Legitimate e-Government
– Public e-Services as a Facilitator of Political Legitimacy

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Abstract
This paper addresses the critical issue of legitimacy in relation to e-government by focusing on public e-services to citizens. The discussion is framed through a tentative model on how to integrate legitimacy in design and development of e-government.

In theory legitimacy is built on legality and trust towards and within the state. In practice it is developed through a socio-technical collaborative formation of local cultures based on common values, trust, interpretation of systems and practices. Legitimacy is crucial for democratic governance and is a basic prerequisite for all governments. Legitimacy is most often seen as generated through personal, face-to-face meetings, but e-government substitutes such opportunities for interaction. E-governments is neither clearly place-bound. Legitimacy thus has to be gained and sustained in slightly different ways.

This paper brings a political science perspective on legitimacy into the IS discussion on e-government. Legitimacy of e-government has to be further theoretically extended to be useful and applicable for sustainable e-societies in different governmental contexts. Here a conceptual model on legitimacy of e-government is elaborated on in relation to local socio-technical settings and co-produced processes.

1. Introduction

Legitimate government is essential in democratic states. The basic meaning of political legitimacy is based on a combination of trust and legality. In political philosophy legitimacy mainly refers to the moral or rational principles upon which governments may demand obedience. However, in political science it rather builds on Weber’s models of legal-rational authority [1]. Legitimacy has primarily been related to the input side of the political system in line with Easton’s [2] conceptualisation in the 1950s. In that perspective legitimacy of the state is mainly generated through the expressions of the electorate. Legitimacy is than an issue of the relation between values among the electorate and the elected. More recently, and in particular as a response to the complexity of governmental services in mature welfare states, there has been an increased interest in how legitimacy is gained on the output side of the political system [3]. In this respect the high legitimacy of Scandinavian welfare states is gained through the close interplay of citizens and public administration. The public administration of mature welfare state appears through high-quality welfare services provided by street level bureaucrats, who have continuous interaction and frequent meetings with citizens often through face-to-face interaction [4]. This is indeed challenged when public e-services are developed and implemented. E-government is formed in the interplay of ICT and the governmental structures.

Legitimacy is essential for governments and has to be continuously reproduced and maintained into new sceneries as e-government. The demand for new approaches to build legitimacy is due to the continuous development of both the technological and social arrangements of e-government. There is also a need to relate to all the models of government and their national cultural, institutional and organisational arrangements – there is not one universal model of e-government.

In this respect it is relevant to focus on and discuss meanings of legitimacy in relation to e-government and in particular on-line services at the output side of the political system. There are demands for new and extended meanings of legitimacy in these contexts and this paper strives to elaborate on some of them.

1.1. Aim of the paper

The aim of this paper is to elaborate on and discuss core components of legitimacy in relation to e-government and in particular public e-services.
This work is based on a theoretical grounding as well as the experiences, interpretations and implications from several case studies in an interdisciplinary research program. This multi-disciplinary project was conducted through a variety of qualitative, longitudinal organisation-related case studies of e-government in Sweden. Hereby implications for legitimacy in public e-services in particular and e-government in general are discussed.

This paper proceeds in five steps. This introduction also includes methodological considerations and a presentation of the case studies. In the next section an overview of legitimacy of e-government is present by building on central political science perspectives, to conclude into a model of core aspects of legitimate e-government. Thereafter the focus is on the proposed core aspects the socio-technical setting of legitimacy (section 3) and the co-creation of public services (section 4). Finally some conclusions and implications are highlighted.

1.2 Research design and case studies

The starting point for the more theoretical and conceptual argument in this paper is that legitimacy for e-government has to be interpreted differently than in traditional non e-governmental arrangements. There are two basic pre-requests for this argument, the lack of face-to-face interaction and the geographical disembedding. The theoretical elaboration builds on a political science perspective but relates to IS research on e-government and strives for an extension of e-government models into appropriate referent theories, as asked for by Heeks and Bailur [5, p. 262].

The conceptualisation relies on re-analyses of the case studies of e-governmental public services included in the research program. As the former research leader of the program the overall and combined conclusions are at my main focus. This paper is hereby a re-analysis of the broader results into an interpretation from a political science approach. The research underlying this paper is based on an interdisciplinary effort focusing on the hyphen in e-government, that is, the mutual construction of technology and government, its development and interpretation. Our research program has been multi-disciplinary, striving to reach interdisciplinary analyses mainly by combining public administration and information systems. This inter-disciplinary approach is in line with Taylor and Lips [6] argument that the innovation in e-government has become an “agenda for e-government” itself.

