Introduction to Minitrack on Development Methods for Electronic Government

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This outline introduces the Minitrack on Development Methods for Electronic Government, organized as part of the Electronic Government Track at HICCS-45. After explaining the rationale and scope of the Minitrack, the paper presents the summaries of accepted papers.

1. Introduction
In order to realize the promised transformation of government and its relationships with citizens, Electronic Government has to rely on a range of technical, organizational, and regulatory components – software, hardware, services, processes, protocols, contracts, frameworks, models, and architectures. Developing such components, building complete solutions from them, and deploying such solutions in government organizations to obtain the expected transformational effect and to contribute to larger policy objectives, is challenging, risky, and expensive.

This mini-track focuses on development methods, covering technical, managerial and organizational dimensions, addressing the challenges of Electronic Government development: evolving requirements, change management, dependability and accessibility, IT-strategy alignment, stakeholder engagement, technical and organizational complexity, legacy systems and heterogeneity, different interpretations of rules and regulations, and dependence on ever-changing legal, political, and cultural environment. Of particular interest are contributions that can make Electronic Government development more measurable, predictable, replicable and scalable, contributing to the establishment of theoretical foundations and engineering practices for the domain. Of interest also is the application of such practices, particularly in the context of sustainable development.

2. Papers
The first paper “IT Business Cases in Local Government: An Action Research Study” by Peter Axel Nielsen and John Stouby Persson presents insights on contemporary IT business case practices in Danish municipalities. Experiences from local government reveal difficulties in developing effective IT business cases beyond simple cost savings. Based on the lessons learnt the authors synthesize four principles (i.e. minimal contents, benefits ownership, dynamic utility, and social commitment) and argue that these principles improve the content, development, and use of IT business cases in local government.

The second paper “Shared Services as a Collaboration Strategy and Arrangement in Public Service Networks” by Marijn Janssen, Muhammad Kamal, Vishanth Weerakkody, and Anton Joha examines three shared service development projects in public organizations, each having chosen a different collaboration strategy. Using the core competency and absorptive capacity theories, the authors find that the development of shared service arrangements is influenced by path-dependent factors including the type of organizations involved and their relationships, absorptive capacity and geographical location.