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Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen



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**COMMUNITIES IN ONE WORLD**

# DIALOG GLOBAL



## Participatory Budgeting Worldwide – Updated Version

Study

On behalf of

**BMZ**



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

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Study

Yves Sintomer, Carsten Herzberg, Giovanni Allegretti,  
– with the collaboration of Anja Röcke and Mariana Alves

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Service Agency Communities in One World

November 2013

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## Foreword

At the end of 2010 the Service Agency Communities in One World published the first edition of this study, which met with keen interest among researchers, practitioners and engaged individuals around the globe. The idea of a study shedding light on the global dimension and forms of participatory budgeting (PB) was new, and at the time the study provided a unique compendium of information. Today, three years later, PB has become more common worldwide, and its procedures and forms have continued to develop. To keep pace with the dynamic developments in this field it was time to revise and update the study.

The team of authors therefore compiled the current facts on procedures and forms of PB, good practice examples and dynamics. Our special thanks are owed to Dr. Giovanni Allegretti and Marianna Lopes Alves, who conducted pertinent investigations among scholars and practitioners of PB on all continents.

We were surprised – and pleased – by the number and diversity of further developments, and instances where PB was introduced for the first time. One finding of this study is that the number of participatory budgeting procedures worldwide is continuing to grow. Some countries, such as Peru and the Dominican Republic, have even made the introduction of PB a legal requirement for all local authorities. To what extent this will promote a more just allocation of scarce resources at the local level, and the inclusion of marginalised sections of the population in local development planning processes, remains to be seen. Nonetheless, it is already evident how much PB is now seen as an important instrument for local development planning.

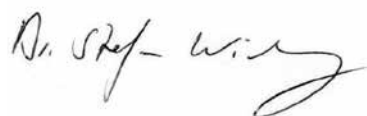
Moreover, PB has also been introduced in a growing number of cases in Francophone and Lusophone Africa. The international learning dialogue has proved a key factor in the development and formation of these participatory budgeting procedures. In many cases, mutual visits and study trips have enabled participants to see how things were done by the pioneers in Brazil, especially Porto Alegre, and what approaches European actors have taken.

In Europe too, PB is increasingly being seen as important for local participatory development. In Poland, for instance, legislation has been passed to promote the introduction of PB. And in many European countries local governments are involving their citizens in decision-making on local expenditure, not least due to the pressure they face as a result of scarce resources. The European Union has listed PB as a good practice example for the calls for proposals to be issued by the European Social Fund 2014-2020. By so doing it has acknowledged PB as a permanent instrument for the future, also in Europe.

Yet it is not only the number and the distribution of participatory budgeting procedures that have changed over the last three years. In the course of their research the authors also found that the six ideal types of PB established in the first edition now display changed features that reflect today's dynamics and trends. In other words, this new edition has many exciting new developments and discoveries in store as readers make their journey around the participatory budgeting procedures of the world. In many respects it is a supplement to the first edition, because the good practice examples presented there should still continue to serve as models.

We are confident that this new edition will find just as many readers and be made available in just as many universities, town halls and libraries around the world as the original version. It is designed to motivate municipalities and active citizens around the globe to engage in dialogue, and learn from and with each other. We hope that in so doing it will help further disseminate and improve PB worldwide.

Yours



Dr. Stefan Wilhelmy  
Head of the Service Agency Communities in One World /  
Engagement Global gGmbH

# Preface

This essay represents an attempt to provide an updated overview of participatory budgeting (PB) in the world based on a first edition published in 2010. There, our aim was to present and analyze existing cases of PB using a coherent definition and typology. The changes that have occurred in the past three years have given rise to a need to modify some of our previous classifications, as the spread of PB worldwide has introduced new nuances and hybrid models. The global panorama and the numbers we provide are not as precise and as systematic as we would have liked. This essay is designed mainly to facilitate future research on the topic. We closed the new edition in 2013, taking into account data referring to the end of 2012. The updating of the report has not been realized within a specific research program, but based on data gathered thanks to colleagues who have collaborated voluntarily in various countries. This explains the asymmetries and gaps that readers will easily detect.

Engagement Global and the Service Agency Communities in One World, Germany, commissioned this study. Dr. Stefan Wilhelmy, Head of the Service Agency, together with Mandy Wagner, were in charge of relations with the research team. We would like to thank all our colleagues and partners for their substantial support. Their names are listed below, distinguishing the contributors to the first edition from the new ones who have helped to deliver this updated version. We hope that all those who contributed to the text have been mentioned. Any mistakes that remain are ours.

This text owes part of its reflections to the project „Participatory Budgeting as innovative tool for reinventing local institutions in Portugal and Cape Verde? A critical analysis of performance and transfers“ (PTDC/CS- SOC/099134/2008, funded by FEDER – COMPETE and FCT).

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Special thanks go to Yves Cabannes and Nelson Dias, main authors of several inter-continental studies on participatory budgeting; to Osmany Porto and his colleagues from CEBRAP for the constructive critics during a special seminar on this issue (S. Paulo, Brazil); and to Ernesto Ganuza, who provided many inputs for our research. Special recognition goes to Rafael Sampaio, who co-authored the box on the growing use of ICT tools.



# Introduction

The term “participatory budgeting” has been translated into dozens of languages. This bears witness to a success story. In the past five years, participatory budgeting (PB) has become an issue all around the world, first in the alter-globalization movement, then due to a series of international awards given to the best practices of city management and democratic innovation, such as those created by UCLG-Africa in the Africities Forum, by the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy (OIDP) or by the Bertelsmann Foundation (especially the prestigious Reinhard Mohn Prize). Recently, Carole Pateman, an important author in the history of participatory democracy, dedicated considerable space to a debate on PB (Pateman, 2012), as Pippa Norris also did in her study on Democratic Deficit (2011), while the distinguished *Journal of Public Deliberation* devoted a special issue to discuss the device (No. 8, 2012). Although far less important in its consequences, this phenomenon of expansion and recognition tend to follow the path of technological innovations, such as mobile phones, MP3 players and the Internet. This development is also interesting because PB is a procedure invented and consolidated in countries of the Global South. It is also remarkable that PBs are found in a wide range of societies, cultures and political systems, sometimes non-democratic ones. Whereas in some cases PB is used to democratize democracy, to strengthen civil society or to further modernize already efficient public services, in others it is a tool for fighting corruption, supporting a slow decentralization process or opening a democratic process in the context of authoritarian regimes. Given the diversity of their contexts and forms, PBs would appear to be an appropriate subject for a global dialogue. By finding out more about the various procedures and their origins, we will also discover more about the society of the related country, region or city. The present essay is designed to encourage readers to embark on this process of discovery.

## 1. A Global Perspective

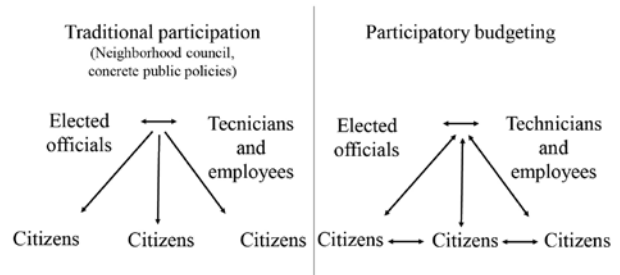
This essay on the dissemination and diversity of PB is designed to facilitate intercultural exchange between committed citizens, civil servants, experts and researchers. It identifies and explains different procedures, describes how and why they arose and illustrates the analysis with concrete examples. Specific tools such as transparent budgets, allocation criteria and/or websites are presented, and potential objectives of PB are clarified. This is not to say that any rigid blueprints will be provided. The essay is rather designed for use as a toolbox. We will not paint a more favorable picture of PB than the reality warrants. Both difficulties and success stories will be presented for what they are. It is only by clearly identifying challenges that the likelihood of responding to them successfully will increase.

The present essay is not, strictly speaking, a research report. Nevertheless, it does contain the results of various studies conducted in Europe and other parts of the world. These include the “Participatory budgets in Europe” research project of the Hans Böckler Foundation at the Centre Marc Bloch in Berlin; studies by the Center for Social Studies in Coimbra (Portugal); European Union projects such as “PARLOCAL” and those organized within the URBAL and URBACT umbrella programs; and also reports of sessions devoted to analyzing PB held during international meetings such as Africities, the World Urban Forum (WUF), the World Social Forums (WSF), the OIDP world meetings; and publications issued by national and international organizations, such as the World Bank, the UN-HABITAT program or the Service Agency Communities in One World (a division of Engagement Global gGmbH – Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen, Germany). We have also cooperated with local governments, NGOs and social movements on numerous occasions. This provided us with a number of opportunities to participate in citizens’ assemblies and other key moments of PB.

## 2. What is Participatory Budgeting?

Before beginning our journey around the world, we need to explain in more detail exactly what “participatory budgeting” is. Some readers may already have a clear idea of what the term means, but others in different parts of the world would probably disagree: in order to compare on a world scale, we would like to give a precise definition of what we will analyze. Before we do so, however, we will first look at an anecdote that explains what distinguishes PB from other participatory procedures. The story goes that the inhabitants of the French city of Poitiers once requested that their local authority make the Rue Jourdain a one-way street in order to calm traffic in the neighborhood. The city council looked into the possibility and finally gave its consent. As a result of this measure, however, the traffic was shifted into the neighborhood on the other side of the street, where soon afterwards the inhabitants also demanded that the traffic be calmed. They proposed that another one-way street sign also be put up at the opposite end of Rue Jourdain. The council granted this request too, which led to the present situation, in which access to Rue Jourdain is blocked at both ends. What at first glance reads like an example of bungling was later used by the elected political representatives in Poitiers as proof that citizens’ participation also has its limits, and that the city council has to be the one to weigh up interests and look for the common good. What the city council failed to see, however, is that the citizens had no opportunity to discuss the issue of traffic calming with their neighbors. They had raised their demands before their respective participatory neighborhood councils, to which only the inhabitants of the neighborhood in question are invited. Here, as is the case with many forms of traditional citizens’ participation, the primary mechanism involved is communication between citizens in a certain neighborhood and their local authority. By contrast, PB includes the possibility – as illustrated in Figure 1 – of citizens from different neighborhoods getting together, possibly through delegates’ committees.

**Figure 1: Traditional forms of participation and participatory budgeting**



Source: Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke, 2014.

“Horizontal” communication of this kind has been observed in Porto Alegre and in other PBs. This is not sufficient as a definition, however, because all other participatory devices and methods, such as planning cells, or community planning can also – in principle – be used for cross-district dialogue. To define participatory budgets more precisely, we need to apply further criteria. This would also appear necessary given that some of the experiments described here are not referred to as “participatory budgeting” by local actors. Conversely, some procedures are listed as participatory budgets even though they would not be labeled as such in another country. Therefore, we propose a practical definition of “PB”.

### Participatory Budgeting: Five Criteria

Basically, PB allows the participation of non-elected citizens in the conception and/or allocation of public finances. Five further criteria need to be added (Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke, 2014; Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke/Allegretti, 2012):

(1) Discussion of financial/budgetary processes (PB deals with scarce resources). All participatory devices may concern financial questions (for example, any participatory process related to urban planning will have an impact on costs if projects become bigger or smaller than previously planned). In PB, however, the participatory process is centrally based on the question of how a limited budget should be used.

(2) The city level has to be involved, or a (decentralized) district with an elected body and some power over administration and resources (the neighborhood level is not enough). In fact, we can observe a growing number of neighborhood funds in relation to which citizens can decide about a concrete amount of money, but without having any influence on broader-scale issues. In order to clearly identify PB, we consider only those participatory processes with a similar scale to that of the elected bodies of representative democracy.

(3) It has to be a repeated process over years. Consequently, if a participatory process is already planned as a unique event, we would not consider it to be PB: one meeting, one referendum on financial issues are not examples of PB.

(4) Some form of public deliberation must be included within the framework of specific meetings/forums. This means that if citizens are invited to discuss budgeting in local councils or in parliaments, we would not view it as sufficient, because PB should include specific institutions and therefore a new public sphere. Furthermore, we state that PB should be based on some kind of deliberation. This is why we do not consider a survey on budgeting issues in which citizens would remain without contact with one other to be PB. However, PB deliberation does not necessarily directly lead to decision-making.

(5) Some accountability is required so that the output reflects the public will. We have observed that in many participatory processes, participants never receive feedback about whether or not their proposals are accepted. This should be different in PB, through annual meetings or publications where organizers provide information about the realization of the proposed projects.

### 3. How Participatory Budgeting Spread across the World

Undoubtedly, a high degree of “ambiguity” (Ganuza / Baiocchi, 2012) characterizes the way PBs have mushroomed and travelled around the world in recent years. Some of the promise of its origins has not been fulfilled, but a creative hybridization of different models and tools adapted to local situations has made it possible to foster different goals. PB offers a large range of possibilities for innovation with regard to decision-making (Smith, 2009), especially at local level. It began with a number of Brazilian cities (including the metropolis of Porto Alegre), where participatory budgets first arose in the late 1980s. During the 1990s the procedure started to spread widely in Brazil (Avritzer/Wampler, 2008; Borba/Lüchmann, 2007; Avritzer/Navarro, 2003). Today there are around 300 experiments, giving Brazil one of the highest densities of participatory budgets in the world, especially if we do not take into account those contexts in which PB is a mandatory obligation established by law.

PB has also spread to other parts of the continent. This includes Andean countries such as Ecuador and Peru, as well as Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia and the Caribbean. This trend has continued since the turn of the millennium. Although it has not been possible to obtain the exact figures, right now there are between 618 and 1,130 participatory budgets in Latin America: almost one-third of the participatory budgets in the world, which count between 1,269 and 2,778 traceable experiments. Undoubtedly, other cases must exist, but they remain “invisible” outside their local territories. Inspired by the Latin American experiments, which represent the ideals of good governance and a more just distribution of public resources, people across the globe began to pick up the idea of PB. After Porto Alegre, social movements and representatives of (left-leaning) local governments from Europe began coming to the World Social Forums organized by the alter-globalization movement. As a result, since 2001 a rapid increase has been seen on the old continent, and a number of other experiments began but were interrupted due to local political changes. The core countries were initially

France, Spain and Italy (Porto De Oliveira, 2010). In these Latin countries, a high number of municipalities have joined networks such as those created within the URBAL funding-line in order to establish links with municipalities in Latin America (Cabannes, 2003). German municipalities, which tended to form their own networks, originally debated PBs in the context of a modernization of local government; the model was not Porto Alegre, but the city of Christchurch in New Zealand, which won a prize for citizen-friendly modernization in 1993 within the “Cities of Tomorrow” network, where a lot of German cities and the Bertelsmann Foundation were active. The influence of Porto Alegre came later.

The processes expanded in other countries, especially the United Kingdom, where participatory budgets have gained some support from national government, and Poland, where a national law was approved by the parliament in 2009 (Röcke, 2013). It is very encouraging because it gives specific funding for the establishment of co-decisional PB in all villages. With the support of the Federation of Local Groups Leaders (which in 2013 changed its name to “Watchdog Poland Civic Network”), which acts as a watchdog for monitoring and tries to upgrade the quality of experiments, this gave Poland the largest number of ongoing experiments in Europe in 2012 (324–1,102). In several countries, local non-governmental organizations play an important role in supporting the dissemination of PBs, such as the PB Unit in the United Kingdom, which had to close in 2012 due to the financial cuts decided on by the national government.

In Africa, development cooperation and international organizations had a pivotal role in introducing PB, an instrument that is now taken into account by the UCLGA (the African Association of Local Authorities). Nevertheless, cases such as the ASSOAL development association in Cameroon prove that a stream of grassroots exchanges with Europe and Latin America has also developed, which has helped to foster some good examples of PB. Africa has experienced a real increase in the quality and number of PBs in the past three years: there were between 77 and 103 experiments

in 2012, the majority concentrated in Senegal, Cameroon, RDC Congo and Madagascar.

This fast development of PBs around the world has led to the creation of continental networks supporting the dissemination of PB. If we cast our gaze further, towards Asia, where PB has been introduced most recently, PBs – which began to appear in larger numbers around 2005 – often do not build on previous forms of citizen participation, but mark a new beginning. Interestingly, here too an exchange with Porto Alegre is to be observed: at least, the Brazilian experience plays an important role as a point of reference in the debate, especially for South Korea and China, whose local authorities and NGOs have often visited the Brazilian metropolis, especially since 2009. In India, the Kerala participatory strategic planning experiment encountered Porto Alegre during the Mumbai World Social Forum. In this continent, 58 to 109 experiments were going on in 2012.

### **Box 1: The growing centrality of ICT**

Although participatory budgeting has existed since the early 1990s, the use of technological tools was long limited to informational and communicational support (Allegretti, 2012b). The first real experiments in which information and communication technologies (ICTs) played a large role within PB were only in the first decade of the 2000s. Unsurprisingly, Brazil was the first country in which ICTs were used to innovate participatory budgets and make them more attractive and cost-efficient. Today, one can point out seven different main uses of the digital technologies in PBs worldwide:

#### **1) Use of digital technologies to collect proposals for PB:**

The first e-PB experiments in Brazil used this method, the most successful case being Ipatinga. Other examples are Lisbon (Portugal), New South Wales (Australia), New York (USA), Pune (India), and a majority of German PBs.

#### **2) Use of digital technologies for engagement and mobilization:**

The first attempts at online engagement were made through e-mails, sending invitations to organizations

and citizens already registered as target-groups of other services. Afterwards, there were some experiments using SMS messages to engage the public. Nowadays, social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, are often the primary form of online engagement and mobilization of citizens (especially youngsters).

### **3) Using digital tools for didactic and playful goals:**

Sometimes ICTs play a pedagogic role, especially with the younger generation, who feel more attracted by them. In terms of entertainment, the e-PB in Belo Horizonte (2008) presented a quiz based on Google Maps with questions about the city. For didactic improvements the city of Hamburg made use of an online budget calculator, which was then adapted and translated by the Swedish Association of Local and Regional Authorities in order to provide a tool for concerned citizens to send their budget suggestions to the local government.

### **4) Use of digital networks for discussion and interaction among citizens:**

The first attempts have been using online discussion forums (asynchronous) and synchronous chats to allow more interaction among participants and between citizens and representatives, as in Belo Horizonte (2008, 2011). Furthermore social networks have been used to encourage these discussions and interactions. An interesting case occurred in Hamburg (in 2009), when 2,138 citizens sent budget suggestions (through the above described simulator) and 38 wiki documents were created collaboratively using these. Since 2011, Porto Alegre municipality has hosted an important social network (portolagre.cc) to support collective action and dynamize social activism.

### **5) Online voting:**

This is certainly the main use of digital technologies in PBs, especially in the past five to seven years. Several municipalities have tested the possibility of using voting via SMS, such as La Plata (Argentina) and Cascais (Portugal), in addition to voting by telephone, such as in Belo Horizonte in 2008. Citizens typically vote online on priorities decided in earlier

face-to-face meetings. Thus one can vote either to prioritize the importance of particular work, or to choose work to be carried out from a longer list.

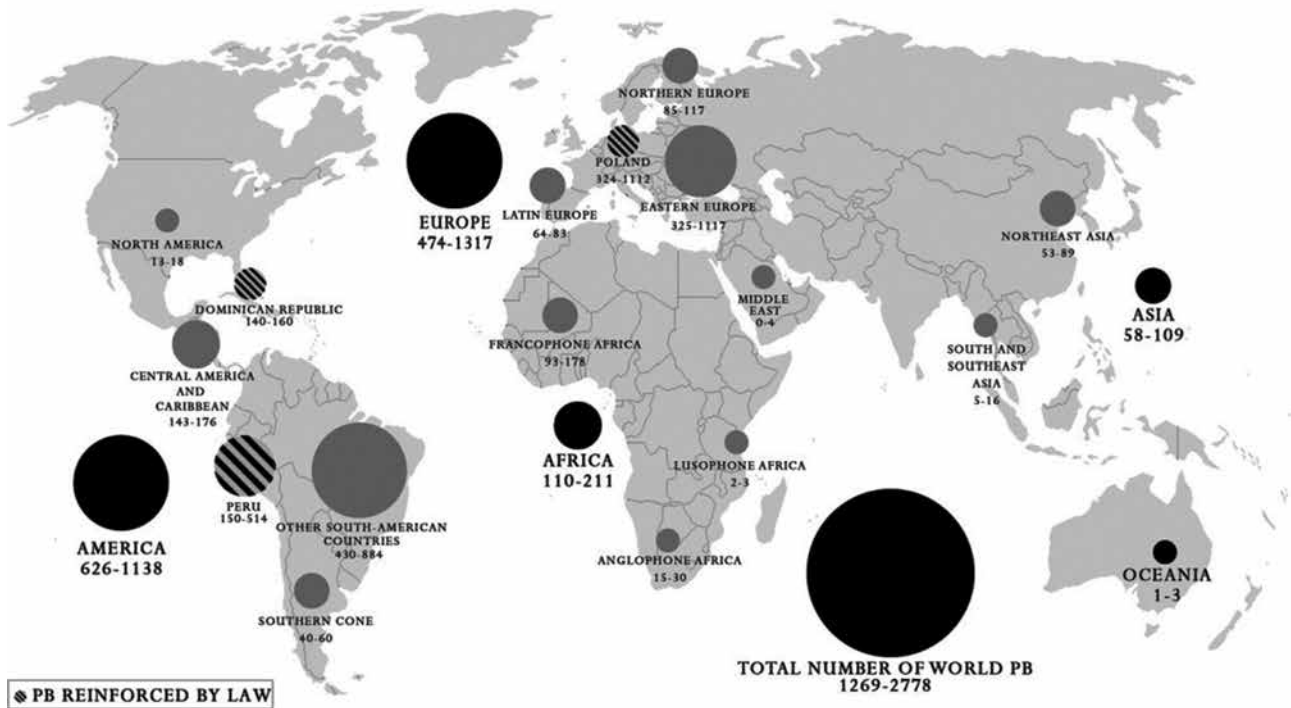
### **6) Online monitoring:**

Quite often, digital technologies have also been used to monitor the whole process of PBs. In Porto Alegre, for example, there is an application (app) that allows citizens to watch face-to-face PB meetings using a Smartphone, and tools to check on the web the status of implementation of several requests. Moreover, Porto Alegre's as well as Seville's websites offers numerous digital tools to monitor the implementation of approved projects, such as cost information, the company in charge, reasons for delay, and current level of achievement. In other examples, such as Malaga (Spain) and South Kivu (Congo), citizens can register to receive updates by SMS on approved projects.

### **7) Online overview of PB development:**

In recent years, several institutions and organizations have developed platforms which help to get an overview of the diffusion of participatory budgeting. The Portuguese NGO In Loco, together with other partners, established, with Info OP, an international PB observatory. There are also national adaptations of this idea. In Germany, for example, [www.buergerhaushalt.de](http://www.buergerhaushalt.de), run by Engagement Global and German Federal Agency for Civic Education, provides detailed maps on the development of PB. There is even a special tool which helps to identify the status of PB implementation year by year.

Throughout the world, academic researchers have also played an important role, either by advising PB experiments created by social and political actors, or by proposing the creation of hybrid processes that could merge the main features of PB with other devices, such as citizens' juries, deliberative polls or participatory processes of strategic planning, as well as being directly part of some experiments, in action-research communities, documenting study cases, publishing comparative analyses, elaborating software to support and monitor processes, proposing and

**Figure 2: Participatory budgeting in the world (2012)**

Source: Authors' elaboration.

applying evaluation criteria and organizing training sessions for local authorities, international organizations, local and regional NGOs.

