# Chapter 11
# E–Government Policy Implementation in Thailand:
## Success or Failure?

**Mergen Dyussenov**
*Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan*

**Lia Almeida**
*Universidade Federal do Tocantins, Brazil*

## ABSTRACT

*This chapter investigates the current e-government and ICT policy in Thailand from an actor-centered perspective. It reviews existing literature on e-government implementation, while looking into the interaction of government institutions and citizens. It seeks to answer questions, such as the following: What are the key actors in driving the implementation of e-government policies in Thailand? How do Thai citizens perceive e-government efforts and ICT policy implementation especially in the context of present military government power? What are some of the risk factors typically embedded in e-government initiatives and policies implemented in Thailand? Some scholars specifically emphasize the key role of central government institutions in driving the e-government and ICT policy implementation pointing at its readiness to transform toward E-Government 4.0. These observations notwithstanding, issues related to the often-omitted crucial role of citizens and local customers in driving policy implementation and the problem of digital divide remain across much of the developing world.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Thailand, along with other nations of the South East Asian region e.g. Indonesia, largely remains at an early stage both of e-government policy implementation (e.g. Mirchandani et al. 2008; Sagarik et al. 2018; Hassan 2019) and engaging the public in policymaking and service delivery processes in general (OECD/ADB 2019). Thailand, however, still appears relatively better developed vis-à-vis some of its ASEAN neighboring states, such as the Philippines and Indonesia, in terms of basic infrastructure preparedness to facilitate e-government policy implementation efforts (Bukht & Heeks 2018), as outlined in Table 1.

*Table 1. Thailand's key indicators of ICT development vis-à-vis ASEAN states*

| Country | ICT Development | Global IDI Ranking | Total Mobile Penetration | Unique Mobile Subscribers | 3G + 4G | Smartphone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thailand | 4.8 | 74 | 122% | 85.47% | 82.47% | 58.98% |
| Indonesia | 3.8 | 108 | 126% | 58.43% | 40.48% | 40.37% |
| Singapore | 7.9 | 19 | 145% | 71.52% | 63.14% | 78.16% |
| Malaysia | 5.2 | 64 | 142% | 76.1% | 60.3% | 64.63% |
| Philippines | 4.0 | 98 | 117% | 65.09% | 44.74% | 40.9% |
| Vietnam | 4.1 | 102 | 152% | 49.66% | 36.48% | 27.84% |

Source: DTAC (n.d.), as cited in Bukht & Heeks (2018).

As Kawtrakul et al. (2011) suggest, in order to boost Thailand's competitiveness in the context of ASEAN economic integration, the next step should focus on the implementation of more concrete policy initiatives, such as Internal Smart with E-Government, International Smart with intergovernmental processes and overcoming language barriers (Kawtrakul et al. 2011), as well as e-Auction, ID Smart Card, and Government Fiscal Management Information Systems (Lorsuwannarat 2006). In an effort to make an initial move in transforming the nation towards becoming a smarter society, the E-Government national policy has been largely implemented since 2000 with the primary goal to improve government services and interactions with citizens and businesses alike (Kawtrakul et al. 2011). Furthermore, even earlier the 2001-2006 Thaksin Shinawatra's government was determined to employ e-government policy as a tool to facilitate the Thailand's transformation towards becoming a knowledge-based society. However, problems and limitations remain that need to be addressed, especially related to the policy formulation stage of policymaking (Lorsuwannarat 2006).

This paper attempts to contribute to scholarly knowledge primarily by evaluating the current e-government policy implementation in Thailand based on a review of existing literature and specifically in terms of local citizens' perception including regular citizens (Mirchandani et al. 2008, Kawtrakul et al. 2011), taxpayers (Rotchanakitumnuai 2008), business communities (Sutanonpaiboon & Pearson 2006, Kawtrakul et al. 2011), students (Sukasame 2004) and navy military staff (Vathanophas 2008 et al.). It also seeks to analyze the key actors involved in implementation processes, predominantly the role of government agencies in implementing e-government and information technology (IT) policy initiatives in Thailand (e.g. Sagarik et al. 2018, Varavithya & Esichaikul 2003, Keretho et al. 2015 etc.), and the role of the public and citizenry (e.g. Mirchandani et al. 2008, Sukasame 2004). It then concludes with a summary of remaining issues, along with policy recommendations.

What follows below is a brief review of policy implementation theories in general, as well as e-governments models of implementation. Next, we detail the literature review carried out, and how theoretical viewpoints and evidence in the existing literature collaborated to identify and analyze the key actors involved and their roles in e-government implementation and as well as the citizen perceptions of the issue. Then, we move on to data analysis, where we first present a contextualization of Thailand's cases through a concrete case and present the data analysis and discussion of the findings. We then conclude with a summary of remaining issues for future research along with policy recommendations.

## Related Content

Immersive Virtual Reality as a Non-Pharmacological Analgesic for Pain Management: Pain Distraction and Pain Self-modulation
Diane Gromala, Xin Tong, Chris Shawand Weina Jin (2016). *Handbook of Research on Human-Computer Interfaces, Developments, and Applications (pp. 478-500).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/immersive-virtual-reality-as-a-non-pharmacological-analgesic-for-pain-management/158883](www.irma-international.org/chapter/immersive-virtual-reality-as-a-non-pharmacological-analgesic-for-pain-management/158883)

Web Divide and Paper Unite: Towards a Model of the Local Tourist Information for All
Francisco V. Cipolla-Ficarra, Miguel Cipolla-Ficarra, Jacqueline Almaand Alejandra Quiroga (2014). *Advanced Research and Trends in New Technologies, Software, Human-Computer Interaction, and Communicability (pp. 536-543).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/web-divide-and-paper-unite/94259](www.irma-international.org/chapter/web-divide-and-paper-unite/94259)

Degree of Similarity of Web Applications
Doru Anastasiu Popescuand Dragos Nicolae (2014). *Advanced Research and Trends in New Technologies, Software, Human-Computer Interaction, and Communicability (pp. 312-318).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/degree-of-similarity-of-web-applications/94240](www.irma-international.org/chapter/degree-of-similarity-of-web-applications/94240)

Experimental Actions With Conceptual Objects
 (2018). *Experience-Based Human-Computer Interactions: Emerging Research and Opportunities  (pp. 47-97).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/experimental-actions-with-conceptual-objects/190283](www.irma-international.org/chapter/experimental-actions-with-conceptual-objects/190283)

Supporting Accessible User Interfaces Using Web Services
Georgios Bouloukakis, Ioannis Basdekisand Constantine Stephanidis (2014). *Human-Computer Interfaces and Interactivity: Emergent Research and Applications  (pp. 137-155).*
[www.irma-international.org/chapter/supporting-accessible-user-interfaces-using-web-services/111752](www.irma-international.org/chapter/supporting-accessible-user-interfaces-using-web-services/111752)