Even if the initial focus of the research program was on public organisation of safety and trust, these results have in later stages highlighted the importance of addressing the conceptualization of legitimacy as well. The interpretation of legitimacy in relation to e-government processes is here based on a constructivist perspective and reflexive methodology practices. The analyses build on reflexive interpretations of the organization and construction of boundaries between private and public, between technology and society and between governmental activities with and without e- [7, 8, 9].

Our research program included several case studies from different policy areas, related to the three levels of government in Sweden – local, regional and national – and also to a lesser extent to the European Union and some international settings. We have used a collection of qualitative methods related to and adapted for each case study. Key actor interviews and document analysis were, however, used in all case studies.

At the national level of public e-services, we studied e-government process in two national authorities, focusing on e-government stakeholders in a development of a new public e-service for higher education [10, 11]. Another case study focused on how the implementation of e-government applications contributed to the merging of several national public authorities in the transportation sector [12]. At the regional level, the main case study focused on the development and implementation of a system for electronic patient records. The case study took place in a county council that provides public health care for about three hundred thousand inhabitants. The electronic patient record system was partly open for patient interaction and was developed and provided by an external private firm [13]. An additional regional case study compared electronic application systems for secondary high school applications in two regions [14]. Municipalities with constitutional local autonomy make up the local level in the Swedish governmental system. The main study on this level compared the impact of local core values in the formation of local, legitimate e-government. The comparison of two urban municipalities showed the importance of local core values for the implementation and outcome of e-administration and e-services [15].

All these cases included design, implementation and use of what could be seen as internal governmental as well as publicly accessible e-
services. Different management methods were used in the different cases. The public organisations had a high degree of independence in how to develop e-governmental services. There were many different arrangements, from “home built” internally developed systems and externally provided standard ones. The latter were most often purchased through the complex public procurement processes.

This paper builds on an aggregated re-analysis of the case studies to extend the interpretations and construction of legitimacy and search for dimensions that build legitimate e-government. Based on extensive case studies conducted within the research program, there is an opportunity for inductive inspiration in relation to the theoretical framing of legitimacy. The tentative model of legitimacy in relation to e-government builds on these case studies and the interpretation that legitimacy can be analysed through the “doing” of trust and legality (the rule of law) [16]. Thus this analysis is a search for a performative interpretation of legitimacy [7, 17]. The case-based interpretation will form the model of four aspects of legitimacy as discussed below.

2. Legitimacy in theory and practice

Legitimacy is a critical issue in all forms of democratic government and has to be continuously re-constructed through trustworthy social and formal relations and must always be formed within the current legal framework. It is based on the essential care values: democracy, rule of law and effectiveness/efficiency [1, 16, 18].

2.1 The Political System as the context of e-government

Legitimacy of e-government is based on the idea of the state. In a basic model of democratic governmental relations to its citizens and the greater society there are two sides. At the input-side ideas and values are expressed by the electorate through general elections and there is an input by the taxes paid into the government. At the output side public services, infrastructures and other goods are provided by the public sector [2].

This model of the political system contextualizes even the development of e-government. At the input side of government there are models and initiatives to promote e-democracy and e-participation. There are in some states even possibilities to vote through electronic on-line systems. There are also extensive ambitions to improve trust at the input side by participation, for example in local decision-making [19], e-participation [20] and urban planning processes [21]. Within governments there is an extensive use of different administrative information systems making e-government into an aspect of e-administration. Such an example from Seoul, showed that the political leadership effectively could improve control over the government bureaucracy which improved governmental accountability and transparency [22].

At the output side of government, the increased use of information systems promotes an increase in public e-services, transparency and co-production possibilities.

Figure 1. e-government added to Easton’s model of the political system

This illustration shows that e-government has implications on all parts of the political system. However, since legitimacy is highly related to the output side through the provision and organization of public services [4], this elaboration on e-government legitimacy will primarily on public e-services. The public e-services differs from e-services provided from private organizations, it is provided on-line and has to be a service with quality for the end-user [23].