In the following chapters, the development of PB on the five continents will be dealt with in more detail, imagining it as a sort of "ideoscape" (Appadurai, 1991), i.e. a model which travels around the world and only exists through its very different local implementations, which continuously contribute to modify the model itself. The process of dissemination described above is merely a first outline, illustrated in Figure 2. Our clear definition enables us to compare the wide range of experiments which are being carried on around the planet. For some countries, very precise data are available. In others, however, where fewer interlocutors were available or where the information supplied is contradictory, estimations have to be made. A further problem is obtaining more detailed information on procedures that so far only a few people have referred to as "PB", yet which, following detailed discussion and examination of the facts,

do indeed need to be counted as such. Conversely, some of the self-proclaimed examples turn out to be just pale copies of PB. That is why we chose to represent "ranges" (rather than precise numbers) for the different countries and continents.

#### 4. A Typology of Participatory Budgeting

To help the reader obtain a more detailed understanding of PB around the world, it is necessary to provide some guidance in this introductory chapter. In order to have some points of reference to distinguish between hundreds of individual experiments, it is helpful to propose a typology. In the past, different typologies focusing mainly on methodologies and procedures have been used, and the previous version of this report followed this path. However, such typologies are hardly applicable in very different continental contexts, where PB takes a huge number of

concrete shapes. This is why this essay proposes six categories conceived – through a Weberian approach – as “ideal-types” which could facilitate the understanding of the social and political variations of PB experiments. In the following pages, six different models are described, which compose a conceptual map on which one can situate empirical cases. Concrete experiments tend to hybridize and to fluctuate between models. As in Sintomer, Herzberg, Röcke and Allegretti (2012), we named the six models as follow:

- (i) Participatory Democracy
- (ii) Proximity Democracy
- (iii) Participatory Modernization
- (iv) Multi-stakeholder participation
- (v) Neo-corporatism
- (vi) Community Development

Obviously, real experiments never completely match these idealized models, but the latter allow us to classify and systematize the puzzling variety of concrete cases and can be used to provide orientation, a sort of road map, whose cardinal points help the observer to not get lost (see Figure 3). The six models we propose are constructed around six criteria: the socio-political context; ideologies and political goals; participatory rules and procedures; the dynamics of collective action (weight of civil society, existence of bottom-up movements and so on); the relationship between conventional politics and participatory processes; and the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of each participatory experience.

In the following paragraphs the six conceptual models are described briefly in order to clarify the orientation map and to serve as a reference for the other chapters which consider concrete examples of PB in the five continents.

#### 4.1 Participatory Democracy

While choosing this word, we are aware that the term is often used as a “catchword” which refers to the majority of approaches that in some way bring non-elected citizens together in the decision-making process, even in the case

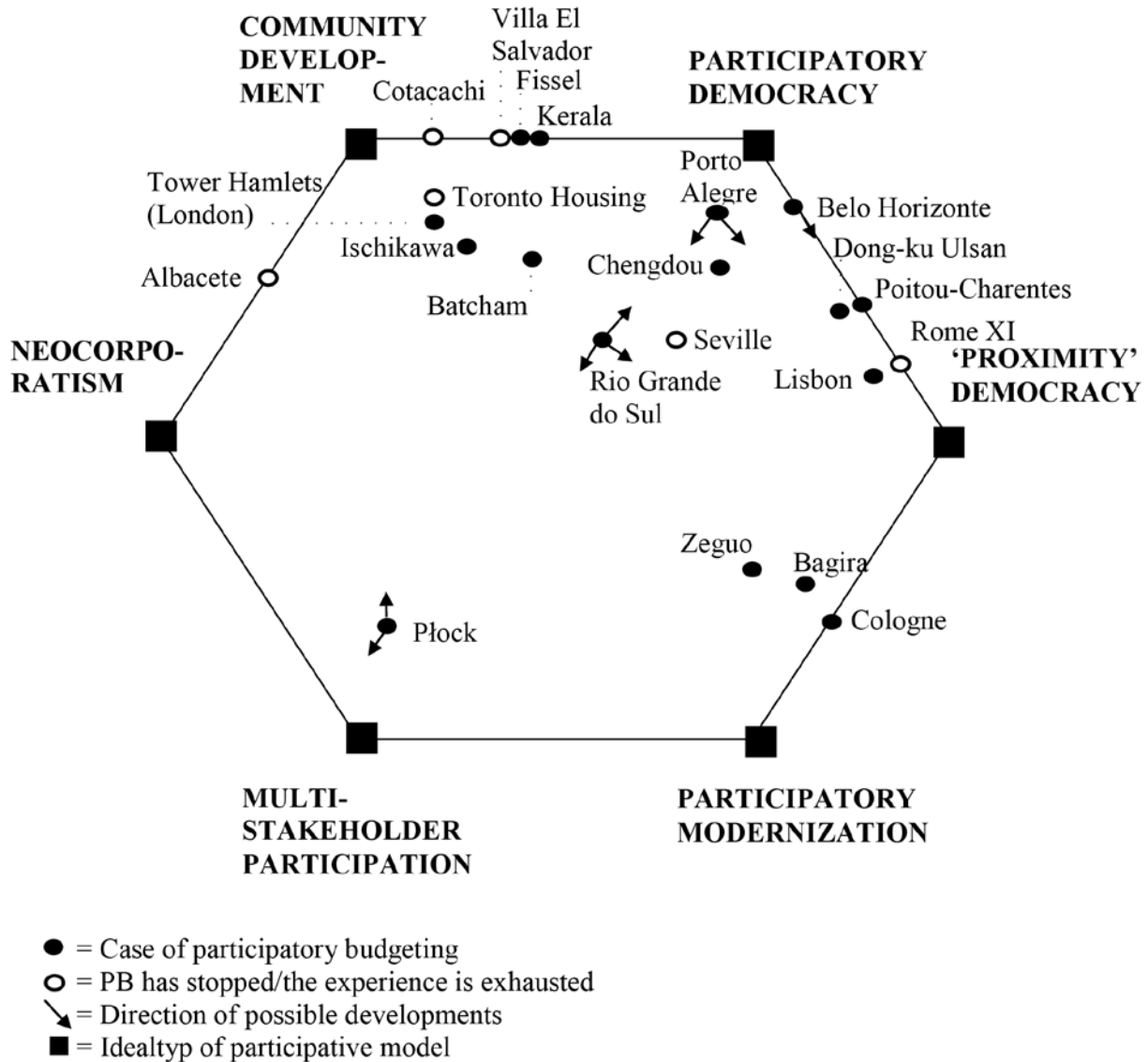
of merely consultative procedures. So we propose to specify its meanings, specifically targeting experiments in which traditional mechanisms of representative government are solidly linked to direct or semi-direct democratic procedures, meaning that non-elected inhabitants (and eventually their delegates, who are invested with a “semi-imperative mandate”) have *de facto* decision-making powers, although *de jure* the final political decision remains in the hands of elected representatives (Romão, 2011). In such a model, inhabitants’ decisions have a “binding” role, which is generally sanctioned through a “political pact” by which local institutions commit to respect the participants’ will. This narrower meaning is in line with the visions of most contemporary social scientists and constitutes an explicit normative frame. Alongside anti-authoritarian socialism, it constitutes the inspiration of our first ideal-type.

When it comes to defining what concrete elements characterize this model, we could list the simultaneous emergence of a “fourth power” (participants have real decision-making power, different from the judiciary, the legislative and the executive) and a “countervailing power” (the autonomous mobilization of civil society within the process leads to the empowerment of the people and the promotion of cooperative conflict resolution). It must be underlined that the model we defined as participatory democracy tends to rely on the participation of the working class. This dynamic can generate a positive equation between conventional and unconventional politics, as the positive action of the two can combine and activate a “virtuous circle” (Ganuzza/Fernandez, 2012).

In this model, participation usually has real repercussions in the relations between civil society and the political system, and in terms of social justice, being that the countervailing power in combination with the political will of the government contributes significantly to an “inversion of priorities” in benefit of the most deprived social groups and socially-polarized neighborhoods. In such a model of PB, the logic and general orientation of distribution is transformed, going beyond the mere involvement of marginal groups in order to list social justice among the guiding-horizons of



**Figure 3: Typology of models of participation in the World  
(with the example of participatory budgets, 2011)**



Source: Giovanni Allegretti, Carsten Herzberg, Anja Röcke and Yves Sintomer.

the experiments (Wampler, 2012). Usually, we notice that these effects are most likely to occur in countries of the Global South where the awareness of socio/spatial polarization is stronger, and it is perceived as one of the real limits to the possibility of harmonious development.

The above description can explain why such a model is usually linked to an idea of citizen participation mainly under a "left-wing flag," often presented as an alternative to neo-liberalism, but also as part of a broader process of social and political reform. Nevertheless, in this model, the modernization of administrative action is not necessarily



considered a pivotal step, which can weaken the final results of the PB experiment, as the cases of Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte in Brazil illustrate. A number of Latin-American participatory budgets exemplify this model, but in other continents, cities such as Seville (Spain) or Dong-ku (South-Korea) used to share some of its characteristics. The Kerala experiments in India fitted to a certain extent (especially in the goals of empowering deprived social groups), but surely it shares with it some dimensions that refer more to the community development model described later. The same can be said for Fissel (Senegal), Villa El Salvador (Peru) and, to a lesser extent, Cotacachi (Ecuador). Beyond PB, this model also reflects other citizen participation processes, such as the constituent assemblies in countries like Bolivia, Ecuador and, to a lesser extent, Venezuela.

Some authors have argued that the participatory democracy model is the most politically and philosophically stimulating one because it combines strong participation with social justice. However, it can work only under specific circumstances, and that other models could therefore be more appropriate in certain contexts. The weakness of participatory democracy is that it requires a strong political will and a mobilized and independent civil society that is ready to cooperate with local governments. The main challenges of this model include efforts to successfully link civic participation to administrative modernization, and avoid the risk of co-opting the mobilized members of civil society into the institutional framework (which would cut them off from their own grassroots).

## 4.2 Proximity Democracy

Proximity, both in terms of geographical closeness and increased communication between citizens, public administrations and local authorities, represents the pivotal element that contributes to defining the second model. It usually takes place in countries whose local governments have some real power, but they are somehow marginal within a political culture marked by a “centralist bias,” so that local public administrations are not necessarily involved in a strong process of modernization. The proximity democracy

model is based on “selective listening”: spaces for citizens’ meetings and deliberation are provided, but in the end, the traditional elected decision-makers cherry-pick citizens’ ideas to select those which are most likely to be transformed into public policies and projects formally approved and inserted in the budgetary documents. Proximity democracy is grounded in informal rules and leaves civil society with only marginal autonomy. In this perspective, it maintains a discretionary power of choice in the hands of representative institutions. It constitutes more of a “deliberative turn” of representative government than an inroad into a new kind of democracy – a deliberative turn that will perhaps not be recognized by the theoreticians as deliberative democracy because of the low quality of deliberation which often characterizes these devices.

As such, proximity democracy is neither a right-nor a left-wing instrument. It is not conceived as an instrument of social justice. Provided the process is often merely consultative and civil society does not have much autonomy, the emergence of a fourth power or of a cooperative countervailing power seems excluded. In fact, many experiments close to proximity democracy are essentially top-down. This model often targets and attracts self-mobilized individual citizens, even if community organizations and NGOs often play a considerable unofficial role. In order to increase the presence of “ordinary” citizens, several experiments use random selection to invite inhabitants to be part of budgetary committees.

A low degree of politicization and a low level of mobilization (particularly of the working class) are common denominators of proximity democracy. Its main strength is the improvement of communication between citizens and policymakers, and the dynamization of the local social fabric. Its weaknesses lie in the essentially arbitrary way in which policymakers “selectively listen” to people’s perspectives. The main challenges of this model are to ensure that participation is effectively coupled with decision-making: as Alves/Allegretti (2012) demonstrated in the case of Portuguese PB experiments, the merely consultative models of PB demonstrate a higher degree of fragility, due to the gap

existing between the expectations they generate and the concrete results they foster; and, in addition, to combine proximity with state modernization beyond neighborhood level and to avoid the so-called NIMBY (“not in my backyard”) effect.

Nowadays, the proximity democracy model seems most common in Europe, often supported by councils and funds (usually reduced amounts of general budgets or their investment slice), and oriented towards participation in “small decisions” about neighborhood equipment and services. The same happens in North America, Australia, Korea and Japan, and in several countries of the Global South. A number of experiments, such as Rome’s XI district (Italy, today renamed VIII District), Lisbon (Portugal), the French region Poitou-Charentes or Dong-Ku Ulsan (Korea), are to be located between proximity and participatory democracy.

### 4.3 Participatory Modernization

New Public Management strategies and culture seem to be at the origin of the third model of participatory modernization, in a context in which the state is trying to modernize itself (in order to become more efficient and legitimate) or seeks to resist the pressures to privatize. PBs belonging to this model tend to be top-down, are less party-oriented and barely go beyond their consultative value. In contrast to proximity democracy, modernization is not focused only on the neighborhood level, but includes also the central administration and its main service providers. In this model, participants are considered clients; hence there is no interest in the integration of marginalized groups or in the launch of social policies. Civil society has only limited autonomy, and there is no space for either a fourth power or a cooperative counter-power. Experiments in line with this model tend to raise the legitimacy of public policies, although politics remains in the background. Those targeted are mainly middle class. The normative frames are based upon participatory versions of New Public Management.

The strength of this third model lies in the close link between the modernization of public administration and

participation, and the fact that cross-bench political consensus can easily be achieved. The dark side is that it makes it difficult to introduce broader issues, particularly related to social justice. The processes close to the participatory modernization model often tend to be purely managerial in nature and to become tied by merely technocratic procedures. For the future, the main challenges to be addressed include how to increase the mobilization and autonomy of civil society, at the same time developing a genuine political dimension in order to provide politics with renewed impetus.

This model has been influential in Germany and to a lesser extent in other countries of Northern Europe. It has influenced other participatory tools than PB, such as consumer charters, score cards, panels and inquiries, as well as hotlines. Neighborhood councils and neighborhood management can become part of this. Countries outside Europe have also taken advantage of this approach, for example China. All around the world, many municipal authorities of very different political affiliations have introduced PB procedures that reflect this model. Cases such as Cascais – today the best example of ongoing PB in the Iberian peninsula – invest a lot in participatory modernization. Experiments such as Bagira (one of the three municipalities of Bukavu, capital of South Kivu in Congo RDC) but also Zeguo (China) or Cologne (Germany), are in between participatory modernization and proximity democracy.

#### Box 2:

#### Participatory modernization: the case of Hilden (Germany)

Hilden (Germany): an interesting example of PB aimed at promoting participatory modernization.

The industrial town of Hilden (population 57,000) in the District of Mettmann is one of the few examples in Germany in which the participatory budget can be considered – beyond party affiliations – an established and permanent heritage of the city, which clearly marks the local political culture. It was introduced in 2001 within the scope of the “municipal participatory budget” pilot project of the federal state of North-Rhine Westphalia.

The participatory budget is designed first and foremost to make the financial situation of the town and the work of the municipality more transparent to citizens. To this end, a brochure containing the key information is prepared annually. At the center of the participatory process is a citizens' forum, to which inhabitants are invited by random selection. Beyond that, any interested citizen can take part. The forum comprises an evening event at which the mayor and the treasurer first of all provide an overview of the financial situation of the municipality. Participants can put any questions they may have to the municipal staff members present, and can write down any suggested improvements on the cards provided and leave them in the collection box. At this time, the proposals are not prioritized, but each citizen is sent a personal reply indicating whether his or her suggestion will be implemented, and if so, when. The proposals implemented are basically minor repair measures to public facilities (buildings, roads and so on), or minor adjustments to services (opening hours, library services and so on). In Hilden, many interesting tools for making the process and communication of data more attractive have been created during this 12 years of experimentation. Among them, the table-game "Hildopoli" emerged, which allowed school-children to take part in simulations and discussions on the municipal budget with their families. In the meantime, in the face of increasing municipal debt, Hilden switched to a budget cut-oriented procedure. In 2012, citizens were invited to comment on a budget cut strategy elaborated by external experts. Meanwhile, with face meetings seemingly abolished, citizens could use the Internet to comment on the 43 recommendations of the experts, which sought to save 7.5 million euros in total.

#### 4.4 Multi-stakeholder Participation

The fourth model, "multi-stakeholder participation", is based mainly on the idea that citizens who get involved in PB are just part of the broader coalition of actors which animates the discussion on the budget, together with private enterprises, NGOs and local government. In this model, local politics appear to have only limited room for maneuver, compared

with economic forces and where the donors call the tune. Although participatory procedures may well have decision-making powers, they remain caught in a top-down approach that does not enable a cooperative countervailing power nor a fourth power to emerge. PBs of this type represent an enlargement of governance mechanisms (whereby private economic interests gain an institutional influence in the decision-making process). In the participatory public-private partnership, civil society is weak and has little autonomy, even if the rules for decision-making are clearly defined. The majority of participants in PBs belong to the middle class, while policies seem to have incorporated the constraints of neoliberal globalization. International organizations such as the World Bank or the United Nations have already played an important role in its dissemination.

Its main strength is the linkage between the main organized structures of society, which facilitates social consensus around certain aspects of public policies. The "multi-stakeholder model" includes private companies that are fundamental to local development but which tend in other models to remain outside the participative process. However, it is characterized by asymmetrical relationships of power and non-organized citizens are excluded. This is why this model is to be diametrically opposed to participatory democracy. The main challenges are linking participation and modernization, going beyond a simple cherry-picking approach and successfully discussing the most controversial matters, and balancing the weight of the various stakeholders involved in the process. It will also be important for the future to carefully imagine how to counterbalance the pressure to transform NGOs and associations into quasi-governmental organizations or semi-commercial entities.

The majority of experiments related to this model have taken place in Eastern Europe, for example, the case of Plock (Poland), but it has considerable influence especially in the Anglo-Saxon world. Some African PBs also partly fit this model, especially when PB is conceived as a driver of decentralization and external actors play an important role in funding the experiment, as in some experiments in Madagascar.

## 4.5 Neo-corporatism

It is possible to define a “neo-corporatist” model through the role that local government plays by surrounding itself with organized groups (mainly NGOs, trade unions and professionals’ associations), social groups (the elderly, immigrant groups and so on) and various local institutions/agencies. In the PBs belonging to this model, government aims to establish a broad consultation with “those who matter” and tries to achieve social consensus through the mediation of interests, values and demands for recognition by the various factions in society. In this model, the political leanings of local governments vary, as do the dynamics of modernization of the public administration. Even if the participatory rules may be formalized, the quality of deliberation remains variable, and local neo-corporatist processes are essentially consultative. Even though civil society does play a considerable role in them, its procedural independence is fairly limited, and they are essentially top-down processes. This is why the emergence of a cooperative countervailing power – or of a fourth power – is unlikely to occur. The outcomes are more linked to a strengthening of traditional participation than to a virtuous circle of dialogue between conventional and non-conventional participation. At national level, the classic neo-corporatist approach particularly exists for managing the health care system or the Socio-Economic Councils. They may be highly formalized, have real decision-making authority and confer decision-making power to the social partners.

The “neo-corporatist” model usually tends to be dominant in Local Agenda 21 processes (where different local stakeholders meet to discuss common topics but have no power to realize their proposals), or in participatory strategic plans (where governments invite different groups to round table talks). In the context of PB, this model has had only limited influence, most notably in Spain. International organizations have often played a considerable role in disseminating this model.

## 4.6 Community Development

The existence of a phase of project implementation by local communities rather than by civil servants represents the main characteristic of the last model. It tends to dissociate itself from municipal politics and is a strong participatory process driven as much by a bottom-up dynamic as by a top-down one. In this approach, the margins for representative politics to intervene in the transformation of priorities are usually fairly limited. In this situation, the emergence of fourth institutional and cooperative countervailing powers is more likely than in most other models. The fact that the majority of PBs inspired to community development are not closely linked to local institutions distinguishes this model from participatory democracy. Usually, the influence of Porto Alegre is blended with older community traditions. Many PBs inspired by the community development model have clear procedural rules and a relatively high quality of deliberation. The most active participants tend to be the upper fraction of the working class, involved in running the community associations. In this model, the role of NGOs is often decisive, especially when they advocate the rights of disadvantaged or marginalized groups. In a configuration such as this, the partial substitution of non-conventional participation linked to community activities for conventional participation (party membership and voting in elections) is fairly likely. The political inclination of local governments is not a decisive factor for this model of PB, whose normative frames refer to empowerment, to Saul Alinsky’s community organizing, but also to guild socialism, left liberalism, Paulo Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed and sometimes the traditions of local communities, particularly of indigenous ones (as the Andean “minga” tradition shows).

In the field of PB, in the Global North, this model has developed mainly in the Anglo-Saxon world, for instance in Canada (with the Toronto Housing Community or the Guelph examples), or in the United Kingdom, where it predominates (the experiment of Tower Hamlets, London, can be seen as emblematic), but other countries, such as Japan, have also been developing this approach. This model is widespread in the Global South, with cases such

as the rural villages of Fissel or Gnagnao (department of M'bour, Senegal) or work with the poor in suburban metropolitan communities as Villa El Salvador (Peru). Other forms of community development have emerged and have become one of the most widespread instruments of citizen participation, from the Community Development Corporations in the United States to various forms of community organizing, both in the North and in the Global South, and the neighborhood councils in Venezuela.

The advantages of this model lie in being able to experiment in places where local governments are often weak and where, conversely, civil society has genuine independence and a real tradition of organizing. The main weakness lies in the fact that it is difficult to build an overall vision of the town when concentrating energies in discussing small local investments; also to be considered a weakness are the tenuous links between participation, modernization of the public administration and institutional politics. The challenges that such a model faces include trying to keep the management of community organizations free from managerial influence and to stop them from turning into "para-public bodies" producing services for public local institutions; moreover, processes of this type often have difficulty looking beyond the micro-local level and contributing to the transformation of institutional politics.

### **Box 3:**

#### **Leith (Great Britain): a pilot for Edinburgh PB?**

Bradford, a post-industrial city in West Yorkshire (with a population of 523,000) was one of the first places in the United Kingdom to adopt PB within the framework of the Neighborhood Renewal Program (NRP), a national strategy aiming at the social, economic and political development of the poorest areas in the country.

Many of the new experiments arose thanks to the support and careful networking strategy provided by the NGO "the PB Unit," as in the case of Leith, Edinburgh's port district. Here, in 2010, the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership (LNP, one of the 12 umbrella organizations that operate in the Scottish capital city, covering a population of around

43,850 in the wards of Leith and Leith Walk) decided – in collaboration with the local and central Services for Communities of Edinburgh Council – to explore "the use of PB approach as a way to make local democracy relevant to community interests."

The partnership is made up of ward councilors, community council representatives, police, fire service, NHS Lothian, voluntary organizations, Forth Ports and the Port of Leith Housing Association. The experiment was called "Leith Decides" and used 35 percent of the 2010/11 Community Grants Fund (around £16,600). It consisted in some events (held from November 2010 to February 2012) that allowed local people to make decisions on Community Grants Awards of up to £1,000 from a choice of projects. The City of Edinburgh Council staff supported a Steering Group of citizen volunteers and LNP members in planning and publicizing the events through local radio, local press and community newsletters, websites, flyers, posters, information in libraries, a Facebook page (which increased its hits by 63 percent in the second year) and advertising hoardings.

