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Correspondence: Digital tools, participation, and promoting effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of post COVID-19 urban governance

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1. **Recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering sustainable economic, social, and environmental progress**

The greatest challenge of our time centers on recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, of delivering sustainable economic, social, and environmental progress. The capability and capacity of urban governance mechanisms, globally and locally, are central to this task. The COVID-19 pandemic has served to highlight and exacerbate economic, social, and environmental inequalities. The challenge to urban governance rests in successfully negotiating the often-competing demands of economic, social, and environmental recovery and progress.

2. **Post COVID-19 urban governance**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed, at least in the short term, the way people live and work in cities. Questions arise as to whether aspects of this change have been beneficial or harmful to socio-economic well-being. In these terms, should urban governance seek to embrace or resist these changes?

3. **Effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of urban governance mechanisms**

The Urban Governance journal seeks to open, and contribute to, debates on the effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of urban governance mechanisms. To this end, it requires to distinguish between local contexts and global dynamics. This objective can only be met through the rigorous comparative assessment of the urban governance of societal challenges.

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1. **Coordinating different interests and needs**

With the increasing complexities in cities, one of the key challenges is how to coordinate different interests and needs of diverse actors that go beyond government agencies and include private sectors, civil society, and local communities. This challenge is related to several domains, such as urban regeneration, infrastructure, climate change, energy transition, and environmental management.

2. **New digital tools to support stakeholder collaboration and citizen participation**

An emerging topic is the use of new digital tools (e.g. social media, planning support systems, smart platforms, and apps) to support stakeholder collaboration and citizen participation to cope with complex problems and promote sustainability transitions. This can go beyond the current debate on smart governance, which is often too technology driven and lacks concern for the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social). Additionally, more attention should be paid to the contextual differences that shape the different characteristics of urban governance in various institutional settings.

3. **Key questions for urban governance**

I expect UG to answer the following questions: What are emerging challenges of urban governance in different contexts? What is innovative collaborative governance to address complex problems in topics like urban regeneration, climate change, and energy transition? What is the added value of new digital tools in governance processes?

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