2.2 Trustworthy government

Legitimacy is formed in trustworthy processes following legal and institutional arrangements. Procedures – how governmental activities are performed – are a core aspect of legitimacy in combination with faith in common value systems. A society’s value system is transformed into the governmental system on the input side. Policies are expressions of values and legitimate when the government manages to form policies in relation to common core values. In Lipset’s [24, p. 64] formulation “legitimacy involves the capacity of the [political] system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most
appropriate for the society”. Beetham [18, p. 10-11] argues that legitimacy has to be evaluated according to the extent to which it can be justified in terms of commonly held beliefs and values rather than the degree to which people say that they believe it. Based on this Beetham continuous to argue that there are three dimensions of legitimate power: conformity of rules, the coherence of rules and shared beliefs, and the relation to power [18].

Legitimacy hereby relates to power relations and organization of the government and its relations to others in the society. A legitimacy deficit will undermine public support, trust in policy and public administrative changes [25]. Low legitimacy also undermines the ability to cooperate and promote partnership among governmental actors and others. Thus the organisation of government carries the pre-conditions for legitimacy [4, 26].

In welfare states with extensive out-put and services for citizens legitimacy is mainly generated through the output of governmental policies and actions. At the output side of government, legitimacy is also formed through organisational content (“its products or performance”) as well as its structures and practices (“its processes”). Legitimate decisions are made in line with the legal framework and public opinions. Also the content of the delivered services has to be in line with the idea of the general public to be legitimate [4]. Just to take a simple example, public health care is legitimate when people both trust the care given (the work of the doctors and nurses they meet) and how it is organized (to whom, when and where it is provided and funded).

Legitimacy is, so to say, at the core of interaction among governments, people, organizations, technologies and the institutions in a society. Thus the setting of the information society challenges the meanings of legitimacy. Technology can appear as systems, tools and resources and in all these roles it can challenge how, when and where meanings of legitimacy are formed [9]. Technology thus has to be considered a co-actor in the forming of legitimacy for government in general and for e-government in particular.

### 2.3 E-government challenging legitimacy

Research on the emerging information society or digital society cannot be clearly distinguished from the almost utopian texts outlining a new society in line with Castells’ work [27]. He argues that the new order of society also forms and promotes new values, norms and forms of interaction that in turn are developing and influencing government. Hereby the meanings of legitimacy are challenged, but often embedded into policy myths [28, 29]. There are new arrangements and structures developing around and within governments to what has been called a virtual state [30].

The expectations and visions of digital information are also expected to change the civil service into “digital-era governance” (DEG) [31]. DEG is in their terms a broader perspective on e-governance. They also include organizations and activities outside direct policy-driven activities, a networked governance approach [32]. The DEG-perspective integrates functions from a holistic, user-oriented perspective by the digitization of administrative processes. The citizens become more active and integrated users of public services in the DEG setting. Additionally, it is important to ensure that e-government is integrated into and permeates (all) other policies and therefore is also influenced by other policy area characteristics [33].

E-government is based on mutual interactions of technical and social arrangements, which is a typical socio-technical system [34]. Theories of socio-technical systems indicate that they are constructed and given meaning in the mutual interplay between the technical and social components of the systems. Legitimacy thus also has to be formed in the interplay between the technical and social aspects of e-government in the current setting, such as the extended context of risks and safety. Legitimacy on the input side of e-government is formed through democratic process characterized by openness and communication, but not directly related to voting turn-out [35].

E-government also has to relate to general democratic values such as participation, legal certainty and efficiency, as well as general policy objectives such as growth, transparency and sustainable development in the context where it is used. Such political and social aims are (re-)constructed as both social and technical meanings of the socio-technical systems of government through e-government. But here the core focus of legitimate e-government will be on public e-services and the processes that form them through procedure and performance.

### 2.4 Legitimacy as a procedure

Legitimacy is formed in trustworthy processes that follow legal and institutional arrangements [36]. Administrative procedures that provide and frame public e-services are central in the procedural aspect of legitimacy.
The legitimacy of public services provision rests on the professional administrators’ skills and behaviour, in combination with the processes being carried out in accordance with the law and its standards of impartiality, equality and other democratic values [26]. A core aspect of this type of legitimacy is impartiality. Impartiality in the exercise of public power is defined as an implementation of laws and policies where government officials – broadly defined as those who exercise public authority – do not “[…] take into consideration anything about the citizen/case that is not beforehand stipulated in the policy or the law” [16].