From the first to the second year the number of participants doubled, exceeding targets and showing a 75 percent rate of high satisfaction. Following the success of the first-year pilot, the share of the 2011/12 Community Grants Fund allocated through "Leith decides" was increased to 40 percent. The Preference Voting method was used, asking voting participants to score every project out of five; ballot sheets which did not fulfill this requirement were not counted. The targets for the 2012/13 financial year include: (a) setting up performance measures to ensure that voting participants are representative of the community profile; (b) investigating greater use of electronic communication; (c) the use of online and postal voting, particularly for excluded groups; (d) access to information and voting through schools and libraries. Following the Leith experiment's success, other districts are discussing the start-up of similar processes in 2013, and there is a debate with Edinburgh City Hall to engage the entire municipality in PB in the future.

**Table 1. Key characteristics of the six models of citizen participation**

	Participatory democracy	Proximity democracy	Participatory modernization	Multi-stakeholder participation	Neo-corporatism	Community development
<b>1. Context</b>						
Relationship between state, market and third sector	Central role of state	Central role of state	Central role of state	Hegemony of the market	Central role of the state	Hegemony of the market, assertiveness of the third sector
Political leaning of local government	Left-wing	Variable	Variable	Variable (but no radical left)	Variable	Variable
<b>2. Frames and goals</b>						
Normative frames	Participatory democracy, post-authoritarian socialism	Deliberation-oriented version of republicanism, deliberative democracy	Participatory version of New Public Management	Participatory governance	Neo-corporatism, participatory governance	Empowerment, community organizing, pedagogy of the oppressed, libertarian traditions, left-wing liberalism
Social goals	Social justice, inversion of priorities	Renewal of social relationships, solidarity without redistributive policies	Social peace, no re-distributive objectives	Social capital reinforced, economic growth, increased redistributive goals	Consensus and social cohesion	Empowerment of subaltern groups, affirmative action, no overall redistributive policy
<b>3. Procedures</b>						
Rules, quality of deliberation	Clearly defined rules, good quality deliberation	Informal rules, deliberative quality weak or average	Rules may be clear, weak deliberative quality	Clearly defined rules, average to good deliberative quality	Rules may be clear, variable deliberative quality	Rules may be clear, average to high deliberative quality
Procedural independence of civil society	Strong	Weak	Weak	Weak	Variable	Strong
Fourth power	Yes	No	No	No	No (at local level)	Yes

<b>4. Collective action</b>						
Weight of civil society in process	Strong	Weak	Weak	Weak	Strong	Fairly strong
Top-down vs. bottom-up	Top-down and bottom-up	Top-down	Top-down	Top-down	Top-down	Top-down and bottom-up
Consensus vs. cooperative conflict resolution; countervailing power	Cooperative conflict resolution Countervailing power	Consensus No countervailing power	Consensus No countervailing power	Consensus No countervailing power	Consensus No countervailing power	Cooperative resolution of conflicts Countervailing power
<b>5. Others</b>						
Link between conventional and participatory politics	Combination	Instrumental use of participation	Weak (participation is a management tool)	Weak (participation is a management tool)	Strengthening of conventional participation	Substitution (participation develops outside conventional politics)
Strengths, weaknesses, challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Combining strong participation with social justice</li> <li>– Very specific conditions</li> <li>– Linking participation to modernization; avoiding risk of co-opting mobilized citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improved communication between policy-makers and citizens</li> <li>– Selective listening</li> <li>– Combining participation with formal decision-making process; and with state modernization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Linking participation with modernization; broad political consensus</li> <li>– Low level of politicization</li> <li>– To increase participation and autonomy of civil society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Inclusion of private corporations</li> <li>– Dominance of private interests</li> <li>– Balancing the weight of stake-holders; autonomy of NGOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Creation of social consensus</li> <li>– Exclusion of non-organized citizens; asymmetric power relations</li> <li>– Linking participation with modernization; autonomy of civil society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fits in contexts with weak local governments and strong community tradition</li> <li>– No overall vision of the town</li> <li>– Limiting Managerial influence; going beyond the micro-local level</li> </ul>
Countries	PB: Latin America, Spain, South Korea	PB: Europe, North-America, Korea, Japan, countries of Global South	PB: Germany, Northern Europe, China	PB: Eastern Europe, Africa	PB: Limited	PB: Anglo-Saxon countries, Japan, Global South

## 5. Five Continents

Having looked at participatory budgets around the world, we will now focus in greater depth on individual continents. In all cases we will say something about the overall conditions under which participatory budgets arose. We will possibly identify the key actors, the networks and their objectives. And, of course wherever possible, information will be provided on the effects of PB. We also considered it important to describe concrete experiments and situations that provide practical insights. Observations of this kind, and descriptions of methods, will often be presented in boxes, as we did in the previous section on the different models and typologies of PB.

We will begin with a report on Latin America, because that is where PB first began. The next chapter focuses on Europe and North America. Here we can speak of a “return of the caravels”, because PB represents one example of what the industrialized countries in the global North can learn from the South in terms of innovation of public policies and innovative forms of decision-making. PB now also exists in Africa and in Asia (and to a much smaller extent in Oceania), parts of the world to which two chapters are devoted. The conclusion will deal in greater depth with the issue of mutual learning and with more prospective issues.



# I. Transforming Politics, Transforming Society? Participatory Budgeting in Latin America

Latin America is by far the most important continent for PB. The mechanism was invented there in the 1980s; in 2012, almost 40 percent of the participatory budgets existing in the world were still situated there and an even larger share of the most dynamic experiments are Latin American. Nearly everywhere, in this part of the world, the influence of Porto Alegre has been decisive, even though the original methodology has been adapted to local contexts and has sometimes been merged with other methodologies. Furthermore, as the idea of PB has spread throughout the region and has been advocated by new actors such as the World Bank (which are very different from the leftist networks that first propagated it), the social and political logics that the mechanism fosters have become differentiated. Overall, the present panorama is no less manifold than in other parts of the world, as we will see later.

We will see first of all how PB was conceived in Porto Alegre, before looking more closely at its spread across the rest of Brazil and to other Latin American countries, paying particular attention to the networks involved in the process. Then we will analyze how the original mechanism has been hybridized with various methodologies, and conclude by surveying the results and the unfolding dynamics. How can we explain the apparent success of PB? Do current practices really correspond to the ideals that originally led to its emergence? What are the present trends of PB in Latin America?

## 1. Once Upon a Time in Porto Alegre

When PB emerged in Brazil, the context was peculiar. In a country with one of the widest income gaps in the world, the 1980s were marked by the transition from dictatorship to democracy. For nearly two decades, the huge social movements that shook Brazil had been pressing for political and social changes. The new constitution adopted in 1988 was very progressive and open to citizen participation, but the real functioning of the political system remained characterized by corruption and clientelism.

The city of Porto Alegre, capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul (population 1.3 million in the early 1990s), had always been diffident towards the central government, and the standard of living was above average for Brazilian cities. Last but not least, it was one of the places where social movements, and especially urban movements, had been strongest in Brazil (Baierle, 2007; Avritzer, 2002). The city was also a stronghold of the Workers' Party (PT), which was even more left-wing there than in the rest of Brazil.

After some previous experiments in smaller cities (Bernardo de Souza, 2004), PB crystallized in Porto Alegre due to a "window of opportunity" which opened in the aftermath of the electoral victory of the Workers' Party in 1988 (Abers, 2000). It was not only the new left-wing local government that drove the new participatory process. Civil society, and in particular community associations, also demanded stronger co-decision-making rights. The invention of PB was, therefore, the outcome of a conjunction of top-down and bottom-up processes. The local "presidential system" that exists in Brazil provided a strong incentive. The left-wing city executive directly elected by the citizenry did not have the necessary majority in the separately elected legislative chamber and needed, therefore, to gain a foothold in society. The PB mechanism was a pragmatic invention, and not the mere application of an intellectual or ideological design. By 1993, it had already assumed its most salient features – and by the time the PT lost the office of mayor to the opposition in 2004 after 16 years in power, PB had been integrated to such an extent that the new government did not dare to abolish the procedure, even though it has progressively reduced its scope.

Three goals have been assigned to PB since its birth in 1989. The first was political. The idea was to "democratize democracy" through grassroots participation and mobilization of the poor, who had been excluded and marginalized by the Brazilian political system, and by waging a struggle against clientelism. The second was social. The aim was to bring about a reversal of priorities in favor of the disadvantaged, and especially those living in the suburbs, who had been almost forgotten in the course of the urban development

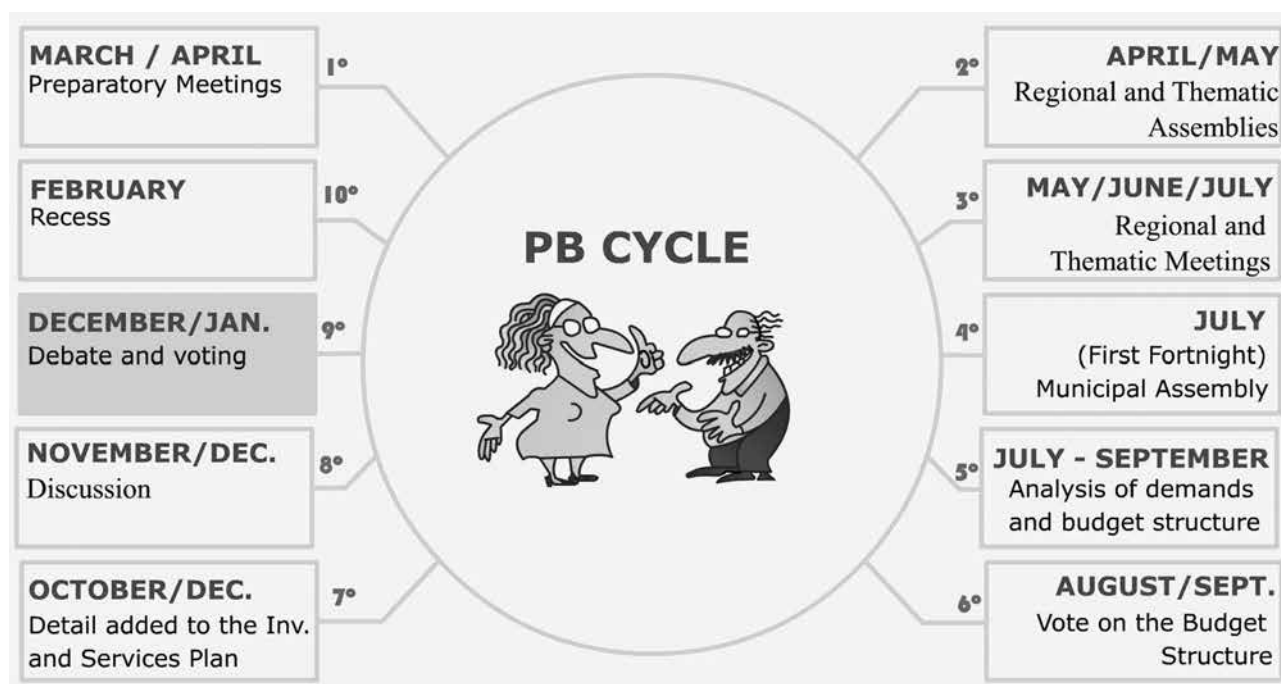
process. The third goal appeared only when the hopes of some PT leaders for a rapid revolution vanished. It was supposed to help establish good governance that would eradicate corruption and increase the efficiency of public policies (Fedozzi, 1999; Gret/Sintomer, 2004).

The mechanism conceived in Porto Alegre is highly complex and a real institutional innovation. The basic idea was to involve non-elected citizens in the allocation of public money, and provide them with direct decision-making power at the grassroots level, power of co-decision-making at the city level and a capacity for control at all levels. The participatory pyramid has three levels: assemblies open to all inhabitants in neighborhoods, a participatory forum of delegates in the districts and a general participatory council at the city level. In addition to the meetings that take place on a territorial basis, specific assemblies focus on thematic topics (such as housing, urban infrastructure, healthcare, economic development, environmental issues, education, youth, culture and sport). The aim of the assemblies is to discuss priorities and to elect delegates who follow up on the development

of suggestions. Any individual who wants to participate in public meetings can do so. Associations have no privileges, even though they play a key role in organizing and mobilizing citizenry. It also follows that they remain independent of the city executive, which is their main partner. The legislative local power (the City Council), although it has the legal power to accept or reject the municipal budget, tends to play a marginal role in the mechanism. Rules – annually revised with the participants – established that delegates be tightly controlled by the grassroots, that they can be removed, have a one-year mandate, and their re-election is limited (some of these features, conceived to greatly reduce their autonomy and make them very different from conventional elected representatives, have been relaxed in recent years). At the city level, the PB council convenes once a week for two hours. Its duty is to ensure that the priorities of the districts are taken up in the budget to the largest extent possible.

PB in Porto Alegre is not limited to one particular time of the year and is based on a one-year cycle that runs from February to December, as presented below.

**Figure 4: PB cycle of Porto Alegre**



Source: ONG Cidade, <http://www.ongcidade.org/site/php/comum/capa.php>

Most of the discussions concern annual public investment, even though other topics are dealt with, such as city revenues and structural expenses, such as the salaries of public servants and recruiting processes for new employees and collaborators. Long-term urban and economic development is beyond the reach of PB, which plays a very secondary role in this process, although some “bridges” have been launched since the last Master Plan approved in 1999 in order to better coordinate its management and PB in amid-to long-term perspective.

Last but not least, as well as reviewing the technical feasibility of the public works proposed by citizens, the funds which are available for each of the investment areas are distributed among the districts on the basis of (a) the local list of priorities with the majority “one person, one vote” principle; (b) the number of residents; and (c) the quality of the infrastructure or the services available, with an allocation formula that gives more weight (through a coefficient that can be revised year by year) to those districts that have less (Genro/De Souza, 1997; Fedozzi, 2000; Herzberg, 2001; Baiocchi, 2005). The embodiment of a principle of social justice in such a criterion has been one of the most original achievements of the experiment.

**Table 2: Criteria for allocation of capital investments in Porto Alegre**

Regional Thematic Priority

Relative Weight 5	
First Priority	Grade 4
Second Priority	Grade 3
Third Priority	Grade 2
Fourth Priority	Grade 1
Relative weight 2	
Above 90,001 inhabitants	Grade 4
From 45,001 to 90,000 inhabitants	Grade 3
From 25,001 to 45,000 inhabitants	Grade 2
Up to 25,000 inhabitants	Grade 1
Relative weight 4	
From 76 to 100%	Grade 4
From 51 to 75.99 %	Grade 3
From 15 to 50.99 %	Grade 2
From 0.01 to 14.99 %	Grade 1

Source: Booklet from the municipality of Porto Alegre, 2005.

Overall, even though some serious challenges have had to be faced and have not been completely overcome, the results of Porto Alegre PB have been surprisingly positive, according to the numerous researchers who have studied it. First of all, participation increased until 2002. The social characteristics of those who participate are even more striking: lower income people tend to be more involved than others, women became a majority in the assemblies after a few years, and young people are very active. Even though delegates tend to be somewhat more educated, male and older, they are fairly representative of Porto Alegre’s citizenry (Fedozzi, 2007; OBSERVAPOA, 2013).

PB gives the floor to those who had always been outsiders in the political system. It has led to a real empowerment of civil society and, most notably, of the working class (Baierle, 2007). More and more citizens have joined initiatives and

associations in order to successfully present their demands in the PB process. Clientelistic structures have largely been overcome and the relationship between the political system and civil society has much improved (Avritzer, 2012a; 2012b; 2002).

In addition, PB has led to a reorientation of public investments (or at least of those that have been discussed in this process: Mororo, 2009) towards the most disadvantaged districts: primary health care was set up in the living areas of the poor, the number of schools and nursery schools was extended, a lot of streets in the slums have been asphalted and most of households now have access to water supply and sanitation. This has come about because the process has been invested in, mainly by the working class, and because it has contributed to an improvement of public services and infrastructures.

Another key issue is that the process has led to better government. Corruption, which was not very high in Porto Alegre, has been made more difficult. PB has also been an incentive to public administration reform: a strong planning office has been created in order to facilitate discussion with the participatory council, there has been more cooperation between administrations, new budgeting methods focusing on products have been introduced, and the relationship between the administration and citizens has improved (Fedozzi, 1999, 2000). The main weakness at that level is that the focus on annual investments has tended to make the long-term perspective a byproduct. The risk is that decisions taken in PB will generate long-term expenses (maintenance and salaries) that are difficult to sustain (World Bank, 2008). Also, funds are sometimes lacking for other planning projects that are not part of the participatory budget (Allegretti, 2003).

## 2. Dissemination within Brazil

Whatever the challenges and the limits of Porto Alegre PB may be, it has been taken as a model to copy or to adapt in many places. This outcome was not self-evident even in Brazil, because the Workers' Party (PT) in the Rio Grande do Sul was seen as very leftist even by other elements within the national PT, and because this party was not in power in many municipalities in the 1990s.

However, progress has been impressive: there were fewer than 40 experiments claiming the PB label in 1993–1997; around 100 in 1997–2000; nearly 200 in 2001–2004; and 255–330 at the end of the 2000s (at least according to “local” criteria applied by studies that more or less coincide with our own definition).

In the early 2000s, only around half of the experiments were led by PT mayors (de Grazia/Torres Ribeiro, 2003). The development of PB in large cities has been even more remarkable: in 2001–2004, one-third of the cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants and nearly 60 percent of those with more than 1 million inhabitants were involved; 58 percent of the population living in cities with one million or more inhabitants were living in a place where the local government had decided to implement PB (Marquetti, 2005). In addition to Porto Alegre, some of the biggest Brazilian cities were involved: São Paulo (population 11 million), Belo Horizonte (population 3.1 million), Recife (population 1.4 million) and Belem (population 1.25 million) – however, some important setbacks occurred in these cities in the second half of the decade.

PB was also expanding in smaller towns in more rural areas, especially in some parts of the Rio Grande do Sul, and on the periphery of major conurbations such as Santo André (population 673,000), Guarulhos (population 1,300,000), or Campinas (population nearly 1 million), three cities near São Paulo. São Paulo was the state in which the number of experiments was the highest. At that time the South and the South-East, which is to say the most developed part of the country, was where most people were being won over

by the idea. In the North and North East, the experiment started to mushroom especially from 2004 onwards. In that area, the preconditions needed to establish successful PB had to be put in place, especially in terms of financial accountability, promotion of coordination among services and combating deeply rooted patterns of clientelism and “caciquism.”

Of particular importance was the introduction of PB at the state level in the Rio Grande do Sul after the PT’s electoral victory in 1998. The process had only a short life, because it was interrupted when the PT was defeated in 2002. It tended to reproduce on another level the methodology invented in Porto Alegre, which caused some problems due to the difficulty of maintaining efficient grassroots control at this level and the fact that state PB tended to by-pass municipal governments. In 2011, after the electoral victory of Tarso Genro (who had twice been mayor of Porto Alegre and as a national Minister had been the creator of the Social Economic Council) the idea of PB was reintroduced in Rio Grande do Sul, taking a new shape.

#### **Box 4:**

##### **The system of citizen participation in Rio Grande do Sul**

One of the priorities of Governor Tarso Genro and his coalition (elected at the end of 2010) was to create a state system of Citizen Participation that could evaluate and integrate the multiform tools created in the past 20 years. Unlike in 1998–2002 (under Governor Olivio Dutra), PB does not appear to be the main device for participation, even though it enjoys significant participation. A number of other instruments have been created, such as the Digital Cabinet, which in 2013 received several international awards.

The system of coordination is fragile, but the Multi-annual Plan (PPA) is widely supposed to be the center of a permanent dialogue between government and society. Thus a public discussion on the contents of the PPA 2012–2015 started in March 2011, leading to a set of 1,626 “demonstrations of interest”. Since 2011 other Brazilian States

(such as Bahia and Espirito Santo) have adopted a similar methodology. During the PB process, citizens’ delegates were also elected to participate in the PPA Board (a council with 76 members).

The year 2004 represented a significant turning point in the history of PB in Brazil. The PT lost some important cities, such as Porto Alegre itself, Sao Paulo, Belem in the North-East and Caxias do Sul (population 300,000) in the Rio Grande do Sul. Some of them, like these last three, decided to discontinue PB or to substitute it with a lighter consultative process with a different name (as in Caxias). In other places, such as Porto Alegre, the new political leadership decided to continue with it. In addition, the left won a lot of other towns and developed PB in new places, especially in the North-East, a region that created a PB network that includes a number of very radical and dynamic experiments, such as Fortaleza (population 2.4 million) and Recife. Until 2010 the number of experiments rose only very moderately, reaching around 300 experiments in the whole Brazil. Some of the newly-conquered cities which started PB (for example, Canoas, a city of 325,000 inhabitants in the metropolitan area of Porto Alegre) developed very interesting and innovative models, which tried to correct some of the limitations that emerged in previous experiments and also to coordinate PB with the other 10 participatory processes being implemented at the municipal and supra-municipal levels. Overtime, the number of inhabitants living in a city with PB has decreased, especially due to the discontinuation of the process in Sao Paulo, which has nearly 11 million residents.

But if we take into account the number of experiments, PB has increased. Also, PB has gradually become a relatively stable feature of many progressive and modern local administrations in the country, far beyond the influence of any single party. However, developments in the 2012 municipal elections had led to more changes regarding PB scenarios in Brazil. It is important to note that major infrastructural programs undertaken by central government since 2004 have contributed to weakening and marginalizing PB: they are extensive but completely top-down and benefit

municipalities through closed channels that do not engage in dialogue with local societies (Allegretti, 2013).

We are unsure, at the moment, of the future of the award-winning experiments in Recife and Fortaleza after their PT administrations lost elections in October 2012. Meanwhile, in 2007 the Brazilian Network of Participatory Budgeting was created, in order to support mutual exchange among the 62 member cities, and with the ambition of attracting new attention and new members. In 2013, Canoas substituted Guarulhos as coordinator of the Network and in 2014 will host the annual meeting of the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy.

### 3. Latin America Adopts Participatory Budgeting Continent-wide

Beyond Brazil, this instrument had won over many people in Latin America by the turn of the millennium. It became one of the most popular instruments of citizen participation in the whole subcontinent: between 618 and 1,130 cities (out of 16,000) have introduced PB, some of them among the most important in this part of the world. This geographical dissemination involves nearly all regions of Latin America and – to a lesser extent – Central America. However, the higher number of PB projects in this region needs to be examined carefully, because most experiments are concentrated in the Dominican Republic, Peru and Brazil.

PB has started to spread to the Southern Cone, especially at the beginning of the millennium. Here, between 40 and 60 cities have already implemented it, with different methodologies and results. PB first inspired Brazil's neighbors, Uruguay and Argentina, where important experiments soon began in some major cities, such as Montevideo (Uruguay's capital, which has more than 1.325 million inhabitants and has been governed by the left-wing Frente Amplio since 1990), Rosario and La Plata (two cities in Argentina, with populations of 1.2 million and 600,000, respectively), and Paysandú (population 85,000), which is probably the most famous experiment in Uruguay. It has influenced PB

movements in other cities (notably Buenos Aires, where it has been experienced only in some districts, and for short periods). In 2010, an interesting PB started in Corrientes (Argentina), a city of 380,000 inhabitants, and a solid exchange network (holding an annual meeting) was setup in the country.

