

Inclusion in Digital Government: Narrowing the Divides

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1. Introduction to Minitrack

Governments at all levels continue to promote, grow, and augment their digital engagement with the citizens that they serve. Through social media, mobile applications, online services, and other forms of digital services, governments are increasingly expecting that individuals will interact with them through a range of digital media and technologies. This includes public policy-making (*e.g.*, governance), government operations (*e.g.*, emergency management), citizen engagement (*e.g.*, transparency), and government services (*e.g.*, information provision). As they promote these digital pathways, it is critical for governments to ensure that all citizens are able to realize their needs through inclusive design, availability, and ability. However, many digital divides remain – from access to sufficient technologies (*e.g.*, broadband, devices, costs), the ability to use technologies, and the design of digital government services.

This minitrack hopes to increase the attention on digital inclusion within electronic government services. The minitrack potentially includes (but is not limited to) topics such as:

- Longitudinal analyses of inclusion in digital government;
- The role of digital literacy in use/non-use of online government services;
- The use of digital government by immigrant, migrant, indigenous, or populations;
- The use of digital government by indigenous populations;
- The use of digital government by low-literacy populations;
- The role of socio-economic status on the use of digital government;
- Accessibility of digital government for people with perceptual, motor, or cognitive disabilities;
- The role of government in the development of international technical standards for digital accessibility;
- The role of community-based organizations (*e.g.*, public libraries, non-government organizations) in fostering digital inclusion;

- Development and/or implementation of statutes, regulations or policies related to digital inclusion;
- Trends in case law related to digital inclusion;
- Trends in comparative or international law related to digital inclusion;
- The relationship between trust of institutions and use of digital government by diverse populations;
- How digital-based voting impacts involvement of citizens in elections
- LGBTQIA+ interactions with digital government;
- Usability evaluation methods for testing digital government services with diverse user populations;
- Research methods for understanding why diverse individuals avoid using digital government; and
- Inclusive design methods to involve diverse populations in the actual development of digital government.

2. Papers in Minitrack

2022 is the second year of the minitrack on inclusion in digital government, and we are excited to have two excellent papers. The first paper, “Monitoring and Measurement of Digital Inclusion: A Critical Analysis of Key Global Frameworks”, analyzes indicators of digital inclusion or inequality used in ten national and international frameworks. The paper highlights indicators that were found to be limited or missing altogether, discussing their weaknesses in supporting strategic and practical decision making to facilitate digital inclusion. The results can be used to shape a path towards better support for measuring and promoting digital inclusion.

The second paper, “Side Effects of National Immunization Program: E-Governance Support Toward Elders' Digital Inclusion”, investigates the adverse effects, on seniors' digital inclusion, of a centralized ICT-based approach to national immunization programs in Poland, as well as e-governance functions to mitigate those effects. The authors collected data from social media, news portals, and medical portals. In their analysis, they extracted several topics, which were then interpreted by experts specialized in e-government. From the study results, the paper proposes five guidelines for public inclusion policy toward elders.