Established procedures are characterized by routines and an almost unreflective, routine behaviour where decisions are made without direct explicit calculations [26]. But when new procedures develop – as with e-government – legitimacy may become more deliberate and open, as there is a search for a new balance between input values, procedures and output legitimacy. E-government is an emerging practice and its process legitimacy has to be based on the values of both the information society (e-) and the democratic and legal secure norms (government). e-government has to unite technical values with social and political values. The process legitimacy of e-government has to integrate and merge different procedures performed by public and private actors into a networked setting and they also enrol end users in co-production of legitimacy.

2.5 Legitimacy as performance – the quality of government

Public services have to have good quality meeting the needs and demands of the citizens. Legitimacy is sustained by the quality of public services. The outcomes of public administration are the services that are created in society and used daily by citizens. High-quality governance, in this regard, related to a high degree of legitimacy [37]. The concept of “quality of government” in the welfare state is related to citizens’ interpretations of services and impartiality of administration. Quality of government is, in this context, considered as legitimate out-put of government and governmental services in particular.

The concept of quality in business and in market relations is, however, rather about achieving or even exceeding customer expectations [38]. With this approach, public management that aims to produce high-quality government must achieve or even surpass the expectations of citizens. But public administration often seeks to go beyond certain citizens’ expectations. Legitimacy as quality of government is both about the service experience of a single citizen and the idea of public service delivery in general. Public organizations need to “do” certain public e-services in a manner that reflects their duties, skills and the needs there and then.

Trustworthiness of government is operationa-
ized by Levi et al. [39] into government performance, leadership motivation and administrative competence. E-government adds a complicated mix of private and public actors and citizen participation that makes the picture of trustworthy and legitimate e-government less clear.

Transparency is another key element of legitimate democratic institutions. Even if e-government is improving opportunities for transparency, Curtin and Meijer [40] conclude that there is a naive assumption about the relation between transparency and legitimacy, that has to be avoided. Legitimacy is not gained by fancy websites telling about government policies nor by participation it is much more complicated.

The e-government field is in practice combining issues from both information systems and government. But the current understanding of e-government focuses on the technological aspects, probably to make a difference from government studies in general. But there is also a need to extend the interpretations of e-government. Taylor and Lips [5, p. 149] argue that “in an era of increasingly information-intensive government, e-government scholars must broaden their perspectives and view the world they study through the social scientific lenses of the information polity”. To extend the social and political aspects of e-government there are potentials in relating to and developing traditional political scientific concepts.

2.6 Conceptualising legitimacy of e-government

Since legitimacy is a fundamental aspect of democratic government it also has to be applicable when used in relation to e-government. The theoretical outline above is here extended and problematized by relating to public e-services.

A basic distinction for legitimate e-governance on the output side of the political system could be between the socio-technical setting, as a structural aspect, and the integration of end-user co-creation of public services, as an actor-level aspect. Together these aspects make up a foundation for legitimate e-government on the output side. The two core
dimensions of the proposed model of legitimate e-government discussed here is:

1. The local socio-technical setting of legitimacy
2. Legitimacy as a co-created process

Figure 2. A model of legitimate e-government

This model aims to show that e-government adds new dimensions to the meanings of legitimacy. The socio-technical settings and arrangement is challenging the meanings of legitimacy. This will be discussed by relating to what is seen as the public setting of e-government and the difference in the role of citizens and customers. The second aspect that appeared in all case studies was the co-creative approach in e-governmental services, that is a core of the procedural aspect of legitimacy. The co-creative approach appeared in the case studies by integrating end-users in developments of services and in the use of services (production). It is also obvious that the governmental core criterion of impartiality is crucial for the legitimate provision of e-governmental services.

3. The socio-technical setting

The interpretations of legitimacy in relation to e-government relate strongly to its contexts. Legitimacy is situation dependent – in time and space. Thus the socio-technical setting appeared in the case studies to form a critical prerequisite for legitimate procedure and performance. Two aspects of the socio-technical setting will be addressed: private-public interaction and the roles of citizens and customers.