Some years later, PB was introduced in Paraguay and Chile, where fewer and smaller cities are involved. In Chile, it is estimated that around 22 municipalities (out of 33 that have applied a form of PB to date) are still experimenting. Among them La Serena (190,000 inhabitants), Quillota (76,000), Buin (63,500) and Lautaro (35,000) are the best known. According to Chile's Forum for PB, by 2010, 4.7 percent of the population had had access to PB in their locality. The trend is rising, especially since the newly elected mayor of the municipality of Santiago de Chile, Carolina Toha Morales, expressed in her "programmatic commitment" (December 2012) her willingness to introduce PB in the Chilean capital (5.5 million inhabitants) for the next four years (2013–2016).

In Peru, some early experiments began at the end of the 1990s, such as in Villa El Salvador (population 350,000), a "slum town" located in Lima's suburbs, or in the small port town of Ilo (population 63,000), where several participatory planning experiments started at the end of the 1990s. National laws introduced in 2002–2003 (and reformed in the following decade) made PB compulsory, both at the regional and municipal levels. Formally, all regions and local governments have set up a participatory budget, but implementation is far from satisfactory in all cases and there are many "fake" experiments. Due to the lack of independence and methodologically coherent research, it is very difficult to estimate the numbers of "real" experiments; there are probably between 150 and 300 PBs that satisfy the criteria that we have proposed in order to enable international comparison – in other words, possibly more than in Brazil.



**Box 5:****When PB is mandatory: Peru one decade later**

The story of PB in Peru is particularly interesting because PB is compulsory at all subnational levels of government. This ambitious experiment is closely linked to a democratization process that was originated in 2000 by the fall of Alberto Fujimori's authoritarian and corrupt regime.

As a consequence of several unexpected positive outcomes underlined by the World Bank Report (2008), in 2009 the Peruvian government reformed the law to reduce the eight steps originally envisaged. The new Law states that subnational levels have to follow four steps: (a) preparation, which includes registering and training participating social/administrative agents; (b) concertation, which gets different actors involved in development planning and prioritizing the "themes" of projects; (c) coordination between the different levels of government; and (d) formalization of investment projects, which consist of a meeting at which all participating agents are given a vote on the final project list.

The main differences between cities and regions include the interpretation of "participating agent," intended to be a mixture of civil society organizations, members of the Regional or Local Coordination Council and government officials. Between the "individual model," which opens up space for individual citizens to participate, and the "corporate model," in which participants represent civil society organizations (World Bank 2008), the majority of Peruvian cases chose the second (McNulty, 2011, 2012), in continuity with the tradition of participatory planning.

The 2010 instructions state that all projects must be linked to development plans and have a significant impact, so that regional projects should cost at least 1 million USD and benefit at least two provinces and 5 percent of the population. The World Bank study (2010: 8) estimated that in 2007 36 percent of subnational budgets (around 393 million US dollars) were debated in the participatory budget process.

The role of the Ministry proved important in reducing the number of "fake experiments" which would no longer

benefit from state transfers. In such a framework, perceptions of PB participants and national politicians' support for the process are growing (McNulty, 2012) and it is possible to imagine that "truly participatory" processes (Remy, 2011) could progressively increase in number and quality in the coming years.

In other South American countries, the development of PB has been less impressive (the numbers, which are not very accurate, probably varied between 25 and 40 in 2012, a regression in comparison with seven years earlier).

In Bolivia, a national Law on Popular Participation was adopted in 1994, together with other decentralization reforms, but its implementation varies widely from one place to another, and the growth of PB experiments in the 327 municipalities seems to have been eclipsed by the social uprising that led to the election of Evo Morales to the Presidency and by the development of other participatory processes - the Constituent Assembly, 2006-2007, being only the most important one (Santos, 2012).

In Ecuador, PB was adopted at the beginning of the millennium by several indigenous towns (such as Cotacachi, population 37,000), and by municipalities with a strong indigenous component (such as Cuenca, population 420,000). In both cases the commitment to PB has waned since 2010, although the new Constitution commits municipalities to higher degrees of participation. In many cases, electoral setbacks have led to the process being interrupted, and the left-wing President Correa elected in 2006 is not keen on independent civic participation.

In Colombia, the experiments started later, but are benefiting from a very active national network of exchanges between municipalities created in 2008. A number of towns and cities, many of them located in zones of conflict, have begun some kind of participatory process that includes a budgeting dimension. The oldest is Pasto (population 500,000), in the southern region of Nariño, whose experiment had strong links with the indigenous ancestral tradition of mutual-help (Allegratti, 2007). The

process started around 2004 and bypassed political party affiliations. Today, the most visible experiments, related to the discussion of priorities of the Strategic Master Plan, are in the country's largest cities, such as Medellin (around 2,230,000 inhabitants, with strong participation by young people and women), and Bogota (population of 7.5 million, which started in 2006 with the Progressive Party and focuses on high schools). In both cases formal rules have been laid down by municipal by-laws. In Colombia, citizen participation has been pushed by the National Constitution, which makes it a key principle of the democratic state and a fundamental right. PB has been specifically quoted as a pivotal tool both by the National Development Plan and the recent transformation of the municipal legal framework.

In Venezuela, some experiments were launched in the early 1990s (for example, in Caroní, population 705,400 in the Bolivar Region). Others followed in the early 2000s, thanks to the favorable framework created by the 1999 Constitution. The most famous and established is that of Barquisimeto (in Iribarren, population of 1,432,000), which was extended in 2012 to Lara State. Despite such experiments, PB is not particularly important in this country, and other forms of citizen participation developed impressively under the Chavez government: the "communal councils" and the "communes," which share some similarities with PB.

#### **Box 6:**

##### **Communal councils and communes: a singular mechanism of citizen participation in Venezuela**

Under Hugo Chavez's Presidency, a new form of participation was invented in Venezuela. At the neighborhood level, residents can meet and elect delegates in order to propose and realize community projects. Decisions are taken either by the general assembly of the community and/or by the participatory council. The *consejos comunales* receive money directly from various offices of the central government or public companies. Local governments may also give them funding, but this does not often happen, because they are largely disconnected from local authorities and somehow in competition with them, although the division of competencies is unclear. A peculiarity of this

mechanism is that it usually entails the direct involvement of communities in the realization of the projects, – a feature that makes the communal council a special form of community development. In November 2009, a new law reinforced their role and encouraged communal councils to form a federation in order to achieve a larger scale. The aim is development into a direct democratic "communal state." Thousands of communal councils and hundreds of "communes" exist today, and they have received millions of US dollars, much more than most other participatory experiments in the world. Based on a loose definition of PB, communal councils and communes should be included, as they do share common features with some mechanisms that are officially called participatory budgets in other countries in the South. However, as they are not articulated with local governments but depend only on national government, they do not fulfill one of our definition criteria. This is why this experiment cannot be included within the framework of the present study. Communal councils and communes by-pass local governments, in a context in which the "communal state," which has led to social improvements, is economically inefficient and increasingly more authoritarian.

In Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean countries, the development of PB has also been manifold – and is difficult to assess, due to the lack of coherent and systematic research. There are many more cases that have used the label than there are real experiments. Some experiments have taken place in Mexico city, especially in Tlalpan, Naucalpan and Iztapalapa (three of the 16 boroughs of the capital, with 650,000, 800,000 and 1.9 million inhabitants, respectively) (Munevar 2012), as well as in Ecatepec de Morelos (population 1.6 million), but most have been short-lived and their results are mixed, even though the 2010 reform of the Law of Citizens Participation in the Federal District of Mexico recognizes PB as a pivotal tool for controlling the way in which public resources are used (Gurza Lavalle/Isunza Vera, 2010).

In Central America, one of the most interesting PBs is the one created in San Salvador (population over 300,000), the



capital of the small Central American country El Salvador, in which the left-wing FMLN has shown a real political will to develop this practice. In Nicaragua, Law 40/1988 that established the municipal framework stated in two articles that local authorities have to engage in dialogue with citizens on the budget, and there were some interesting experiments in the early 1990s. Because of the commitment of the Danish Cooperation Agency, the municipal legal framework was reformed and this has facilitated interesting experiments, such as in Nandaime (38,000 inhabitants), led by a council of women, and San José de los Remates (10,000 inhabitants), where PB was at the center of the discussion of a switch from being a rural community to a center of sustainable tourism.

The Dominican Republic, a “party-centered and conservative society” (Morgan and Espinal 2009) at the far right of all the other countries in the area, is a special case as regards the spread of PB. As in Peru, PB was made mandatory in 2007, as one dimension of a decentralization process. Nevertheless, the dynamic had begun previously in many places, and the legal obligation was no mere top-down imposition. The Federation of Municipalities (FEDOMU) pushed it strongly, imagining that it could force the central government to transfer the due 10 percent of budgetary resources to local authorities, which did not occur in the past despite legal obligations. The FEDOMU soon organized a task-force to monitor BP processes and offer training and support to local authorities for experimenting and increasing the quality of experiments. It also continued national-level lobbying until PB was inserted as an important tool of innovation in the new revised Constitution (Article 206) approved in 2010.

Although the Dominican system of decentralization is very inflexible (Navascués 2011), visible changes are slowly emerging in the system of inter-institutional transfers. And if cities such as La Caleta (50,000 inhabitants) invested only 2 percent of their resources in 2009 to implement choices made through PB, others invested much more, such as Santiago de los Caballeros (population 678,300), where the figure was 44.3 percent, and the importance of PB is

developing. According to recent studies, many of the most interesting experiments are still those that pioneered PB, such as Villa Gonzales (around 33,500 inhabitants), Azua (87,000 inhabitants), San Pedro de Macoris (217,000) or La Romana (202,000). Several of these cities saw the ruling parties put out of office, but PB was maintained thanks to the encouragement given by the national legal framework. An interesting case is that of Bani (population 107,900), where a PB experiment using text messages and other mobile technologies is being conducted with the support of the World Bank Institute ICT4Gov program. Out of 154 municipalities and 226 local districts, local actors say that most of them could begin a PB process. Although a more realistic account would probably result in smaller numbers (around 150, according to our comparative criteria), the Dominican Republic is probably – together with Peru and Poland – one of the countries in which PB density is the highest in the world, even compared with pioneers such as Brazil.

#### 4. Two Generations of Networks

In Brazil, Argentina and Colombia, networks remain substantially independent of international cooperation. The Argentine Network of Participatory Budgeting relies on the strong commitment of national government, which hosts the website and makes the organization of annual meetings and the publication of an interesting bulletin for supporting exchanges possible, while the Colombian National Network of Local Planning and Participatory Budgeting can count on the support of big cities, such as Bogota and Medellin. The Brazilian Participatory Budgeting Network relies minimally on international funding – and only for specific projects, such as South-South exchange with African cities in 2009.

Globally, in the 1990s and even after the turn of the millennium, the development of PB was the result of politicized networks. The Brazilian Workers’ Party played a crucial role. PB was part of its agenda and was introduced in nearly all the cities it governed. Local facilitators of the process from one city could be hired in another one, following some

electoral success or due to personal career trajectories. Radical NGOs such as POLIS, based in Sao Paulo, offered consultancy and led research on PB. In 2004, the team of San Paulo's PB split to help other cities (as Fortaleza) to run their participatory budgets.

The World Social Forum (WSF) has also been very important for horizontal exchanges among political and NGOs activists – in Latin America but also far beyond it, as we shall see in the coming chapters. The WSF first met in Porto Alegre in 2001, and five out of nine WSFs until 2013 were held in Brazil (four in Porto Alegre, one in Belem). In addition, two decentralized WSFs were held in Latin America (in Caracas in 2006 and again in Porto Alegre in 2010), and regional Social Forums such as the Pan-Amazonian SF have contributed to the diffusion of PB. The Local Authorities Forum for Social Inclusion, which first developed in parallel to the WSF in order to create an international left-leaning network of local governments, also played a role. It became an informal network – called RedFAL – that disappeared in 2011, when the majority of Spanish left-run municipalities and provinces switched to the right. This first generation of networks (which includes those linked to the WSF and the Local Authorities Forum for Social Inclusion) was highly politicized: PB was, from their point of view, an important instrument for political change. The Brazilian participatory networks tend to retain part of this spirit even in 2013. These politicized entities even interact with international organizations, such as the UNO and the EU.

**Box 7: Two important and radical networks for diffusing PB: PGU-ALC (UN Habitat) and URBAL 9**

Two important networks played a major role in the diffusion of PB in Latin America (and beyond) in 1997/2010. The Urban Management Program of the United Nations in Latin America and in the Caribbean (PGU-ALC), based in Quito, has been the most important UN program on urban issues. After the 1996 Istanbul HABITAT Summit, it opened the doors for direct cooperation with municipal local governments. A new director, Yves Cabannes, with broad experience with urban social movements, was appointed. From 1997 to 2004, under his direction, PGU launched

activities aimed at fostering the development of the most radical participatory budgets in the region. It promoted a lot of studies and very influential manuals for practitioners (Cabannes, 2004) that have been translated and updated by UN-HABITAT in several languages, including Chinese (2010) and Arabic (2009). PGU helped to create networks that facilitated the exchange of good practices, the production of practical tool-kits, the implementation of training programs and the diffusion of experiments around the sub-continent. It involved not only major international partners (UNDP, the World Bank until 1999, the German, British, Swiss, Dutch and Swedish cooperation agencies, specific programs – CEPAL, UNIFEM, URBAL – and other organizations), but also the most progressive Latin American local governments. What they had in common was a combination of good governance, participation and social justice, with PB playing a crucial role. Through the PGU, those local governments that employed good practices in this respect received the prestigious legitimacy of the UN. Nearly all major Latin American PBs participated in networks organized or supported by the PGU, most notably Porto Alegre. PGU has had a strong influence even in shaping some European PBs through the networking and the technical supporting tools that it promoted. In 2004, PGU had to close as the UN decided to continue another program to the exclusion of all others. This was Cities Alliance, dominated by the World Bank – a program in which the degree of real innovation (as the emphasis on participation) is often variable. In Ecuador, the team of the former PGU created CIGU (International Centre of Urban Management), an NGO which tried to use the previously acquired experience, providing information and consultancy on PB throughout the region. After 2011 and the end of some international funding programs, CIGU also ceased its international activities.

A large number of the PGU actors were also involved in URBAL, the EU cooperation program with Latin American local governments, and especially in its thematic network number 9, specifically devoted to “Participatory Budgeting and Local Finance.” The URBAL 9 umbrella-network – coordinated by Porto Alegre – included two waves of sub-programs and lasted from 2003 to 2010, managing

around 5 million euros; 450 local governments and other institutions (such as NGOs and universities) were involved. The program not only contributed to the development of the idea of PB, but also fostered a minimum standard for Latin American experiments and provided some detailed information concerning what was actually going on (Cabannes, 2006). Cases such as the short-lasting PB of the Italian city of Udine were “driven” by URBAL projects. The last project coordinated by URBAL 9 was intended to bring together the cities that had formerly been coordinators of projects on PB, in order to create a permanent space and tools for training on PB.

Both the OIDP (International Observatory of Participatory Democracy) of Barcelona and the local observatory of Porto Alegre (Observapoa) were created thanks to URBAL projects, then gained autonomy and are still operating today.

Conversely, the new generation of networks in Latin America tends to be far less politicized and to rest on a more “neutral” and even – sometimes – “technocratic” legitimacy. It is worth noticing that in the Dominican Republic, international institutions and European cooperation agencies have been pivotal in strengthening PB. The German cooperation agency GIZ (formerly GTZ) has played a crucial role in cooperation with FEDOMU and CONARES, a national agency for the reform of the state, together with some Andalusian local governments (Malaga sub-region, the city of Cordoba and the Andalusia Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity, FAMSI). Although some local actors were also engaged in a bottom-up process, the impressive development of PB in this country would have been inconceivable without this “neutral” and broad network. This is a good example that helps us to understand the kinds of network that operate in the latest generation of PB in Latin America. On a smaller scale, GIZ is very active in Colombia, and the same type of cooperation is going on in Chile, where a national network has been set up (the Chilean Forum of Participatory Budgeting) supported by Germany’s Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The global program on gender budgeting in Latin America and the Caribbean has received support from two UN agencies (UNIFEM and

UN Volunteers), but also from the Spanish cooperation agency and from the Basque regional government.

Many examples could be given in which the intervention of international organizations and/or governmental cooperation agencies has played a leading role. Even Cidade, a radical NGO that was very active in Porto Alegre’s PB and had a strong international reputation, relied on various international partners for its projects, from very different political orientations: the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the World Bank, the left-wing Transnational Institute (TNI) and the Malaga-based PARLOCAL project. The World Bank is now the most important body publishing research on PB at the continental level. It is funding some of the most interesting projects, and the new Porto Alegre local government (as well as the Rio Grande do Sul governing coalition) partly relies on its advice. This has implications, as we shall see in the conclusion of this chapter.

## 5. Hybridization

Along these new paths, the mechanism invented in Porto Alegre has become hybridized. At least five tendencies should be noted.

The first is the most common. Often, PB has become less complex and radical. Officially, the original Porto Alegre mechanism remains the point of reference, but elements are sometimes left out. There is either no thematic dimension, or no permanent participatory council; often, the available funding is far less than in Porto Alegre, perhaps reduced to 1 or 2 percent of the municipal budget. In other cases, the process is only consultative and has no binding power. This often happens when the initiative is only top-down, or when the political leadership is not fully convinced that it should play the game – such as when it is forced to comply with a national law, as in the Dominican Republic or in Peru, or when a new administration comes to power that does not want to abolish PB but reduces its scope, as in Porto Alegre itself; or when a local government wants to

implement this fashionable mechanism, but conceives it primarily as a communication tool rather than as an instrument to enable real social or political change. Such “PB lite” tends to be situated between participatory democracy and others, usually proximity participation or community development.

A second and very common hybridization process occurs when the Porto Alegre instrument is combined with elements of *participatory strategic planning*, a procedure which is well-known in Latin America and found frequently in Peru, Ecuador and Colombia. In many cases, a municipality that had previously implemented participatory strategic planning discovers PB and tries to introduce it in combination with existing practice. Some experiments lead to highly original results, especially when strategic planning is the result of an autochthonous process and supported by a strong political will. This is the case in some of the most famous Latin American PBs, such as Villa El Salvador in Peru, Santo André and Belem in Brazil, Cuenca in Ecuador and Medellin in Colombia. In other cases, the implementation of PB and participatory strategic planning has been more or less concurrent. Sometimes, the second dimension is introduced in order to deal with long-term issues, which the Porto Alegre mechanism, focusing as it does on annual investment, is barely able to address. To a limited extent, this has happened in the Rio Grande do Sul capital, especially in the “city congress” that met every four years (the last in 2011) and was supposed to provide a long-term vision, although this was not systematically articulated through PB. Other innovations, such as the Geographic Information System, have been more inventive and have influenced PB itself.

**Box 8: Participatory budgeting and the use of Geographic Information Systems: examples that use the spatial dimensions of participation**

When the Observatory of Porto Alegre (OBSERVAPOA) was created in 2005, one of its main tasks was to develop social, economic and environmental indicators and represent them on easily understandable maps, reorganizing all the statistic data through a Geographic Information System

based on PB districts. A Geographic Information System (GIS) is an ICT tool that captures, stores, analyses, manages and displays data, linking them to their locations, thus merging statistical databases and maps and allowing interactive queries and user-created searches that visually clarify the data distribution in a given territory. GIS was first applied to PB in the South, where it was used in various creative ways, mainly the representation of popular demands and approved results. In many European cities (Seville or Modena, for example), GIS has been used to create maps of works funded by PB so that citizens can “visualize” its results and the distribution of funded choices.

In Belo Horizonte, the municipal government published a study in 2008 on the distribution of the 1,000 public works funded through PB since 1993. Using the Geographic Information System, it was calculated that 80 percent of the city’s population was living within 500 meters of infrastructure financed by a participatory budget. In 1996, the spatialization of social/economic data was used by the town hall and the Catholic University of Minas Gerais to create the “quality index of urban life” (IQVU), whose more than 50 parameters are used to better distribute municipal resources among the 80 infra-urban statistical areas of the territory. Since 2000, PB has been used to allocate resources to each district in proportion to its IQVU: the lower the index, the higher the level of resources allocated to improve its quality of life.

A third hybrid form combines PB with *community development* structures. This has happened in terms of two processes. In some places, community organizations previously played an important role and it has been necessary to rely on them when introducing PB. This was the case especially in indigenous municipalities in the Andean countries: in Cotacachi (Ecuador) or Pasto (Colombia), PB has overlapped with traditional community meetings and leadership. In other places (Ortiz and Crespo, 2004), NGOs and international organizations have implemented the “traditional” model of community development for the poor, which focuses on involving communities in the implementation of projects, but have merged it with some features of PB. This

has been influential most notably where NGOs and international organizations started the PB process, sometimes managing more money than the local government itself (common in the poorest countries). In Villa El Salvador, the PB design has made it compulsory to involve neighborhood communities in the implementation of public works: this has been a condition of obtaining public money. This model influenced the Peruvian law of 2003, which creates a bridge between PB and local development planning, focusing on social organizations instead of individual citizens.

A fourth – and far less frequent – form of hybridization has occurred between PB and *gender mainstreaming*. Policies designed to provide improvements in relation to gender issues usually involve activities directed towards target groups: women who are not in the job market, women with young families, immigrant women, female members of the workforce, or even women in general – but leaving men out. Gender mainstreaming was first introduced at the third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, and was launched officially at the Beijing Conference in 1995. Its aim is to tackle the root causes of inequalities between men and women. The objective is to change the traditional gender roles and promote gender equality. These policies encourage the development of comprehensive programs that target both men and women, and seek to change traditional views. The latter is well expressed in Spanish and Portuguese by labeling the responsible service as the “*secretaría de la mujer*” (or “*da mulher*”), the “department for women” (with the singular form often being used). The programs also systematically analyze concrete measures in terms of their impacts on both men and women by raising issues such as whether sports facilities that are built tend to be used mainly by boys rather than being gender-neutral. Another important aspect is gender budgeting, which is intended to measure how public budgets support gender differences and how they reinforce or change the respective roles of men and women. Strangely enough, although they are characterized by elective affinities, PB has not merged with gender mainstreaming very often, although Latin America is the most advanced continent in this respect.

One of the most interesting examples is the Rosario experiment in Argentina.

### **Box 9: Participatory budgeting and gender mainstreaming: the Rosario experiment**

In the Argentine city of Rosario (1.2 million people) PB started in 2002, following a methodology adapted from Porto Alegre (Roeder, 2010). In 2003, the municipality decided to develop gender budgeting and has been supported by the UNIFEM gender budgeting program since 2006. The idea is to increase women’s participation in PB and more generally in citizen activities, to make civil servants (both men and women) sensitive to and train them in gender issues, to merge PB and gender mainstreaming, to develop gender equity and to combat gender prejudices. Progressively, all districts have been involved in the experiments and a growing number of projects are being adopted, most of them training programs and, to a lesser extent, public campaigns. In 2008, nearly 20 projects were developed, at a cost of around 3.17 million pesos (more than US\$ 800,000). The most interesting aspect of all this is the likelihood that its effects will be sustainable because it induces a mental change, a new way of framing public issues in relation to gender. In order to empower women and foster gender equity, women’s involvement in PB is an important but not a sufficient condition; the projects must aim to transform relationships between men and women within the process, and training, no less than political will, should be a crucial dimension (UNIFEM/UNV, 2009).

Last but not least, PB sometimes has been transformed through the *use of new technologies*. It is fashionable to add the internet to innovative practices in the age of new technologies, and so-called e-participation has often been included as a marginal dimension in PB. Most often (as shown in Box No. 10), the web is only a tool that eases the circulation of information, and in places with wide access to the internet, a “serious” PB is often a PB on which detailed information can be found on its official website. In other places, the process is more interactive, and the internet plays a complementary role, along with assemblies, for

making proposals in the PB framework. Some experiments are highly promising.

#### **Box 10: E-participatory budgeting: innovative practice in Belo Horizonte (Brazil)**

One of the most interesting e-participation experiments is the e-participatory budget of Belo Horizonte in Brazil. With 2.3 million inhabitants, this city is the sixth largest in the country and an important political center. Its PB is one of the oldest in Brazil: it began in 1993 and its methodology has been innovative. Notably, it has included an autonomous housing PB designed to deal with this important issue. It is based on a two-year cycle, a feature that has inspired other experiments in Brazil, and emphasizes popular control over the real execution of the public works chosen. In 2006, a digital PB was added as a third pillar, repeated in 2008 and 2010. The digital PB has three goals: to modernize PB through the use of ICTs; to increase citizen involvement in the process; and to include big investments, concerning the whole city, in the PB process. In fact, most Brazilian PBs face a double problem: participation remains relatively limited (1 to 3 percent of people living in cities, somewhat higher in smaller towns) and the biggest investments tend to remain outside their reach. The idea is to organize an online vote open to all residents older than 16 in order to prioritize some investments that require more than the amounts available at the district level.

Citizens have to access the e-voting platform through the city's official website, which provides information on the various public works. For covering the risks linked to digital divide, a bus equipped with computers was organized and moved around the city, targeting poor areas. Decisions are made by majority, with no preference given to socially disadvantaged areas. In 2006, R\$ 25 million (around US\$ 14 million) were made available to the digital PB. The amount was increased to 50 million (US\$ 28 million) in 2008, so that one public work (a beltway around a very important square) could be selected.

The methodology was somewhat different in 2006, when voters could cast 9 votes, one per district, and 2008, when

voters had only one choice and it was also possible to vote by phone. A total of 173,000 persons voted in 2006 (nearly 10 percent of the Belo Horizonte electorate), and 124,000 in 2008 – compared with 38,000, 34,000 and 44,000 voters for the district PB in 2005/2006, 2007/2008 and 2009/2010. The increase in participation with online voting was clearly a success in the first edition, but later on was affected by the lack of control over double voting and voting-by-phone, which obliged the municipality to introduce a series of strict rules that ended up discouraging many participants in the last edition of e-PB in 2011. Over time, the deliberative dimension has been virtually lost and the digital participatory budget today looks more like a referendum “lite” or a “strategic choice” than a “traditional” PB. This peculiar structure has made the Belo Horizonte digital PB an internationally recognized good practice and has inspired many other cases, albeit adapted to different contexts (Peixoto, 2008).

## **6. Important But Contrasting Results**

In 30 years of PB in Latin America, major albeit contrasting results have been achieved. Some important debates have divided PB supporters: does PB necessarily rely on individual participation (often called “universal” by those who defend it), or can it be community-based? Who takes the final budgetary decision to be presented to the communal council, the PB council or the local government? Is there social control and inspection of works once the budget has been approved? Is the neighborhood level the only one that matters, or is there a place for a citizens' discussion at the city level? Are the resources that are allocated to PB too limited, risking that it become mere scarcity management, or can PB claim to improve citizens' control over significant public resources (although that, in turn, risks an atomization of public decision-making in neighborhoods)? Does PB have to be institutionalized by law – be it at the city, the regional or the national level – or does it have to rely instead on rules that local government and participants decide each year or even remain “spontaneous,” with no fixed rules (Cabannes, 2006)?



Nevertheless, one first effect is recognized by nearly all actors and observers and explains a large part of the interest this process has raised. When it is implemented seriously, PB *increases the transparency* of the use of public money as well as popular control, and therefore *reduces corruption* (Kuriyan et alii, 2011). Investments and services tend to be discussed openly in this new public sphere, instead of being negotiated behind closed doors. For this dimension, lessons learned at Porto Alegre can be generalized. Corruption is a problem everywhere, but the Corruption Perceptions Index proposed by Transparency International shows that PB has spread most in those Latin American countries in which the corruption index is particularly high (Transparency International, 2011). In this context, PB seems a promising and long-lasting contribution to solving a difficult problem. Econometric studies suggest that municipalities that implemented PB were likely to have less corruption and make fewer budgetary mistakes than municipalities that did not implement it (Zamboni, 2007).

A second result concerns clientelism, which is an important aspect of relations between civil society groups and politicians. The features of PB that help to fight corruption are also a powerful way of *reducing clientelism*, because negotiations and deliberations happen in public and require a horizontal dialogue between citizens, rather than merely “private” vertical exchanges between politicians and electors. Here again, academic studies confirm what local actors say about their practice – at least when PB is “for real,” when it is not only consultative and when the investments discussed are significant, which is not always the case. In the most dynamic experiments, the change is radical and clientelism tends to vanish (Avritzer, 2002; 2009). When one takes into account the distorting impact of patron–client networks on Latin American politics, this outcome is far from marginal. This positive result has to be balanced with one important limit, however: as Porto Alegre and many other experiments show, the inner logic of the political system itself – with its struggles for power, often motivated by self-promotion rather than by a preoccupation with the common good – does not necessarily change as a result of PB. It must be underlined that the

otherwise positive self-regulation has in some cases been “diverted” or “perverted” by new forms of clientelism developing in civil society (Langelier, 2011; 2013).

The third outcome we could list is crucial: in Latin America, PB has demonstrated that it can become a *powerful instrument of redistribution to the poor*. This feature has been underlined by various qualitative field-work studies. In the slums of Porto Alegre and other cities, observers note the progress due to this new practice, whether in housing, paving, basic sanitation, land use regulation or education. A series of quantitative studies have added new elements to this analysis. In 2003, a Brazilian researcher worked out a methodology that showed that the poor neighborhoods in Porto Alegre have tended to receive much higher investment than the well-off ones. With the same methodology, together with other colleagues, he later demonstrated that the same thing was going on in Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte and Belem (Marquetti et al., 2008). The combination of the mobilization of the lower class and of the distributive criteria in the PB process significantly reorients the distribution of public resources. However, this result had to be qualified: the resources that have flowed in the PB process have been going mainly to the poor, but what proportion of the public budget is accounted for by the funds allocated to PB (Mororo, 2009)? Is PB only a niche phenomenon or does it help to reorient public policy overall? Does it contribute to a fragmentation of investment, due to the grassroots pressure to allocate resources to small public works? Does PB contribute to improved tax collection? Is it efficient in the long run? These issues have been addressed by econometric studies that have focused in particular on Porto Alegre, but that have also analyzed Brazilian PB more broadly, comparing cities with and without PB. The findings are striking. Living conditions have improved more in municipalities with PB (in terms of poverty rate, access to potable water, access to sanitation and so on) than in those without (and this is true even when one ignores the vote for the left, in other words, the direct political pressure for a pro-poor policy). This is especially the case in the medium term, when PB has been implemented for a decade or more. PB does not lead to a fragmentation of public investments. What

PB does not generate, contrary to some expectations, is an effect on taxes. It does not have a consistent impact on fiscal performance (Baiocchi et al., 2006; World Bank, 2008). This feature has also been demonstrated for Peru by a World Bank study (2010).

A fourth outcome, although less frequent, has to be noted. When PB is articulated with a broader concern for the *modernization and the efficiency of public administrations*, the two processes can reinforce each other. We will return to this aspect in the following chapters.

PB outcomes in Latin America make it understandable that an innovative mechanism invented in Porto Alegre by leftists and grassroots community movements has won over a large spectrum of actors, far beyond its original geographical and political context. PB is still part of the World Social Forum Agenda, but it is now also included in the pro-poor development programs of the World Bank. However, when we look at their overall dynamics, not all Latin American PBs have the same profile.

At one end of the spectrum we have the Porto Alegre experiment. The interaction between a strong political will and bottom-up movements, a methodology that really implies a devolution of power to community organizations, the possibility of good deliberation through the building of participatory councils, criteria of distributive justice and the mobilization of the poor: the participatory democracy model, which in Latin America has much in common with the community development model, has led to the development of “empowered participatory governance” (Fung/Wright, 2001). It has been part of a broader and deeper transformation of society and politics, and the massive inequalities that formerly characterized the continent have been called into question (Santos, 2005). To a certain extent, the invention and diffusion of PB can be seen as one dimension of a larger process that has shaken Latin America, pushing the continent away from dictatorships with neoliberal policies and toward democracies in which new governments try to promote other kinds of development.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, even ignoring the (numerous) “fake” experiments, many Latin American PBs are mainly top-down and are not based on the independent mobilization of civil society. They control only a limited amount of money, which means that they cannot really influence the overall distribution of resources. They rely on methodologies that do not give any real decision-making power or control to community organizations, which means that they are highly unlikely to empower the poor. They do lead to more transparency, more social accountability, more responsiveness and less corruption, together with some “pro-poor policies” that help to mitigate somewhat the huge inequalities of Latin American societies. Formally, while they may be inspired by the Porto Alegre methodology, in fact their situation is different. Today the World Bank, which decided in 2000 to foster “pro-poor policies”, wields a strong influence over these PBs.

Between these two ends of the spectrum, numerous PBs are being led by left-leaning actors, or by NGOs that really want to change the development model, but lack the bottom-up mobilization and a global political perspective. Furthermore, everyday life is tending to reduce what used to be an innovative practice to routine. This is why some radical actors who were involved in the first PBs have strongly denounced these “PBs lite” that seem to have lost their soul (Baierle, 2007). Often these actors have to some extent been left behind by the success of what was originally their invention.



## II. The Return of the Caravels: Participatory Budgeting in Europe and North America

Having examined PB in Latin America, let us now look more closely at its spread further afield. Europe and North America are especially important in this regard. For once, development cooperation is being turned around. Countries of the Global South are showing the industrialized nations of the North how they can use a new form of dialogue. Metaphorically, we might say that the caravels on which the discoverers sailed to the New World at the beginning of the modern age have now returned.

On board they have brought back with them an innovation that brings citizens, elected officials and civil servants closer together. The demand for it appears to be strong: a relatively high degree of electoral abstention and political disaffection are generating pressure on political systems in the Western world (including the many countries of the former Soviet bloc) to demonstrate its legitimacy, and in many countries local governments are struggling with financial problems, exacerbated by the current financial crisis, especially in Mediterranean Europe. Municipalities in Europe and North America are responding to these multifaceted challenges by developing various procedures. In these procedures, Porto Alegre is no longer central as an inspirational model; a range of other models have emerged (Sintomer et al., 2011) that often go back to older traditions and governance models that have little in common with the radical vision that inspired the Porto Alegre PB. In this chapter, we will first of all present the general spread of PB in Europe and North America. We will then discuss its effects on social justice, local government modernization and civil society empowerment.

### 1. The Diversity of Participatory Budgeting in Europe and North America

PB spread rapidly in Europe, a development that was triggered mainly by the social forums in Porto Alegre. These were attended not only by representatives of initiatives and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), however, but also by local politicians from various countries. A particularly

important role was played by those who attended the Local Authorities Forum for Social Inclusion, a parallel event of the World Social Forum.

We can indeed speak of a return of the caravels in the sense described above. Whereas in 1999 it was still possible to count the number of PBs on the fingers of one hand, by 2005 the number of cases in Europe had reached 55. And this trend continued. By 2009, their number overall had risen to more than 200, due largely to the sharp increase in Italy, as well as in Spain and Portugal (where Lisbon, around 548,000 inhabitants, was the first European capital to have a city-wide PB with electronic voting). Since 2008, PB has also started in Northern Europe (Norway and Sweden, then Iceland in 2010 and Finland in 2012), while in 2003 some started in Eastern Europe. If we look at the combined populations of the towns, cities and districts with PB, we see that the curve is similarly steep. The figure increases from fewer than 350,000 in 2000 to 3.6 million in 2004 and over 8 million in 2009.

In 2009 the majority of around 150 PBs in Italy were interrupted, mainly due to the abolition of the local property tax on first homes that Berlusconi's government passed unilaterally. A large-scale compaction also happened in Spain in the aftermath of the 2011 municipal elections, when the 85 percent of municipal governments practicing PB lost the elections, and the new ruling coalition did not want to maintain their PB "flagship projects." Nevertheless, the number of PBs in Europe continued to grow, thanks to the contributions of Portugal, Germany and the United Kingdom and (since 2009) first of all thanks to the "Solecki Law" in Poland that involved more than 1,000 rural and rural-urban municipalities in co-decision-making with regard to the local budget. In 2012, Spain and Italy experienced a partial recovery, due to the role of the independence-seeking Basque party "Bildu" – which listed PB as one of its priorities in the management of the several municipalities won in the elections of 2011 – and to some new local governments.

Reykjavík (with around 120,000 inhabitants) is an interesting case; it launched its PB in 2010. In the Icelandic capital the process was due to a desire of the new mayor (a TV actor and presenter) to establish effective government and put local governance in line with national level, at which there had been several participatory experiments, including the drafting of a new Constitution by an elected committee of 25 citizens, after a process of deliberation based on random selection of participants in two large citizen assemblies. One peculiarity of Reykjavík PB is that it takes advantage of the high rate of broadband availability in the country, mixing district assemblies with widespread use of internet-based tools that allow deliberation among citizens to grow fast; in this perspective voting is an “open process” and citizens can change their voting priorities at the last minute, according to how the public discussion on needs and priorities evolves.

One notable aspect of the European panorama of PBs is the diversity of approaches. Adaptations of the participatory democracy model could be found mainly in Spain and Italy. Also widespread on the Iberian Peninsula are participatory budgets that incorporate elements of the multi-stakeholder participation model. The most widespread participatory budgets in Europe, however, are those that closely resemble the proximity participation model. Examples of this have developed mainly in France, Portugal, Belgium, Sweden, Norway and Italy. Initially, in Western Europe it was generally social democratic or post-communist left-wing parties that were involved in disseminating PB. Conservative governments, too, are now actively involved – and in Sweden, Germany, Portugal and Poland, PB was a cross-party phenomenon from the outset. Various networks and organizations have also supported the introduction of PB. In Italy, the “Nuovo Municipio” network has played a major role (Allulli, 2006), although since 2006 the support of Latium and Tuscany for the development of participatory processes has been the most important lever for the growth and dissemination of new PB experiments (Picchi, 2012; Sintomer and Talpin, 2011). In Germany, networks linked to the modernization of local government have been important, while Germany’s Service Agency Communities in One World/Engagement

Global gGmbH and the Federal Agency for Civic Education are playing a major cross-party role.

Particular mention has to be made to the use of ICTs in the German context. Cologne, but also Bonn, Potsdam, Trier and Essen are examples.

#### **Box 11:**

##### **E-participatory budgeting in Cologne**

Since 2007 the city of Cologne (population 1 million) has used an extensive online participatory budget for its bi-annual budgeting. A debate was organized in the form of blogs (Engel, 2009). All participants were able to add their comments to proposals and prioritize them; this means that Cologne has adopted and further developed Lichtenberg’s voting method. In the first cycle, a total of around 5,000 proposals were received for the three areas “greenery,” “roads, paths and squares,” and “sports.” The council had previously provided scrupulous responses to the first 100 proposals received for each of the three areas. The various proposals and additional comments were posted on the website, and could also be read in conjunction with the responses published by the council and committees. International organizations see the procedure in a highly positive light and have awarded the city prizes for it. In subsequent years, Cologne continued with PB. Unfortunately, the process could not be linked to face-to-face meetings, even though this has been proposed for some time. It seems that busy citizens in bigger cities prefer to use the internet. Municipal governments indicate having spent 17 million euros on awareness raising in the first round of PB. In the following cycles, the city – as with many Germany municipalities – has had to face serious financial challenges. Hence, only about 1 million euros were spent on PB in 2010. PB continues in Cologne, with some changes: in 2012 the possibility of giving “negative scores” to some priorities was eliminated, because of its negative effects.

In other countries, networking is mainly done by civil society initiatives, for instance the PB Unit in the United Kingdom (an NGO/think tank active until 2012, formerly the Community Pride Initiative) or the In-LoCo association in

Portugal, which is actively cooperating with the Portuguese Center for the Training of Local Civil Servants (CEFA) and with various other institutions, national and international. The strategy has proved effective: it has sustained the maturation of more than 30 PBs experiments in the country, and has favored a shift from merely consultative processes into co-decisional arenas. Such a change of paradigm made possible the birth of such important experiments as that of Cascais (206,000 inhabitants).

In Spain, there is a strong municipal network of PB experiments, which in 2007 was responsible for the approval of the "Antequera Charter," which defined the main characteristic that a PB must have in order to act as a radical instrument of cultural and political change (Ganuza/Francés, 2012). After the elections of May 2011, the shrinkage in the number of Spanish PBs weakened that association, but in 2012 it merged with Portuguese municipalities in a new Iberian umbrella-network, supported by the region of Andalusia. Conversely, stagnation in the number of French experiments may be explained, among other things, by the lack of facilitating networks.

The Association of Municipalities and Regions in Sweden (SALAR/SKL) has been very active internationally, and since 2008 has been able to promote seven PB experiments at home, plus one in Norway (SALAR, 2011; Allegretti/Langlet, 2013). One important case is Orsa (6,800 inhabitants) whose PB, despite being consultative, provides an interesting online budget simulator (elaborated by the technicians of SALAR participatory networks) and a serious structure for feedback and monitoring to increase the accountability and responsiveness of the public administration. In Finland, besides the late start of interest in PB, the rapid growth of pioneer experiments owes a lot to the interest of the University of Tampere and a group of activists/researchers who coordinate the Open Spending Initiative in Finland. The organizers' idea is that such new experiments could renew participatory traditions that used to exist in Finland, for example, in the northernmost city of Finland, Rovaniemi (around 61,000 inhabitants), in which regional boards have

a strong role in budgeting, configuring a sort of community development model of PB.

In Eastern European countries, PB has initially been promoted mainly by international organizations. More so than in Latin America, it is often the World Bank, UNDP, USAID, GIZ and other development organizations that organize participatory procedures in cooperation with local partners. PB thus often comes from outside, the primary objective being to mobilize citizens and promote good local government. Processes of this kind often begin with the transparent preparation of public budgets, as in Russia, Armenia and the Baltic states (Shah, 2007). In a number of cases, a clear PB structure is displayed, such as Svishtov (30,600 inhabitants) in Bulgaria, Elbasan (population 126,500) in Albania, and some Croatian, Romanian and Russian experiments that began in 2012–2013. In 2011 the Slovakia capital Bratislava (460,000 inhabitants) became the second European capital (after Lisbon) to have a city-wide experiment. After a pilot-project organized with the NGO Utopia, in the second year the number of public assemblies and internet voting were expanded, establishing the goal of allocating 1 percent of total expenditure, as in some Hungarian and Japanese experiments. It focused on small community projects that seem to represent a hybrid model between proximity democracy and community development. The experiment led to a huge debate in the country, especially on the internet, and many grassroots groups demanded that it be expanded to other municipalities.

One notable feature of the first wave of participatory budgets in Eastern Europe is that most PBs involve pilot projects that were often halted after international support came to an end. There may be various reasons for this, although many reports speak of a high degree of skepticism among citizens (Driscoll, Lakowska and Eneva, 2004; Co-Plan, 2005). The major exception is Poland, where a vigorous public discussion on PB has taken place among civil society organizations, and where the NGOs Stocznia and SLLGO (the national association of local leaders that is now called Watchdog Poland Civic Network) are playing the important roles of trainer and catalyzer in dialogue with

the National Parliament, which organized special sessions for discussing PB in 2012. SLLGO won an important case in the Supreme Administrative Court as a result of which the personal data of all people taking part in decision-making concerning “Solecki fund” PBs could be publicly displayed as part of relevant information related to the investment of public resources.

**Box 12:**

**A new type of PB in Poland**

In 2012, Poland had the highest number of PB experiments in Europe. In February 2009, a law was passed after close dialogue between the government and social organizations (mainly with SLLGO, the Watchdog Poland Civic Network). It applies to the 2,173 rural and urban-rural municipalities in the country and promotes the so-called “Solecki Funds,” special resource packages that local administrations submit to direct democracy in villages, giving people the chance to change their environment, voting on a priority list of actions with binding force. The law does not create compulsory obligations, but provides incentives, engaging the government to reimburse resources to the municipalities in the proportion of 10 percent to 30 percent, depending on the number of inhabitants and the level of local wealth. Since 2009, over 20,000 village meetings have been held and PLN 375 million (85 million euros) has been devoted to co-decision-making. The number of experimenting local governments grew to more than 1,100 and, in 2011, expenditure on PB represented 0.3 percent of all local government expenditure in Poland.

The participatory processes activated by the Solecki Law could be described as a model of community development, although they engage local authorities in an important active role in discussions with citizens instead of just devolving decision-making to local communities. However, local differences are considerable.

There is no state incentive to experiment with participatory procedures in urban areas, but several pilot experiments are ongoing in cities administered by different political alliances. In 2003 the petrochemical industrial city of Plock

(nearly 130,000 inhabitants) started a kind of PB process within the framework of a UNP program, shaping a sort of public-private partnership between the city, PKN Orlen (Poland’s largest oil company located in Plock), the Levi Strauss Company and representatives of some local NGOs (Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke, 2014). In 2009, a different PB pilot experiment was carried out in two districts (Orzepowice and Boguszowice, 20,000 inhabitants together) of Rybnik, in Silesia Province. One year later in Sopot (39,000 inhabitants, in Pomerania) a bottom-up consultative PB was born under pressure from the towns’ inhabitants; it dealt with approximately 1 percent of the city’s expenditure. Other urban experiments are going on and PB is flourishing.

In North America there is a strong tendency towards “home-grown” experiments that draw on the tradition of community development, in other words, the promotion of disadvantaged districts by self-organizing interest groups. Some features have nonetheless been introduced with direct reference to Porto Alegre, and bottom-up activities are certainly to be observed here (Lerner/Wagner, 2006). A couple of years ago, United States had no real experiments that we would define as PB, while Canada had started three experiments: the city of Guelph (the first example, starting in 1999), the district of Montreal called Plateau Mont-Royal (both around 100,000 inhabitants) and a sectoral experiment in the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC). By 2012, the situation had turned upside down: the Canadian city of Hamilton (520,000 inhabitants) started a new PB in its Ward 2 (population around 38,000), but the Toronto and Montreal experiments were stopped in 2010 and 2009, respectively, while in the United States some very visible PBs have started up, mainly located at “ward” or “electoral district” level (in any case, they are sub-municipal).

In Chicago and New York City, these processes have enabled more than US\$20 million to be subjected to co-decision-making through public deliberation. The US experiments are supported by local organizations such as the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP), a very dynamic not-for-profit organization. Chicago’s PB started in 2009, with US\$1.3 million

from the 49th Ward for public deliberation that could be used only for particular infrastructural investments. The experiment has spread to other five wards. The success of this experiment must be regarded with caution, however, especially because participants are mainly white and more affluent, and not much has been done to enlarge the participation of marginalized groups (Lerner/Secondo, 2012). New York is currently the biggest US experiment in PB. It started in 2011, with a US\$6 million budget, that represents around 0.06 percent of the city's budget. This is part of the discretionary funds granted to New York councilors to be spent on their constituencies (or electoral districts): this explains why the areas in which PB takes place in New York do not coincide with the administrative borders of the city's boroughs, but cross different neighborhoods. The amount (to which four different councilors, three Democrats and one Republican, contributed) was split among 27 projects selected by more than 6,000 voters, and a total of 7,736 participants (PBP report, 2012). Most winning projects were allocated in the area of "environment, health, and public safety," followed by art, culture and education. Some strategies have led to diverse public participation: decentralized meetings, different dates and times, and the provision of some services such as care centers for children and serving food. Location seems important, and holding assemblies in religious institutions or in partnership with immigrant events has helped low-income citizens and migrant groups to participate more (Lerner/Donovan, 2012).