3.1 Making borders between the public and private of e-government

Taylor and Lips [5] consider public e-government to be partly a supplement to and partly integrated into New Public Management (NPM). NPM is a governance strategy for governments building on market-like principles and constructs quasi-markets for public choices. It is characterized by contemporary changes in values towards individualization, effectiveness and participation in general. The core values of the public and private sectors are hereby challenged and integrated. Since e-government is closely connected to market values – through NPM – there are challenges with regard to public legitimacy. This was obvious in the case study of electronic patient records, where a private firm that usually designed e-administration systems for other private firms developed and designed this particular public e-government system. The county council (the public organization) acted as a weak buyer and could not express all its values and needs in the procurement processes, which did indeed have negative implications for the legitimacy of both the process and the practice of the e-governmental applications at the output side [13].

The municipal study compared one municipality that has been the NPM forerunner in Sweden and one more traditional social democratic municipality. Here the “NPM municipality” more easily identified and made use of the potential of e-government, since there was value coherence and e-government was thereby recognized as legitimate. The more social democratic municipality had to put much more effort into the re-design and making a local meaning of e-government in line with their norm system, which was less market-like [15, 41]. In the “NPM municipality” the translations of values was smoother since the NPM values corresponded more to the egovernmental settings [15].

These results show that the core values of public and private structures are reinforced, but have to be conceptualized more clearly to sustain legitimacy. In digital-era governance, there is an obvious recognition of a mixing of private and public values [42]. But to gain legitimacy at the output side of government, it must be possible to separate and envisage these values in practice.

In this interplay, there is also technical security formed through specific standards. These standards do not make any clear political statements on development of safe and legitimate e-government. In our cases, the municipal and regional governments did, however, demand clearer regulations from the
national government [43]. Local actors and organisations did not trust their own competence to evaluate the levels of security. There are still few such bridges between levels in the multi-level government system and legitimacy must thus be formed at each level.

Public organizations have a responsibility to communicate and visualize different norms and value systems through their procedures to hold up legitimacy and core public values. Organisation and management of the public values of public governance has to be reproduced, articulated and used as the basis of public e-government to maintain and develop legitimacy.

3.2 The role of end-users – being a citizen not a customer

The output side of government might look like any service provider on the market. But there are essential differences with public services. These are provided to citizens with rights and duties independently of their capacity to pay for them. There are also public e-services that are compulsory for citizens – there are no exits from these markets. The distinction of the public aspect of the public e-services is essential for the performance aspect of legitimacy [23] and also for the general legitimacy of e-government.

The users of public services are citizens, not customers. This is a common discussion in relation to NPM, but it seems even more important in relation to e-government since on-line services quite often have a similar interface [44]. Private and public services in “e-” settings are just a click away. It is not always possible for the user of e-governmental services to see the difference between public and private services. The mix of markets and public structures makes the value grounding of legitimacy complicated. Thus there is a need to clarify the roles of customers and citizens.

Recognizing the difference between private and public e-services becomes more difficult when these services are even more integrated when the electronic identification provided by private banks is used for citizen’s identification even in relation to public administrations and organisations, as discussed in relation to some of the municipal e-government services [15, 40].

There is even a common customer-centred language emerging in municipalities and among other public authorities. Their public services are often designed as if the citizen were a customer, based on market value legitimacy [15]. In the social democratic welfare state context, public services in general are provided in relation to the rights and duties of citizens. Therefore it is important to distinguish the information and services provided by public authorities from others. This changing language is a general change in governmental settings that becomes even more obvious in e-government settings since the technological interface hides the sender. The public authority and its professionals are easily mixed with other private and market actors in on-line interfaces.

If the legitimacy of public e-government is to be based on democratic values, it is crucial that these values are communicated through and characterize the design of e-government, instead of economic and market values. In the case study of the secondary school application systems there was a clear customer approach from the schools but the governmental decision on admission had a legal approach demanding electronic identification. Only the legal guardians had obvious citizen’s right, and had to represent the interest of the teenager. These conflicting approaches made the e-service application appear unclear and the grounding of legitimacy was complicated and not transparent for the end-users [14].

Legitimate e-government is also conditioned by its context with constructed borders. Within this context, democratic values have to be the base of legitimate e-government. Thus NPM’s focus on market values and efficiency has to be integrated into democratic values reaching beyond the distinct meanings of citizens and customers. This calls for new approaches both regarding procedures of service deliveries and organisation in public administration to form legitimacy including both social and technical components. To conclude, the boundaries between private and public organizations are critical for the legitimacy of e-government.