After other experiments started in single districts of other U.S. towns and - in the case of the Californian municipality of Vallejo (116,000 inhabitants) - at the city level, in September 2013 the San Francisco's mayor announced he will undertake an online co-decisional PB in 2014, and one of the first acts of the newly-elected democratic mayor of New York, Bill De Blasio, was declaring that the PB experiment done in the last three years will be gradually scaled-up at city level.

## 2. The Social Impacts of Participatory Budgeting in Europe and North America

One of the greatest successes of PB in Latin America is its social impact. But what about Europe and North America, where social problems, although very important, are less salient and limit discussion to smaller slices of the budget? While municipalities in Germany remain relatively skeptical with regard to the Porto Alegre experiment, mayors in Spain and Italy have followed it up. The common feature of these approaches is that PB focuses on investments and projects that are prioritized on the basis of social justice criteria. One of the best known examples was the Spanish city of Seville, along with a number of smaller municipalities in Italy. One alternative to the participatory democracy approach is offered by experiments that focus on districts in particular need of social development, in which projects can be elaborated together with the relevant population on a participatory basis. How can participatory budgets be employed for purposes of social development and how did these procedures emerge?

In Europe, the strongest social effects of PB are to be found in two small Italian municipalities. These are the town of Grottammare on the Adriatic coast and the municipality of Pieve Emanuele located not far from Milan, each with just over 15,000 inhabitants. In both cases, following a change of government in the early 1990s in the wake of numerous corruption scandals, an era of participatory politics was ushered in that led to neglected districts being upgraded and corruption being largely pushed back. In these two cases, participation led to fundamental changes, demonstrating the possibility of adapting Porto Alegre in Europe (Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke, 2014; Amura/Stortone, 2010). But does this also apply to big cities? The success stories of Grottammare (which started PB in 1994, the first town to do so in Europe, and then upgraded it in 2002) and Pieve Emanuele (where PB started in 2003) led to the two municipalities playing an important role as models for the further dissemination of PB in Italy, where over 150 further experiments with participatory procedures

have since emerged, many of them receiving support from specific funding created by the Latium and Tuscany regional governments, which played an important role as “multipliers”. Until 2009, Modena and Parma (both around 190,000 inhabitants), Bergamo (121,300 inhabitants) and Reggio Emilia (around 170,000 inhabitants) were among the most important big cities in Italy to implement PB, in many cases, however, limited to some boroughs, before these were abolished by the central government between 2008 and 2010 (Sintomer/ Allegretti, 2009). Rome also had five boroughs that experimented with PB for several years: among them, borough XI (around 200,000 inhabitants) was the pioneer in 2004 (continuing intermittently until 2009) while the borough IX (126,000 inhabitants) had the most mature experiment in terms of organizational model (Angeloni et al., 2013; Talpin, 2011).

Although Pieve Emanuele’s experiment stopped in 2007, after the leftist coalition lost the elections (and despite the fact that PB had been inserted in the municipal statutes), its legacy went to other experiments. After 2006, Grottammare merged PB with other participatory procedures centered on making citizens count in discussing and influencing revenues; thanks to the effectiveness of its experiments, in 2010 the city received more than 10 million euros from a bank foundation – which was involved with inhabitants in the dialogue on the project as a whole – as a gift to build a multi-use social center. At the end of 2012 there were around 20 participatory budgets in Italy (concentrated mainly in Tuscany and in medium-sized cities). Italian municipalities are passing through a very difficult financial period, so that PB will not be able to count on large amounts of money and its implementation is planned to happen incrementally through pilot projects in certain wards. Several social movements and citizens’ groups have been lobbying for PB in their territories, proof that it has obtained recognition among civil society organizations. However, the social transformations that took place in Grottammare and Pieve Emanuele have not really been reproduced elsewhere.

In fact, the participatory democracy model has tended to be diluted when imported to Europe. To better understand this, we can look at the Spanish city of Seville in Andalusia, whose population of more than 700,000 for some years made it the largest municipality in Europe with a PB. In Spain, in which around 100 participatory budgets existed until the local elections of 2011, Seville was one of the most ambitious examples, thanks to its application of allocation criteria (Ganuza, 2010; Sintomer /Ganuza, 2012). Until 2011, PB in Seville involved 14 municipal departments and was worth around 25 million euros, while the budget as a whole – including municipal enterprises – amounted to more than 862 million euros (around US\$ 1 billion). After the 2011 elections, the process quickly disappeared, although it was retained formally. Nevertheless, it is important to describe some of its organizational features.

As in Porto Alegre, the procedure applied by the Andalusian capital resembled a pyramid. The base was formed by a division of the city into 15 zones. Here, citizens used to meet at forums, which were usually held at community centers. At these forums, ideas for projects were developed and proposed. Proposals involving funding below 30,000 euros (around US\$ 37,000) were classified as district projects. Projects that exceeded this amount were treated as proposals for the entire city. Delegates were elected at both neighborhood and city levels, whose task was to examine proposals put forward by citizens’ forums, and decide on their final order of priority. This prioritization involved social criteria based partly on those of Porto Alegre. A distinction was drawn between “general criteria” that can be measured objectively and “supplementary criteria” that were assessed personally by the delegates. For each proposal, between 0 and 15 points were then awarded in each category, on the basis of which a prioritized list was drawn up and passed on to the city government and the city council. These criteria were designed to influence the prioritization of proposals so that selected groups and areas could benefit to a particularly high degree. In Seville, primarily projects were implemented that promoted social, ecological and democratic goals in areas where existing infrastructure was weak.



**Table 3: Allocation criteria of Seville's participatory budget**

	Investment and maintenance	Programs and activities
A. General criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic infrastructure (lighting, asphaltting, water supply etc.)</li> <li>• Access to basic services</li> <li>• Population affected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population affected</li> <li>• Condition of the social infrastructure in the zone affected by the participatory budget</li> <li>• Absence of public social programs</li> </ul>
B. Supplementary criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area (district, zone) affected</li> <li>• Ecological sustainability</li> <li>• Integration into the architecture of the city (or district)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support of democratic and humanistic values, such as tolerance, peace, solidarity etc.</li> </ul>

Source: *Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 2004.*

Alongside these criteria, the role of citizens in Seville should also be highlighted. Committed citizens organized into pressure groups were involved in the preparation of PB forums in the districts, as well as in the briefing of their moderators. These preparatory meetings were used to discuss awareness-raising strategies, the structuring of the citizens' forum and the distribution of materials. Second, citizens were to some extent able to modify the PB procedure and adapt the allocation criteria. For example, in 2010, a large group of children – who in the past had participated in a participatory process for presenting proposals for PB, but were unable to vote because of their age – managed to organize themselves and their families and teachers so that a change in the ruling document was approved and children above the age of 10 were entitled also to vote for the priorities of city PB. However, despite the clear rules governing Seville's PB and the fact that this procedure helped empowering civil society, its social justice effects are not at all comparable to those seen in Latin America. In the poor district of Polígono Sur (officially 32,000 residents), PB has distributed in a standard year 10.90 euros per resident, compared to a city average of 8.70 euros; the formal distribution criteria led to a supplement of 70,000 euros for the district, although the establishment of sports facilities or street repairs could cost hundreds of thousands of euros.

### Box 13:

#### Toronto Community Housing

In Europe and North America, the community model perhaps offers an alternative to PB as a means of improving social justice. Various experiments exist in the "Anglo-Saxon world", one of the most interesting being the process experimented with at the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. The city of Toronto has its own corporation for community housing, known as Toronto Community Housing (TCH). Its 164,000 tenants and 58,500 residential units (6 percent of the local housing stock) make TCH Canada's largest social housing provider. It has a budget of CAD\$ 572 million (around US\$ 558 million). A large proportion of its expenditure comprises fixed costs. In 2001, TCH started a participatory budget for tenants, maintained until 2010, when the new Mayor of Toronto abolished it.

Due to its pyramid-shaped structure, the procedure at first glance resembles the Porto Alegre scheme. Spread across its housing stock, there were 27 tenants' councils that received residents' suggestions and proposals. Each tenants' council then agreed on five projects for its district. A committee comprised of delegates from the tenants' councils also decided on two further projects for the TCH as a whole. This committee's task was to appraise the feasibility of the various projects and their concrete funding requirements. The delegates were also mandated

to support the implementation of the projects approved. Through this procedure, decisions were taken on the use of CAD\$ 7 million (around US\$ 6.8 million) every year. This used to involve mainly “proximity” measures, such as minor repairs to buildings, the maintenance of greenery or the building of children’s playgrounds. There was, however, a key difference compared to Porto Alegre. Unlike in the Brazilian flagship municipality, funding no longer had to be approved by the municipal council or the TCH. These funds were managed by the tenants directly. Since many of the tenants come from socially disadvantaged groups, the participatory budget benefited them in particular, and also had an important pedagogic value in accustoming them to dealing with public decision-making in their interest. The activities funded by the participatory budget were usually flanked by measures in the health sector and other social sectors. Further participatory instruments were also used, especially in the domain of planning. Two tenants also used to sit on the TCH board, which comprises 13 members. The agency also started an interesting PB with its 1,400 employees in 2008 to let them decide how to use the resources devoted to training of personnel and managers.

### 3. Participation – A Way of Achieving Modernization?

When people began discussing the Porto Alegre PB experiment in Germany in 2001/2002, many were initially highly skeptical. Some pointed out that the social problems there were not on the same scale as those in Latin America. Furthermore, some put forward the perhaps stronger argument that German municipalities were suffering a financial crisis, and that this would make participation in public investment an absurdity. After all, what was there for citizens to discuss if no money was available or resources were pre-allocated or meager? All these reasons led to an understanding of PB that was not based on allocation issues. In Germany, PB came to be understood rather as a way of facilitating improved public service delivery. although there were a number of cases in Latin America where participation was linked with modernization, PB between the Rhine and the

Oder rivers does seem to have followed its own path. This path is no less original and in fact has played a pivotal role in participatory modernization in Europe

#### 3.1 Information, Consultation, Accountability

The first participatory budgets arose in Germany around the turn of the millennium. Among the first municipalities involved were small, such as Rheinstetten (20,500 inhabitants), Emsdetten and Hilden (see Box 3). In these municipalities, participatory budgets were introduced within the scope of pilot projects such as the “Cities of Tomorrow” network (1998–2002) and the “North-Rhine Westphalia participatory municipal budgeting’ initiative” (2000–2004). These cooperation arrangements were modeled on the community planning experiment of the city of Christchurch in New Zealand, whose “participation for modernization” approach was important to the initiators in Germany. Given the financial challenges faced by the municipalities in a period with high levels of municipal debt, citizens were expected to appreciate this “difficult situation”, although it was also hoped that they would put forward their own proposals for improved administrative services.

By virtue of this focus on the modernization of local government, many PBs in Germany involve social discussions implemented in three steps: information, consultation and accountability. The first step is to inform citizens of the municipality’s financial situation by supplying them with brochures and organizing public meetings. The folders try mainly to answer the following questions: Where does a municipality get its money from, and which services are financed from these different sources? Consultation, which often takes place in the form of a citizen assembly, but may also be supplemented by surveys and online debates, is designed to gather suggestions. Citizens are asked to suggest improvements to swimming pools, baths, libraries, green areas, sports facilities, street cleaning services and so on. What municipalities are looking for here is citizens’ expertise that can be formulated on the basis of citizens’ day-to-day experience with these facilities and services.



One employee of a municipality with a participatory budget once spoke of the “citizen as business consultant” in this context. Another form of consultation is based not on specific services, but on a discussion of income and expenditure. The municipality of Emsdetten, for instance, discussed with citizens various options for offsetting the budget deficit and invited them to develop corresponding proposals. The next step – accountability – involves the municipality giving feedback on which proposals have been taken up by the council and which have not. Hilden, for instance, replies to every proposal with a personal letter notifying the citizen submitting the proposal of its outcome.

### 3.2 Voting and PB in Big Cities

From 2005, PB in Germany underwent further development. One reason for this was that Capacity Building International helped to launch a debate on the Porto Alegre experiment in Germany. Second, there was now also a will to try out PB in larger towns. To this end the Federal Agency for Civic Education, in cooperation with the foundations of the political parties represented in Germany’s federal parliament, commissioned the development of a special procedure. The new conceptual approach carried forward the existing approach by developing it further (bpb, 2005). It was less about investment and more about the participatory evaluation of services and the economic management of public funds. What is new, however, was that citizens were able to prioritize their proposals by voting; the task of selecting the most important proposals was no longer left to the municipal administration. This procedure was first tried out in practice in the Berlin district of Lichtenberg (population 252,000). It was subsequently adopted by Potsdam (population 150,000), and then incorporated into other participatory budgets.

### 3.3 Focusing on Internet Participation and Cost Reduction

Another reason why PB was developed further might be that the first methodology was relatively inefficient. It is possible to collect suggestions for improving library services, parking

facilities or the upkeep of greenery with instruments that are far less complex than traditional PB. Online participation emerged as a way out of this efficiency problem and has since become a key element of PB. In fact, it reduces participation costs for citizens, as well as organizational costs for institutions. In 2012, there were cases in which participation took place either largely or exclusively in the virtual domain. One example that has received international recognition is Cologne’s (population 1 million) PB.

In many places in which public forums are still organized, online participation is important. For example, the city of Potsdam (population 160,000) counts more than 4,000 participants in its PB, but if one were to visit the meetings, one would encounter only two- or three-dozen citizens. Similar observations have been made in Münster (population 290,000), which initiated a PB in 2011. Citizens seem to have a rational attitude toward online participation. On one hand, it is the easiest way for them to participate. On the other hand, PB has been reduced to simple online voting. The space for discussions seems to be used less and is more concentrated on the defense of single projects than on general discussions of budget orientations and priorities between sectors.

Participation via the internet has been integrated in different ways in the PB model of participatory modernization. After using it for online-voting and online discussions in Lichtenberg, Potsdam and elsewhere, the internet has also been used in PB on cost reduction. Here, the idea of modernization is centered on solutions for municipalities’ financial stress. The approach is thus contrary to Porto Alegre in that it focuses on possibilities of cost reduction rather than on new projects or other issues of spending policy. In cities such as Essen (population 570,000) or Solingen (population 160,000), citizens can comment on local government cost reduction proposals, or make their own proposals to reduce spending or find new sources of income. In this way, citizens become aware that municipalities are under financial pressure. PB offers them an opportunity to avoid budget cuts in sectors that are considered important. On the other hand, there is a risk that citizens become involved only to

legitimize budget cut strategies that have been previously decided on and cannot be changed anymore.

Looking at recent developments, one can summarize that the focus on the internet and budget cuts has changed the PB landscape in Germany, which after Poland is the European country in which the most experiments take place. Other tendencies, such as the introduction of grants, are marginalized. All in all, the focus of German PBs seems to be on modernization and, in some ways, also on proximity. In these models, the question of power delegation is less important, even marginal.

#### **Box 14:**

##### **Internet participatory budgeting on costs reduction in the German city of Essen**

Many German cities constantly spend more money than they receive. In order to prevent uncontrollable fiscal stress, local governments are obligated by law to elaborate plans for cost reductions if structural deficits reach a certain level. This has been the case in the city of Essen (population 570,000), situated in the Ruhr, the former industrial coal region of Germany. In this situation, the local council did not want to decide alone on spending cuts and submitted proposals on cost reductions for citizens' debates. For this reason, an internet platform was created in 2010. In detail, 78 proposals representing 381 million euros were presented to the public. People could make comments and cast their votes on preferred priorities. In this way, government wanted to find out which measures were supported and which were not. Furthermore, citizens could also make their own proposals for budget reductions or additional revenues. Based on voting, more than 3,700 registered participants supported budget cuts of 117 million euros. This was nearly half of the amount under discussion. People tended to avoid budget cuts primarily in social areas and education (support rate: 11 percent), while acceptance was higher in cases concerning expenditure, politicians or the public administration (support rate: 85 percent). In the end, however, local councilors approved the full amount of cost reductions, representing 500,000 euros in total. Only small changes were possible, because local councilors had

received the PB proposals when they had to vote on the budget plan (Municipality of Essen 2010). In the following year, the procedure was repeated, but participation was significantly lower. Essen's government has decided not to continue with PB, as the city is now free from financial stress. Citizens are now invited to participate in other areas (Municipality of Essen 2012a; 2012b).

When analyzing German participatory budgets with a focus on modernization, some interesting effects can be observed. These include recognition of the expertise of citizens, who then play an active part in helping to shape public service delivery processes. Another relevant outcome is the submission of proposals for more efficient management of public funds. Such effects are either invisible or non-existent, however. At least, some procedures aimed to favor budget cuts reveal information that had not been made public before. In Essen, for example, citizens were also informed about the salary of managers of municipal enterprises; additionally, citizens in Essen obtained information about the compensation that supervisory board members of these enterprises receive.

By contrast, other modernization outputs, such as cross-departmental cooperation, faster administrative processes, changes in management structures or improved monitoring of local government tend to be found in other European countries (Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke, 2014). At the same time, we should not forget that it was primarily the cases in Germany that prompted the debate on PB and modernization in Europe. A first step in this direction was the creation of greater transparency on PB choices, an issue that became important for several cities. One example can be found in Seville, Spain, where the financing of projects through PB is shown separately in the published budget.

## 4. Participatory Budgeting and Civil Society

In addition to social justice and the modernization of local administration, PB has also often been associated with the mobilization or even the empowerment of citizens. In Brazil, this also led to a strengthening of representative democracy. This occurred through the reduction of corruption and patronage-based relationships that resulted from the increased transparency and autonomy of community initiatives within PB. In Latin America, in experiments influenced by community development, citizens are highly active. Nevertheless, the process is organized mainly outside political institutions, which is why a strengthening of representative democracy is not necessarily to be expected. What balance can be drawn in this respect in Europe and North America?

In a large majority of European PBs, local governments took the decision to introduce this innovative participatory procedure. Frequently, however, initiatives based on community development follow a somewhat different route. They emerge from within a culture of self-help, which is widespread in the United Kingdom and North America, partly because state welfare provision is weaker there than in western Europe or Scandinavia. The nature of these initiatives ranges from relatively informal neighborhood groups to professional organizations. Community organizations acquire funding for their activities from external sources, which often means programs run by the regional or national government, or in the case of Europe the European Union.

In the Canadian city of Guelph (population 100,000), located 100 km west of Toronto in the state of Ontario, community groups initiated a participatory budget that was initially independent and then gradually won over the city government as a partner. Something similar happened in several UK cities (such as Newcastle, Manchester, Salford and Edinburgh), where only when the Community Pride network decided to apply PB decision-making criteria to the funding received by local government did many politicians

start to appreciate PB and its potential. In Guelph, during the 1990s, money was obtained from a provincial government program and participatory consultations were held with the stakeholder community on how to use it. Positive experience was obtained using this approach, which led to the establishment of a coalition of community initiatives that transferred the procedure to other districts. Thematic proposals and territorial projects are first proposed by the organizers. These proposals are discussed and prioritized in community forums. The final decision on funding is taken by community assembly delegates. In other words, the citizens concerned actually do manage the money themselves – frequently with the assistance of a mandated community manager. For each project, a quarter of the funding needed must be obtained by the groups or beneficiaries themselves. More than 1,000 people participate in this process annually, a large proportion of them from low-income groups (Pinnington/Lerner/Schugurensky, 2009). For them and their children, activities are financed in their districts, such as festivals, leisure activities, education measures and minor construction works.

A different PB has also existed in the Plateau Mont-Royal district (population 101,000) of the Canadian city of Montreal between 2005 and 2009. It emerged from a movement that was driven and led largely by civil society organizations (Rabuin, 2009, 2013). As early as the late 1990s, these organizations invited the mayor of Porto Alegre, Raul Pont, to discuss the introduction in their home city of a procedure based on the Brazilian model. Initially, a corresponding proposal was rejected by the city government. A city conference organized by civil society activists in 2005, at which both Brazilian and European experiments were presented, helped persuade the mayor of the borough that PB was a good idea. She had also been persuaded by trips to Brazil during the World Social Forum. The key impetus for introducing such a procedure came in response to the continued pressure exerted by community organizations, especially the Centre of Urban Ecology of Montreal. Although there were no allocation criteria and the process as it was represented a compromise, community groups were

able to influence the procedural rules. In 2009, however, the new mayor decided to stop the process.

Altogether, in these parts of the world, mobilization for PB is not self-evident. Possibly, it is easier for citizens to become engaged if they have already practiced participation at school. The fact that this is possible in principle has been demonstrated in various experimental settings. In the second half of the 2000s, a growing number of initiatives involved students in PB. The most comprehensive experiment to date is being conducted in high schools in the French region of Poitou-Charentes (Sintomer, Talpin, 2011).

#### **Box 15:**

#### **Participatory school budget in Poitou-Charentes (France)**

PB in high schools in the French region of Poitou-Charente started in 2005 – thanks to the political will of the regional governor – and by 2012 it had already approved more than 2,000 projects voted on by more than 150,000 participants. The experiment involves a total of 93 public high schools and some private institutes (Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke 2014) in a region that counts more than 55,000 high-school students. In this procedure, participants can decide on a total sum of 10 million euros (around US\$ 12.3 million) per year; they can put forward proposals for small-scale projects and investments worth a maximum of 150,000 euros (US\$ 184,000) each. The total school budget of the region amounts to 110 million euros (around US\$ 135 million). In each school the participatory budget, which involves all members of the high school community and also the students' parents, is based on two forums lasting approximately two hours each. The first meeting (November/December) begins with an explanation of how the participatory budget works. In a second step working groups are formed to discuss projects designed to improve day-to-day life in the school. Finally, representatives of each group present their respective results in plenary. After the proposals have been reviewed by the regional government, a second meeting is held (January/February) at which the proposals are prioritized. Each participant is given ten

ballots to distribute across the proposals, as they see fit. The list of priorities produced in this way is then passed on to the regional government.

In 2011, another dimension was introduced, with representatives of different schools coming together at regional level who could have a say on issues linked to the redistribution of PB funding among the different structures, taking into account the uneven conditions of schools in urban and urban areas. In addition, Poitou-Charentes created a PB for familial and rural housing for students, which discusses a budget of 265,000 euros a year, trying to improve the quality of everyday life in these places.

Following this example, other regional governments in France (such as Nord-Pas-de-Calais) have started to emulate this process in their territories, but with less emphasis on co-decision-making.

PBs specifically targeting young people or schoolchildren are growing in popularity, especially in Europe. After the well-known, Spanish experiments of Cordoba, Santa Cristina de Aro and Laboraforo in Seville (a separate process targeting young people which in 2010 modified its PB rules, giving all children above 10 years of age the right to vote on the city's PB), another successful experiment took place in the small Italian city of Colle Val d'Elsa, where schoolchildren can discuss how to use 15,000 euros per year, receiving special financial support from the Tuscany Region in order to raise the quality of education. In Europe, the majority of PB processes targeting young people are concentrated in Sweden (Örebro, Uddevalla, Upplands Vasby) and Portugal (São Brás de Alportel, Lisbon, Cascais, Alfandega da Fé, Oliveira do Hospital, Marvila, Trofa, and Condeixa-a-Nova, around 17,000 inhabitants, that in 2012 devoted 150,000 euros to a participatory budget targeting young people aged 16 to 35). While in New York, Vallejo and several UK cities (for example, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 280,000 inhabitants) special measures are devoted to the involvement of children and young people in PB, in Germany the Bertelsmann Foundation is supporting the development of PB experiments for young people (Rietberg, Wennigsen).

In November 2013, the Boston City Government signed a contract with the Participatory Budgeting Project for launching a “Young PB” (the first in the United States) for 2014.

#### **Box 16:**

##### **Scaling-up PB: the regional level**

PB is still used mainly at municipal and sub-municipal level. Some experiments in Latin America have taken place at provincial or regional levels or in states that are part of a national federation, but it is mainly in Europe that PB has involved this level (Sintomer, Talpin, 2011). Besides school PB in the Poitou-Charentes Region, France, one of the first examples was Malaga Province, in Spain, which between 2005 and 2011 elaborated strategies to encourage the development of municipal participatory budgets in small municipalities, supporting PB in 23 of the 101 municipal governments in its territory, six of them surviving the political shift of 2011 (Garcia, 2009). In the same period, Barcelona Province promoted a different kind of network among local cities experimenting with PB, structuring dialogue and mutual self-learning among 11 municipalities.

Some of the most effective experiments with promoting PB at regional level have been in Italy. The experiment in the Latium region (2005–2010) discussed with citizens 5 million euros of investment every year in a specific sector of action suggested by participants; offered training in PB to local authorities and civil servants; and for some years promoted a call for projects, supporting local experiments of participation applied to economic and financial local issues with 11 million euros a year in more than 200 different municipalities of very different sizes and political colors (Allegretti, in Sintomer and Talpin, 2011).

Another Italian region, Tuscany, approved a participatory Law on Citizens’ Participation in 2007 (modified in 2013), which provided a call-for-projects to benefit local institutions and social organizations committed to shaping participatory processes, supporting it with special funding and an independent authority that supervises the quality and evolution of processes throughout the region (Picchi,

2012). A growing number of PBs have been able to take advantage of this initiative. In 2012, Tuscan PBs represented around 70 percent of Italian processes. The region of Emilia Romagna was inspired by the Tuscan Law on Participation and recently approved a similar legal framework to promote participation.

## **5. The Outcomes of Participatory Budgeting in Europe and North America**

Barely a decade after they came into existence in these regions, what conclusions can we draw about participatory budgets in Europe (and to a lesser extent North America)? As regards social justice, we can hardly speak of a new series of Porto Alegre’s nor the strong diffusion of the participatory model. Unlike in Brazil and Latin America, PB here has not led to a reversal of priorities to benefit weaker social groups. The most that has been achieved is a higher level of justice in the territorial redistribution of public resources. Is there perhaps less of a need for social justice in the old continent? There do exist various methods by which socially disadvantaged groups and individuals can be promoted through PB. One is to apply criteria that favor socially deprived neighborhoods in the allocation of public funds. The second involves community development. Here, the funds are managed by the citizens themselves, who are also actively involved in implementing the corresponding activities. In Europe, this approach has been successfully applied primarily in the United Kingdom. It has also taken firm root in North America. One challenge is that the volume of funds made available to date usually remains too low to be able to correct any broader deficits in social justice.

Participatory modernization within the framework of PB can take place in various ways. One way in which participants are able to develop and specify proposals provides extensive scope for joint discussion. In the Berlin district of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, for instance, citizens have been able to put forward detailed proposals because they have

several opportunities to meet in working groups. In Tuscany (Italy) in 2012, several new PB experiments helped volunteers to interact with randomly-selected citizens to work in small groups on proposals and increase the deliberative quality of the processes. Experiments in Lisbon and Cascais in Portugal focused on the preparation of technical staff and employees to play an active role in raising the quality of PB. If we compare the outcomes of the Latin American and European experiments, it appears advantageous to link PB not only to local government modernization, but also to gender mainstreaming and social balance.

With regard to the mobilization and empowerment of civil society, as well as the “democratization of democracy” in Europe and North America, PB has led to far less radical changes in the relationship between civil society and the state than it has in Latin America. It is also difficult to demonstrate a link between the introduction of PB and a global increase in electoral turnout, or an improvement in electoral results for governing parties, although some cases (such as that of the 49th ward in Chicago) seem to present fairly clear evidence of the existence of such a connection. The difficulty of establishing a clear cause/effect relationship between PB and political results is due also to the fact that in many cities PB is not the only participatory tool, so that possible electoral success cannot be strictly related to it, but to the overall “dialogic management style” of the local government. Usually, in those municipalities with a PB procedure, an improved electoral outcome resulted only in cases in which the process was well received by citizens and accompanied by a successful overall performance by the local government (Sintomer/Herzberg/Röcke, 2014; Spada, 2010). Nonetheless, in some cases, as in the United Kingdom and Portugal, PB can attract people who have no trust in the party-based representative democracy system. For example – as proved by the comparative project “OPtar” – in the major ten cities of Portugal with PB, more than 25,7% of participants do not use to vote in elections, but they trust the participatory process and its clear rules (Pereira, 2013).

PB also can help to strengthen civil society. Even if there are still no examples of a strong general change in social relations in Europe and North America, there are numerous cases in which less spectacular empowerment effects are clearly visible. All in all, these experiments with PB form a puzzle. Despite these contrasted results, PB is still developing quickly at European level and – albeit much less – in North America.

In the latter continent, it is likely that participatory budgeting will have a fast development in the next years, especially after the second National Open Government Plan of United States – released in December 2013 – included a large chapter devoted to the importance of PB and its dissemination (see [www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/us\\_national\\_action\\_plan\\_6p.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/us_national_action_plan_6p.pdf))

### III. Africa: Late and Unequal Development

In Africa, where PB development has been more recent, the models developed and the weight of transnational transfers present a fast-evolving picture. Development took on momentum when the Federation of African Cities and Regional Governments (UCLGA) took an active role in promoting training and visibility with regard to PB at its triennial international meeting “Africities,” held in Dakar in December 2012. This continent has been able to draw on a great deal of interchange with Latin America and Europe, which over the past 15 years have stressed the importance of PB as an innovative tool for improving governance. The scarcity of research and the difficulty of many local actors in overcoming the silence imposed by communicational and technological barriers or their marginal location in the global flow of information make it difficult to draw a systematic and inclusive panorama (Lieberherr, 2003). However, one feature is clear: in a continent where representative democratic structures and Western-like institutional cultures are weak, PB remains highly dependent on the action of international donors and NGOs, even though some social movements and a number of local authorities have engaged in it. The path that has largely been followed in Africa is the one that the Latin American radical movements had warned against. It also differs from the European case, where local government has had a major role. During the first decade of the new millennium, “alter-globalization” networks have exerted a strong influence. However, in a region heavily burdened by social, economic and political problems, the innovation that PB represents could be an important source of hope (Allegretti, 2002).

In Africa, a step-forward became possible in the second half of the 1990s, when larger political reforms drew attention to a wide range of management tools that might create scope for participatory democracy (Olowu, 2003). The slow rhythm of the process by which PB took root on the African continent was due partly to the scarce resources provided to local levels by very centralized institutional cultures, as well as to limited decentralization, which was initially felt as a necessary premise for an innovation that had mainly been developed at local level in the rest of the world. However, the encounter between the first PBs and local

institutions in Africa tells another story: these experiments are often “catalysts” supporting and even accelerating the effectiveness of decentralization reforms. The latter came to be merged with strong principles of transparency and responsiveness (in many countries embodied in national administrative reforms, as requested by international donors). They also guaranteed respect for the pre-existing traditions of citizen participation in many areas in Africa. This is perhaps why since 2005 we have seen a visible acceleration of the process, supported by powerful institutions, such as the World Bank (Goldfrank, 2012) and the UN (especially the HABITAT agency, based in Nairobi). It is impossible to deny the existence of an element of “neo-colonialism” in the way in which the idea of PB entered the African political debate. However, the diversity of actors has led to local adaptations that are difficult to classify. PB has merged with other tools, whose main objectives are the “demystification of budgeting,” the “traceability of investments” and “consensual development of planning” in the sense of multi-stakeholder participation. These aims also include a multitude of governance principles linked to the improvement of decentralization and the achievement of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals.

The main limitation of these practices is often their “donor-based” perspective, which considers the transparent management of budgets a “donors’ right,” designed to guarantee their formal goals in relationship to the international community, rather than a “citizens’ right” which could increase the overall level of democracy by widening access to decision-making. Over 50 percent of the resources invested through PB by African cities usually come from external resources (Badiane, 2011). Such an approach can ignore the positive contribution of the traditional or “neo-traditional” authorities linked to indigenous communities (which are often pivotal actors in social development, especially in rural areas), and impose models that mainly benefit NGOs or new local elites. At the same time, the mixed nature of African PBs could play a positive role, generating new hypotheses for poverty alleviation strategies and consolidating decentralization through new contextualized tools. This could lead to new models that conceive of



democratization as a substantive issue based on resource redistribution, access to education, knowledge and power (Sintomer, 2010), and the “right to the city”.

## 1. Early Beginnings and a Proliferation of Experiments in Francophone Africa

The first African experiments that used the term “participatory budgeting” appeared in 2003–2004 in western francophone sub-Saharan Africa. They soon had close contacts with Latin America. The rural municipality of Batcham (population 215,000) in western Cameroon benefited from collaboration with ASSOAL (Actions of Solidarity and Support to Organizations and Freedoms, which developed from an association of book-lovers), an NGO which had helped create “local observatories on electoral engagements”. Through international networks such as the International Alliance of Inhabitants and the France-based *Démocratiser Radicalement la Démocratie*, it learned about the concept from Brazilian experiments. In 2003, ASSOAL negotiated its participation in a pilot project for PB with the mayor of Batcham and Edzoundou (a rural municipality 60 km from Yaoundé). In the year in which Cameroon’s capital hosted the pan-African forum “Africities” ASSOAL organized a special session on PB together with the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP, a mixed agency partially supported by UN Habitat) and the PGU-ALC. Such networking produced a “Charter of intentions for the promotion of PB in Africa”, signed by five mayors in Cameroon, the cooperation agency of Brazilian municipalities, UN-HABITAT, MDP and others. This important moment was followed by several international training events organized by international and national organizations and NGOs. The biennium 2011–2012 represented a very important moment for PB in Africa with continent-level recognition provided by the African branch of the international association of cities (UCLG).

### Box 17:

#### WUF, Africities and the World Social Forum

Since 2003, two recurrent international events have regularly promoted knowledge about PB, giving particular visibility to experiments in Africa. The first is the World Urban Forum (WUF), organized by UN HABITAT to promote regular world-wide discussion of issues such as housing, environment, governance or urban and rural management. The difference between this Forum and Summits such as HABITAT I (Vancouver, 1976) or HABITAT II (Istanbul, 1996) is that it is open to events proposed by so-called “development partners,” such as NGOs, community-based organizations, local authorities, researchers and enterprises. In this new framework, several networking and training events on PB have been organized, starting in 2004. The first African experiments were represented in 2006.

Similarly, the Africities forum, organized by MDP and the African section of United Cities and Local Government (created in 2004, bringing together African mayors and mayoral associations from all over the continent) became a central space for fostering interchange among PB actors in Africa, and lobbying for support from European cooperation agencies and international institutions. At the 2000 forum held in Windhoek, Namibia, the ministers who attended endorsed the Victoria Falls Declaration of 1999, in which PB was recognized as a key instrument for achieving good governance. In subsequent years, sessions on PB have been organized by international organizations such as UN-HABITAT, the World Bank Institute and UCLG Africa. One particular success took place in the 2012 event held in Dakar, at which several official conferences on PB were able to attract more than 400 participants. On these occasions the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy (OIDP) strongly engaged in the promotion of PB experiments, which were in the frontline of the monitoring work of the new pan-African Observatory of Participatory Democracy, launched on this occasion by ENDA (Senegal). Some best-practice awards have been given to African PBs. Finally, during the event, a partnership agreement between local government representatives from Cameroon and Brazil

was signed to pursue South-South Knowledge Exchange (SSKE) on ICT-enabled PB between the two countries.

Similar events focusing on PB practices were also held at several World and Regional Social Forums (Mumbai 2004, Bamako and Athens 2006, Nairobi 2007, Malmö 2008, Tunis 2013). The highest number of networking events on PB was achieved in 2011 at the Dakar World Social Forum and during the parallel Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion, opened by the President of Senegal.

At a national level, the Charter was for Cameroon the beginning of the first two African participatory budgets that were directly related to Latin American experiments (through ASSOAL consultancy and training for local facilitators). The rural municipalities of Batcham (population 215,000) and Ezendouan (13 villages, population 12,000) started PB in 2004, when the Law on Decentralization was about to be revised to increase municipal competences. They adopted similar methods: social mapping was organized, followed by a broad information campaign, the formalization of commitments by the municipal councils and the training of local volunteers, technicians and elected officers. The promulgation of an Internal Ruling Act for PB marked the formalization of a methodology that more or less adopted the Porto Alegre model, coupled with elements of participatory strategic planning. Exchange with other African experiments has played an important role in elaborating the methodology. In the five years of experimentation with PB, a Multimedia Centre, a Professional Training Centre (Batcham Chefferie), street connections and plans for basic infrastructure have been funded and implemented. In addition, archaeological and tourist sites were identified, mapped and developed. In a country in which an average of 75 percent of municipal resources are devoted to current expenses, these investments were made possible both by savings made through transparent management and constructive partnerships with inhabitants, and by an increased attractiveness for international donors. In the past three years the Batcham budget rose by 49 percent, bringing investment up to 35 percent. The 2007 elections led to a change of mayor in Batcham. The

newly-elected mayor, who was also a tribal chief, saw PB as providing added value. The number of participants in public decision-making meetings has risen to 5 percent, the implementation of public works has been accelerated and Batcham has become a point of reference both for the country and for francophone Africa. A number of events have been organized and 27 municipalities (out of the more than 430 that exist in Cameroon) have been running PB experiments with a high average quality, while others started meetings on the 2013 budget (Dumas Nguebou/Noupeou, 2013).

Since 2011, ASSOAL has been involved in close cooperation with the World Bank Institute (WBI) to address the challenges related to the linkages between ICTs and local governance, considering inclusiveness as an indicator of legitimacy and working on how ICT could aid in processes of inclusion. In the first year, the ongoing ICT-mediated PB process in Yaoundé involved 45,000 citizens (out of around 269,000), and the reduction of information costs was a key factor in this success. Thanks to such experiments, ASSOAL started grow and be recognized by several francophone African countries as an important multiplier of PBs far beyond the borders of Cameroon. It has played an important role in training and counseling local and provincial authorities in South Kivu, a province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC), where – at the beginning of 2011 – the governor proposed to implement a PB experiment involving eight local authorities (the three municipalities that constitute the capital Bukavu and five rural territories governed by traditional authorities). Barumbu (150,300 inhabitants north of Kinshasa) and Kalamu (315,342 inhabitants) processes developed due to strong pressure from civil society organizations. It allowed requests for further decentralization in a country whose administrative systems rely on a dual track (appointed – and not elected– politicians in the cities and traditional customary authorities in the countryside) which is not able to make public officers accountable for how they spend public money (Allegretti/Mbera, 2013; Mbera, 2012).

In Senegal, the story is not very different. The first and most internationally known experiments are those of Fissel (population 42,000) in the Mbour Department, and Matam (population 20,000) in eastern Senegal, on the border with Mauritania. Fissel is a rural community consisting of 28 villages. In this area of long-standing democratic traditions (which in 1996 hosted the first Senegalese community radio), the participatory budget was created in 2003, following a request by RECODEF (a representative organization of Fissel civil society) to open financial decision-making to villagers. It was supported by the NGO IED Afrique (Gueye, 2007). The most important feature of the experiment was the gathering together of representatives of several homogeneous groups (women, young people, the elderly) in a second phase. It proved to be very important in offsetting traditional exclusionary practices based on criteria of gender, age and culture, and in empowering traditionally marginalized persons (Allegretti/Freitas/Pereira, 2014). The same NGO was asked to work in other rural communities and was able to create a local PB model that was consolidated in 2008 by two important handbooks circulated all over francophone Africa: *Le Budget Participatif en pratique* (integrated into the regional program *Réussir la Décentralisation*) and *Le Budget Participatif en Afrique – Manuel de formation pour les pays francophones*, coordinated by the NGO ENDA TM with UN HABITAT (Kanoute, 2007). The Matam experiment, which started in 2005, is remarkable because it attempts to mobilize resources from the diaspora (by creating links with emigrants from Matam who live elsewhere in the world), and to involve immigrants from Mauritania who are now residents. The experiment gives families a central role in discussing the relationship between revenues and expenditure. The Spanish cooperation agency is presently working on an important national-level initiative for PB, following a national workshop organized in 2006 in Dakar with the Association of Senegalese Mayors. In Senegal, 19 PB experiments worked on the 2012 budget and 28 began on the 2013 budget.

In Burkina Faso, three new experiments have been implemented since 2010, with the support of local civil society organizations in Ouahigouya (120,000 inhabitants);

Dapélogo (35,700) and Diébougou (42,000). In Benin, an interesting feature of the PB experiment of Adjarra (around 60,000 inhabitants) is that local authorities have noticed an increase in “fiscal civic behaviour,” that is, a reduction in the evasion of local taxes since the first year of the experiment in 2003 (ENDA, 2006), similar to what happened in Congo (Allegretti/Mbera, 2013).

In Madagascar, where the decentralization framework was clarified by law in 1995, six rural municipalities launched pilot PB activities in 2008, supported by two dozen civic and professional institutions, and others took place in urban areas, such as the municipality of Fort Dauphin (population 59,000), the fifth administrative district of the capital Antananarivo. An important role was played in the dissemination of innovations by SAHA, a rural development program funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The most renowned example of PB in Madagascar, that of the rural municipality of Ambalavao in the center of the country (population 9,000), demonstrates the problem of pre-existing municipal debt and the difficulty of mobilizing people, especially women. Since 2006, and despite a political change, there has been a qualitative growth in the organization of a system that tries to involve people at village level. The municipality has managed to raise the budgetary contribution of local taxes in land from 8 percent to 52 percent. It has also involved several village communities in service delivery and implementation of public works. Today, the Local Governance Program of the World Bank is collaborating with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to increase the interchange between the various Malagasy participatory budgets and other experiments abroad. A network (*Plateforme nationale sur la redevabilité sociale*) has been created, which is discussing a “service quality standard” that could help guarantee better results. The improvements in communication include the publication of mayors’ salaries and an increasing use of oral and video methodologies to help non-literate people get involved. Specific measures are also being undertaken to facilitate other vulnerable groups’ access to participatory arenas (Smoke, 2007). Dozens of experiments are being carried out and their number is growing. In December

2012, the PB of Ampasy Nahampoana, a small rural municipality with 4,000 inhabitants in the Toliara Region, won the special award for the best African PB established by UCLGA (the African branch of the United Cities and Local Government Association). According to the rules of the prize, PB experts that work for the small municipality will be made available and funded by UCLGA to support other cities experimenting with PB through peer-to-peer learning.

To date, besides the fragility of formal democratic institutions, the major difficulties in implementing PB in francophone Africa have been linked to two issues. The first is the lack of resources to implement prioritized citizens' demands, which has been partially solved by making communities co-responsible for delivering services and supporting the construction of public works, thus integrating elements of the *community development* participatory budget. The second huge difficulty lies in making participatory budgets the main communication channel between communities and the municipality and to overcome the former patron-clients paradigm. One of the most important challenges for the future is to increase community training, so that people better understand the complexity of public decision-making and the role that every actor plays in the success of participatory processes. The creation of grassroots observatories, as in Cameroon, could also be interesting.

## 2. The Influence of Participatory Budgeting in Lusophone Africa

Although Brazil and Portugal have many participatory budgets, the innovation is still underdeveloped in lusophone Africa. In 2005, UNICEF in Cape Verde signed a first cooperation agreement. Later on, a project for implementing PB was coordinated by the General Direction of Local Administration (a national government body) and supported by the UN Fund for Good Governance. In 2007, the project involved In-LoCo, a Portuguese NGO, which at the time was coordinating an important EU-funded national project for training local authorities in PB in Portugal. In Cape Verde, In-LoCo has been training politicians, municipal workers

and civil society members and supporting the design of local models of PB. In 2009, a new phase was launched with an international conference presenting examples of PB from Latin America and Portugal. The project was aimed at guaranteeing continuity between the new tool and previous participatory practices. In 2009, the first pilot process started in the municipality of Paul (population 8,500), a rural area with a strong potential for tourism. Elections changed the local government and the process was interrupted. The same happened in other towns. Despite all the efforts of the international partnership to introduce PB in Cape Verde into the routine of local government, it became the "hostage" of a very polarized political situation, which includes tensions between central and local government.

By contrast, the situation in Mozambique is no longer deadlocked (Dias, 2013). Here, the most significant existing experiment, that of the capital Maputo (population 1.2 million), started in 2004 as part of the electoral program of FRELIMO, the left-wing party that led the fight for national independence (Nguenha and Weimer 2004). After a city delegation took part in the Africa Regional Seminar on Participatory Budgeting organized in Durban by MDP-ESA, UN HABITAT, the World Bank Institute and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the municipal council of the Mozambican capital announced that a more organized PB pilot process would be launched in the Catembe district. After a period of collapse (Nguenha, 2013), PB was reshaped in 2011 with the help of international organizations such as the World Bank, in collaboration with experts from the In-LoCo Association of Portugal, as a sub-municipal experiment in two-thirds of the city's districts, with decentralized meetings in different neighborhoods. This "new model" allocated around US\$ 850,000 to PB. Other Mozambican municipalities have incorporated some principles of PB, such as the participatory planning system in Dondo (population 71,600) and other processes co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Dondo became one of the reference points in the training companion manual (edited by UN HABITAT and MDP) and won several international awards in recognition of its local participatory management innovations. In Dondo, the strong influence

of the *community development* model in the discussions on the budget plan is balanced by the connection with investments that are co-decided by citizens and private-sector actors, which is what we called a multi-stakeholder model. Today, the United Cities and Local Government Association is leading a peer-to-peer project between Dondo and some Brazilian cities, in order to exchange practices on the articulation between participatory planning and PB experiences.

**Box 18:**

**The “Training Companion”: an active tool to spread participatory budgeting**

In 2005, a survey promoted by UN HABITAT among its own in-country staff and partners from local government and civil society gave shape to the idea of a Training Companion for Participatory Budgeting (UN HABITAT/MDP). An expert group meeting in Nairobi – attended by over 30 stakeholders from 13 African countries and some Latin American institutions – opened a process for generating a learning tool that would include specific ongoing examples in several African cities. A regional workshop held in Harare by NDP in March 2007 mobilized resources for pilot measures designed to make the Training Companion more effective (Masiya, 2009). The two-volume manual (published in 2008 in separate French and English versions) clearly states that it does not aim to achieve a unique model of PB, but rather to benefit different local territories, taking advantage of economies of scale in advocacy and capacity-building efforts. It is the result of broad interregional collaboration. It is also clear and easy to read, being based on simple concepts and illustrative examples that respect the diversity of sub-regional settings. The Training Companion is available as an electronic version, which increases its accessibility.