4. Co-creating legitimacy

The second proposed aspect of legitimacy in e-government is the actor-oriented participatory creation of the services and sometimes even the administration. The construction of practices includes citizen’s participation and develops through the responses of public administration and the competence of the staff to act impartially. This means that the change in perspective is built into the organization of these services and sustained by the practitioners providing the services.
4.1 Integrating end-users to gain legitimacy by co-creation

E-government allows for active citizens and their own search for information regarding public issues and services. Open access to different forms of data is an important source of legitimacy for governments in general. By providing information about services and policy processes such as decisions as well as lack of decisions, governmental organisations can gain legitimacy through citizens’ improved trust in the procedures as well as the quality of government. Making citizens become partners and including them in the service provision by active choices was a core strategy of the liberal municipality in Jansson’s study [15]. Legitimacy is co-created through mature e-government processes [45] and a procedure developed to simplify the decision, which Lundquist [26] sees as a source of legitimacy, in the administration.

The interface and collaboration at the output side of e-government is an interaction where citizens can contribute by providing information electronically, by filling in forms and making comments. In the common application system for secondary high schools the students provide such information and become co-producers of the process. The student counsellors than could use their skills for more advanced counselling instead of basic administration of forms. In this way student participation became a resource for the public administration and their common trust in the system was high [14]. There are probably several other potential areas where e-services can be used for co-production and contribute to legitimacy. By becoming a partner in the process the citizen may not have the same impression of state control, but rather sees governmental organisations as a legitimate partner creating the good life and trustworthy relations in the society.

4.2 Impartiality

Impartiality is a core aspect of output-side legitimacy in Rothstein and Teorell’s model [16]. Their model does, however, not relate to e-governmental aspects. E-government and its technical interfaces offer even more neutral arenas for interaction. The anonymity in on-line use of public services can improve impartiality, than in ordinary off-line meetings between citizens and public administration. The classical saying “no one knows who you are on the Internet” is here given a more positive implications since the public servants can threat anyone differently. There are for example no possibilities for bribery, nor to give other benefits. The systems are as such impartial and may even increase the professional’s capacities to act impartially. Impartiality is a critical issue that is given even more attention in the analysis of public administration legitimacy [37].

Impartiality was a core argument for the development of the anonymous exams in higher education. The students expressed a risk of un-equal treatment in the written exams and the university meet the demands by implementing an e-service to make the students anonymous for the teachers, when marking the exams [10, 43]. Public e-services are designed to increase security in both technical and organizational points of view. This is often expressed through the policy process and clearly linking from policy formation and implementation into the practice of e-government. Security and improved impartiality and efficiency, for example, were used as arguments to manage scepticism towards the electronic patient records [46, 47].

It appeared in the cases we have been able to follow over time that the importance of technology toned down and the organization and the business appears to be based more on the interpretations of the notion of impartiality expressed as forms of security and trust [10, 13]. The confidence of both public employees (professionals) and citizens (end-users) in the e-service was strengthened over time. They develop trust in the system and thereby legitimacy for e-government may even grow.

5. Concluding remarks

Legitimacy is essential for democratic government, but it has to be theoretically extended to be useful and applicable in e-government contexts. This paper has elaborated on such an initial analytical and partly normative modelling. We cannot just add new technical solutions to governmental procedures, without making it correspond to the legitimacy grounds of the state as expressed through legal arrangements and trust. But there might also be demand for constitutional changes and adoptions to the e-society.

The model, presented above, launches four core aspects that can contribute to improved legitimacy for public e-services in particular and e-government in general. Firstly, the specific characteristics of the public have to be considered in design and development of public e-services. Secondly, the e-services have to approach citizens not customers. There is also a need to integrate end-users into processes through creation to promote trust. Finally,
the potential to improve impartiality is essential for legitimacy and has to be developed in the design of public e-services.

The main impression from this elaborative argumentation is the importance of continuously focusing on legitimacy in relation to e-government both in policy and practice. The social and technical interdependency is obvious and has to be integrated into public administration theories and models. Here electronic identification [48] will play a crucial role, but there are also risks of increased digital divides [49] that has to be addressed by research and policies. It is just as obvious that the traditional forms and meanings of legitimacy are not fully sufficient either to explain or develop legitimate e-government. A further development and conceptualizations of legitimate e-government is of great importance for a sustainable e-society in general and for legitimate procedures and performance of e-government in particular.

References