### 3. Anglophone Africa: Hybrid Experiments

In countries influenced by their former French or Portuguese colonial administrations, the mayor plays a central role, as in Latin America and in the majority of continental Europe. For this reason, and due to ideological or cultural influences, PB found a channel through which it could rise and spread in line with the original Porto Alegre model, which focuses on the budget as the main object of discussion. By contrast, in Anglophone Africa two things make it more difficult to clearly define what PB is and to identify concrete examples. On one hand, the inherited administrative colonial structure bequeathed a local government system in which elected officials have more limited political power compared to mayors elsewhere, and in which a higher level of discretionary control over local budgets is provided to technical city managers, as well as central/ministerial institutions (UCLG, 2008, 2010). In addition, in this area of influence PBs are often of a “hybrid” nature, although in the majority of cases, experiments could be similar to the *community development* model of old Anglo-Saxon tradition. Here the discussion of the budget usually merges with other participatory or consultative processes, which have different and parallel objectives, such as physical and economic planning, resource protection or rural development strategies. Moreover, several tools for controlling the financial performance of local and regional authorities have been developed. They are somewhat similar to PB, but are designed mainly to strengthen transparency, accountability and citizen control over budgets (McNeil/Malena, 2010). It is in this area that MDP-ESA (based in Harare), UN HABITAT (based in Nairobi) and other important institutions have been promoting the incorporation of PB principles into local governance. Since 2006, these actors have been working to establish the Training Companion and other tools to disseminate the concept that emerged from some Latin American experiments. This has led to the gradual hybridization of autochthonous African attempts to create a dialogue on financial and budgeting issues between representative decentralized structures and citizens.

In the 2000s, Zimbabwe, one of the many African countries whose constitution does not recognize local government, has been providing interesting examples of “bottom-up” participatory budgets. In this authoritarian pseudo-democracy, where legislation advocates consultation rather than participation (Tawanda, 2012; Shah, 2007), PB often emerged from a “confrontational relationship” between citizens and institutions. In 2002, Marondera (population 46,000, east of Harare) accepted that it would satisfy requests made by inhabitants and local stakeholders after being caught up in the hyperinflation spiral induced by high debt resulting from water supply and sanitation contracts (Chaeruka/Sigauke, 2008). In Mutoko rural district, PB began in 2003 in response to strong civil society protests. Resources of the governmental Pilot Program on Developing Local Governance were used to train facilitators and elaborate a social map of stakeholders active in the area. In the central city of Gweru (population 300,000), the PB process is implemented by ward development committees and budget formulation workshops that are open to representatives of civic groups. These participate in the five-year planning process and suggest tariff levels, adjustments to salaries and capital expenditure priorities.

In Uganda, where the 1995 Constitution explicitly endorses citizens’ participation in planning and where a specific Local Government Budget Call Circular fosters transparency and the standardization of data collection, the concept of community-based monitoring and evaluation is a central feature of the planning and budgeting process. The most renowned PB is Entebbe (population 115,000), the former colonial capital on the northern coast of Lake Victoria, where a process was initiated in 2000. It consists of a one-month period for visiting each of the 24 villages and sub-wards in order to ascertain local conditions, problems, needs and priorities, in the run-up to the annual budget process. A similar process happens in Kasawo and Soroti, where community radio actively contributes to the budget cycle discussion. Here, the “wish list” elaborated by community members does not lead to prioritization and discussion of resources and revenue generation (Babcock et al., 2008).

In the past decade, Tanzania has developed only hybrid experiments in response to the current national allocation system, which is “inefficient, cumbersome, and non-transparent” (Shall, 2007). The same is happening in Zambia, where no formalized participation mechanisms exist and civic participation in policy and budget decision-making processes is rare. The case of the Namwala District Council (around 85,000 inhabitants) is an interesting case linked to the Community Development model. Organized into Area Development Committees (ACDs), it started at the end of 2010 and considered PB to be a “stimulating environment” in which to support other governance reforms. In the vision of the district administration and the MDP-ESA that support it, the creation of a revenue data bank system together with the trust in local authorities created by the practice of PB in the first year was able to increase the district income by about 50 percent (allegedly the traditional apathy of the business community was reduced, contributing to a 95 percent rise in its financial commitment). Among the services prioritized by the area Development Committees in 2011 the first was the renovation of the water supply system, which in 2012 was implemented through the procurement of a drilling rig and 42 boreholes in different part of the territory. The major difficulty for fostering a serious PB with real decision-making power in Zambia is that fiscal transfers from the central government are unpredictable and councils have little information concerning funding policies, the criteria adopted in allocating grants, or the reasons for delays in releasing funds.

The situation is not dissimilar in Kenya, one of the most stable African representative democracies (Mika, 2004). A Local Government Act and Local Authorities Transfer Fund Act state that a participatory planning process is needed before submitting the Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan and receiving national funding (Kundishora, 2004). In big cities such as Nairobi (population 4.5 million), priorities from different wards and constituencies are harmonized in a citywide consultative forum attended by three representatives from each ward. Other interesting participatory mechanisms are the “barazas” public meetings (called by traditional chiefs to educate citizens on public policies)



and “harambee” committees (self-help groups that identify priority projects and raise funds to implement them). In this framework, experiments with participation in budget approval date back to 2001/2002, but their consultative role is limited.

South Africa is the major regional power and one of the most dynamic representative democracies on the continent. Here, participation is defined by the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 as a responsibility of executive committees. It is, however, strictly linked to a “basic needs” approach and promotion of the socioeconomic development of each community, and tends to focus mainly on the planning process, the performance management system and strategic decisions on service delivery (Leduka, 2009; Smith, 2004). A minimum advisory process of opening the budget up to citizens exists all over the country, even if some local authorities are more committed to it than others. In some cities, such as Mangaung/Bloemfontein (population 380,000) or the Metropolitan Ekurhuleni Municipality (population 2.5 million, Gauteng Province), the local government added to the Integrated Development Planning Representative Forum a special “budget conference”, designed to involve stakeholders in increasing coherence between the budget and the actions provided for in the Integrated Development Plan. Some promising projects have failed due to political change. Johannesburg, the main city of South Africa (1.1 million inhabitants, in a metropolitan area of 4.4 million), will restructure its PB experiment in 2013 (it started in 2007) by opening it up to more neighborhood meetings and to all citizens. If this change is pursued it could represent an important step-forward for the whole country, going beyond a tradition centered mainly on consultative meetings (lekgotlas) organized in many cities by the Budget Office and the Mayor Cabinet Office as arenas of “multi-stakeholder participation”, or at least of a mix of this model and the “community development” one. Overall, even if participation during the budgeting process has somehow become a legal requirement for South Africa (as happens in Kenya and other English-speaking African countries), this has not yet resulted in the configuration of real participatory budgets. The rudimentary processes that

exist are still not provided with workable rules, they do not foster the creation of new institutional structures and they rarely tackle racial divisions. The social impact of a participatory mechanism that was conceived in Latin America as a pivotal tool of civic pedagogy and maturation has so far been rather limited in this region of the world.

This is more or less true for all the Anglophone African countries. Although participatory mechanisms (especially those linked to planning) try to involve citizens in budgetary issues, elected officials and administrative staff are only weakly committed to using these mechanisms to really fight social inequalities or to empower individual participants and communities (Munzwa et alii, 2007). The difficulty of relating the “spurious” African PBs (which are often labeled this way by external actors such as researchers, consultants or international institutions) to the Latin American and European ones, and even to many of those taking place in French- or Portuguese-speaking African countries, is quite evident, even though the “circulation of models” has greatly increased in the past five years.

As far as Northern Africa is concerned, where local governments usually have limited competences and responsibilities (UCLG, 2008, 2010) and where representative democracy is often “under control”, it remains an open challenge for the future. In fact, up to now, almost no initiative has been undertaken to promote PB, beyond some training seminars promoted in Morocco by Transparency International (Casablanca, 2007) or ENDA (Rabat, 2011; Tunis 2013) and some side events at the Africities forum (Marrakesh, 2009; Dakar, 2012). The only country that showed an interest in implementation has been Egypt, in the last period of Mubarak era – a context not very favorable to citizen participation and promising for fake experiments. The downfall of the regime stopped the experiment and the UNHabitat handbook *72 answers to frequently asked questions on PB*, translated into Arabic and presented at Africities in December 2009, cannot be used anymore. For 2014, the NGO “Action Associative” promoted a network of five cities in Tunisia, which formally committed to experience PB during the democratic transition phase.



# Participatory Budgeting in Asia and Oceania: Between Autochthonous Development and International Exchanges

## IV.

In Asia, which is home to nearly half the world's population and contains 23 of the 40 largest metropolitan areas on the planet, PB emerged even later than in Africa, although it has since undergone important growth. In contrast with other continents, the processes were initially mainly autochthonous and local, even though their principles and methodologies have a lot in common with those of America or Europe. They implied a critical questioning of the ties between politics, the economy and administrative reforms. Often, the actors conducting these experiments were not aware of what was going on in other cities and countries. The methodology and political significance of the experiments still differ sharply from one place to other, making it difficult to take a panoramic view. In addition, political structures are much more heterogeneous in Asia than in Europe or Latin America, with a spectrum that includes federal and centralized states, constitutional monarchies with parliamentary governments, unitary presidential systems and single-party states. The diversity of cultures and standards of living is striking. A common factor has been that the birth of PB took place in a period of accelerated economic development, and to a lesser extent in a phase of progressive decentralization (UCLG, 2008, 2010, 2013). All in all, however, the PB landscape in Asia is a kind of mosaic. Its contributions to the international debate are diverse. International exchange increased in a second phase, but it is not certain that this will help unify the panorama, because their impact is quite different from place to place. The term PB first came into use only around 2005, with explicit reference to Brazil. The first actors who came into direct contact with the European or Latin American debates were those in Kerala state (India), whose experiment received international recognition from left-wing scholars (Fung/Wright, 2001; Santos, 2005) and alter-globalist movements, and was widely discussed during the World Social Forum held in Mumbai in 2004. Then came those of Indonesia, where Transparency International invited some trainers to explain how the Brazilian model was working in 2003. In 2004, representatives of Sao Paulo's PB office were invited to South Korea. Since then, China has become the focus of a growing Asian interest in PB, as well as the center of international exchange. In 2005, the China Development

Research Foundation organized a visit to Porto Alegre, and international networks contributed to the diffusion of the idea in the second part of the 2000s.

### 1. Participatory Budgeting as a Regional Development Instrument (Kerala, India)

The first and most famous Asian participatory budget – although it did not use this term – took shape in 1996 in Kerala, developing at a state level with the active participation of municipal and provincial institutions. The idea came from the younger party leaders of the Marxist CPI-M party to avoid the decline of the Left United Front in a state in which communist parties and the moderate left-wing Congress Party take turns at government. Promoting citizens' participation in decentralized budget planning could not be achieved without a prior capacity-building phase. In 1996, the Kerala People's Campaign for the Ninth Plan was launched, mobilizing more than 10 percent (a third of whom were women) of the 31 million inhabitants of the region. Participants could decide on almost 40 percent of state revenues during the period 1996/2001. It covered the whole territory, with 991 rural villages (*grama panchayats*), 152 *block panchayats*, 53 municipalities, 14 districts and five corporations (the various levels of local government). Two main elements made this campaign a real – and particularly dynamic – example of PB, despite the fact that it was not originally in contact with Brazilian experiments. First, it mobilized citizens through a cyclical process, supported by 373 state-level trainers, almost 10,500 trained provincial-level resource persons and 50,000 trained local activists (including 4,000 retired administrators). The launching of the process was a political decision, but it opened the door to a huge social movement that gave shape to the experiment. Nowhere else has PB been a channel for such a mass mobilization. Second, people elected delegates to follow the process at every phase, having a decisional say in prioritizing, implementing and monitoring the consensually-elaborated demands to be inserted into local and supra-local development plans.

The participatory procedure comprises five steps: (i) a wide range of local assemblies (or *grama sabhas*, which attracted more than 2 million citizens) with strict rules, such as reduced speaking times for politicians and experts and small groups, in order to facilitate discussion and involve people not accustomed to speaking in public; (ii) data collection and collective writing of the local panchayat and Urban Development Report (PDRs), which serve to stimulate discussion at “development seminars” attended by people’s delegates (around 20 per ward); (iii) drafting of project proposals containing the technical requirements and financial planning details by the “task force” created at the development seminars; (iv) approval of the Plan by District Planning Committees; followed by (v) implementation, monitoring and evaluation, in which citizens also take part. In its 16 years of existence, the “plasticity” acquired by the Kerala participatory experiment (as already recognized by Chaudhuri/Heller, 2002) enabled it to survive the political changes which several times changed the political hue of the state government (Jain, 2005), even though this experiment could be considered dead in 2012. In the Indian academic and political debate, controversy still exists concerning whether the Kerala experiment could be considered a real experience of PB, and scholars defend the idea that the Kerala experiment tended to lose its capacity to influence budgetary issues directly. In any case, this participatory process has contributed to a unique situation, in which some standards of living, such as life expectancy or child death rate, are comparable to European ones – in an economy which tends to grow less than the rest of India.

In the years following the media explosion at the beginning of the Kerala experiments, other cities in India proposed less ambitious and extended processes which – after processes of exchange with Brazilian and European cities had developed – were termed “participatory budgets”. The experiment held in Bangalore (8.4 millions inhabitants, in Karnataka state) appeared to be one of the more solid. It emerged from the PB campaign organized by Janaagraha, a community-based organization which – following a field visit to Porto Alegre in 1998 – worked hard to convince the local government to experiment across 10 wards in

2002–2003. However, PB remains subordinate to other instruments, such as the Citizens’ Report Cards, a form of written submission/petition which is supposed to improve administrative behavior – a procedure which is recommended by, among others, the World Bank’s handbooks of citizen participation (Clay, 2007). The main limitation of this experiment is that it has not been able to have a major impact beyond the small area in which it has been implemented and there is no evidence after 2007 that this has happened elsewhere. Other experiments have taken place in the Bangalorean constituency of Malleswaram and in Pune (around 3.1 million inhabitants), in the Deccan Plateau.

#### **Box 19:**

##### **The case of Bandarawela in Sri Lanka**

In Sri Lanka, since 2004, an interesting experiment has been developed in Bandarawela municipality (Uva province) and the regional Asian branch of United Cities and Local Government has made it known worldwide through the 2010 online Observatory of Inclusive Cities of the Committees of Participatory Democracy and Social Inclusion. This city of 38,300 inhabitants implemented a program called “Grama Proboda” in which citizens could decide on the allocation of funds. Although the decision-making rules are not clearly formalized, more than 100 projects (in areas such as road rehabilitation, leisure facilities and infrastructure works, such as drainage systems) were approved. The project started in 2004 but benefits from small amounts (some tens of thousands of US dollars). The Bandarawela city is characterized by a multiethnic population, with many social and language barriers imposed on minority ethnic groups living below poverty line.

In 2009, a law was approved by the parliament of Sri Lanka that emphasized the importance and encouraged the implementation of participatory planning and budgeting. However, it does not oblige public administrations to do them and leaves local authorities autonomy to decide upon models and mechanisms to promote civil society participation.

## 2. China: Between Participative Modernization, Citizens' Empowerment and Political Reform

Although China shares some economic and social features with India, its political structure is completely different. The growing interest in PB is mostly initiated by local governments. The concept was discovered around 2005, and interest seems to be growing in the wake of the so-called "sunshine finance" revolution, which elaborates principles of budgetary transparency in order to improve the performance of its government system. In China, where local authorities receive only 32 percent of their incomes from central government (UCLG, 2010), there is a high potential in terms of "flexibility" of resources to be allocated through PB. In such a huge country, where information on innovative experiments does not easily circulate, the major difficulty of identifying examples of PB is the ambiguity of the Chinese concept of "participation". In a context in which information often remains the monopoly of the executive and the Communist Party leaders, the notion is not necessarily related to the direct involvement of the people in public policies. It is often used for practices of inter-institutional dialogue involving members of the legislature (the Local People's Congress deputies have traditionally been excluded from the definition of the municipal budget), information disclosure, public notification and – in the best case – legislative hearings, public opinion polls, inquiries and surveys.

In China, participation often implies negotiations with organizations such as private enterprises, residents' committees or the new universe of NGOs, while only a few experiments are based on the active involvement of "ordinary" citizens. This new trend includes examples that can be considered PBs that fit with the criteria we laid down at the beginning of this text and that would match more closely the meaning of the term in Europe, Latin America or India. Although the future is not clear, this could also contribute to the modernization of public administration and to a democratization process at the local level. This, however, remains dependent on the will of the local party

leaders, whose ability to put to good use the innovative proposals made by some Chinese scholars or international networks varies widely. Such innovative experiments allow leaders to quickly climb up the hierarchy, which means that they will move elsewhere if the experiment is successful. Therefore, the sustainability of the process at local level is not easy (Wu/Wang, 2012; Leib/He, 2005).

### Box 20:

#### Three logics at work in China

Baogang He (2011a, 2011b) argues that three main "distinctive logics" are behind China's PBs: "administration, political reform and citizen empowerment". Each one denotes "different conceptualizations and understandings of PB, constituting different frameworks in which PB programs and activities operate", generating and reproducing behavioral patterns and leading in different directions. In the "administrative logic", which is a variation of the participatory modernization model, PB is supposed to help to strengthen and improve the administrative process. When this logic dominates, the ideal of citizenship "is likely to be diluted and even lost other than in terms of the possibility for some public scrutiny of budgets". The "citizen empowerment logic", which can be interpreted as a variation of the community development model, seems to be privileged by activist citizens and NGOs who "regard citizen participation in the budgeting process as a political right, and demand the power to decide the allocation of budgets in local communities" as a means to change the relationship between the state and citizens in favor of the latter". The "political reform logic" tends to be very specific to China and to be situated outside the global typology proposed in the first part. Its focus is "to rejuvenate the local People's Congresses in China to make them work more effectively and to make the deputies more powerful". The participatory improvement of public administration could even be used in order to narrow contestation (He, 2011a, 2011b, 2013). In this approach, PB could become an attractive instrument in other state-dominated administrative mechanisms such as the Feedback Unit in Singapore and the Law of Complaints in Vietnam (Rodan/Jayasuriya, 2007). In China, the three logics are not clear-cut, but they often

intertwine. In any case, the administrative logic of PB has been understudied and lacks critical scholarly analysis and solid empirical data. Much of the literature on PB in China (Ma/Niu, 2007; Su, 2007; Zhang, 2007; Chu, 2008) and many journalistic reports have focused on experiments in political reform and citizen empowerment.

The lack of serious field work makes it difficult to classify so-called participatory budgets, such as those held in Wuxi (population 1 million, Jiangsu Province) Wuxi (Jiangsu), Ha'erbin (capital of Helongjiang Province) or Shanghai. A very interesting Chinese PB is that of Wenling, which has promoted PB in several of its districts (Hsu, 2009). One of them, Zeguo, has become famous, using the methodology of "deliberative polling", a "world première", with the support of some scholars at Stanford University and the Ford Foundation (He, in Sintomer et al. 2011). The result is a hybrid type of policy-oriented "deliberative polling"<sup>1</sup>, which shares some features with the consultation on public finance model. It has undergone several transformations in the course of time and then has been repeated, and Wenling City offers one of the most interesting and diverse examples of citizen participation in China.

#### **Box 21:**

#### **Participatory budgeting implemented through deliberative polling in Zeguo (Wenling)**

Zeguo is an industrial township of Wenling City (population 1 million), located in Zhejiang Province. Its jurisdiction covers 97 villages, having a permanent local population of almost 120,000 persons, as well as a floating (migrant) population of the same size. In December 2004, in cooperation with the Centre for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University, a Chinese scholar working in Australia was chosen by Communist Party leaders to give technical advice to the local government. The idea was to provide a channel

for citizens and interest groups to express their concerns, while reducing conflicts of interest and the perception of corruption in the selection of priority projects in the local budget for 2005. A total of 275 people were selected to participate in a deliberative poll through random sampling designed to create a diverse and representative microcosm of the people, including usually "disinterested" persons (Sintomer, 2011). Of these, 269 completed the initial questionnaire who later served to verify how the "informed deliberation" modified their views and skills. The main goal of the deliberation day was to discuss how to spend the annual budget and examine citizens' preferences among the possible projects listed by the local officials. The total cost of the 30 projects was 136 million yuan (US\$ 20 million), but only less than one-third could be spent on them. In light of budget constraints, the participants were asked to carefully examine each proposal in 16 small groups, discuss their merits and identify key questions for competent experts to answer in plenary sessions. The moderators of each table were teachers selected from Zeguo Number Two High School, trained for the event. At the end of the day, participants rated 30 projects on a scale of 0 to 10. The experiment was repeated in the following years (He, 2013). Local authorities still take the legally binding decisions, but they accepted most of the citizens' proposals in the final budget (He, 2009). The process is now explicitly seen as and termed a PB model. It has grown from year to year, and one of the most striking innovations has been the introduction of some particular "affirmative action" criteria: a quota for employers and personalities has been introduced in order to enhance their participation in the process. As in Porto Alegre, the process remains focused on spending. Incomes are not discussed, although they can be problematic: in many Chinese towns and cities, they depend heavily on the sale of public land to private entrepreneurs. This is a very controversial social issue, because this process is causing the expulsion of millions of people from their houses in rural areas.

One of the main actors in the Zeguo experiment, the Chinese professor Baogang He, was also the protagonist of an Action Aid International project in Chinese villages,

<sup>1</sup> Deliberative polling is a procedure invented by J. Fishkin (2011), in which hundreds of citizen randomly selected meet and deliberate on a public issue, with public hearings of politicians, experts or NGOs activists, discussion in small groups and in general assembly. They are polled at the beginning and at the end of the process, and the result can be characterized as the informed opinion of the people involved. The Zeguo experiment adapted some features of this scheme.

for which he organized four deliberative polls (2006) involving 47 elected village representatives and 25 stratified randomly selected inhabitants' representatives. In those cases, the rule negotiated with the local executives was that the results of the second survey performed at a deliberative workshop should be integrated into the local plan and budgeting documents. The idea of working on new participatory experiments in rural areas came from the notion (which dates back to the political reforms of the mid-1990s) that in a country which is still predominantly rural, administrative reforms in rural institutions should be considered crucial.

In China, today, most PBs are still limited to small-scale experiments, and in many cases, the processes that called themselves PB are merely consultations with the local People's Congress and are not open for local citizens. It is difficult to understand whether the 30 experiments that the UN-Habitat listed in its Chinese edition (2010) of the *72 Answers to Frequently Asked Questions on Participatory Budgeting* fit the criteria we have applied to the rest of the world. However, it is clear that the increased interest in budget transparency and, more specifically, in PB is growing. Chengdu (Sichuan province) is now promoting the largest scale PB in China and possibly one of the most interesting for the future. This important economic and cultural center, with 14 million inhabitants living in rural and urban areas, started implementing PB in 2011 in the 2,300 villages/communities included in the city territory. More than 2 million booklets (called "*A Happy Story in Minzhu*") with easily understandable information on the budget were published in 2011 and to date 50,000 small projects have been approved, 90 percent of them in basic services and infrastructure for local economic development (village roads, water drainage, gardening, irrigation and water supply), farming and business training (Cabannes/Zhuang, 2013). A special feature of Chengdu PB is that it revitalizes village councils, communities are entitled to ask for small loans and Budget Oversight Groups of elected villagers control implementation. Its main challenge is to expand to the townships and the urban area; but this transformation may have to happen gradually, because

the support of the Communist Party for the process is still uncertain and an excess of opening up and visibility could jeopardize the entire experiment.

### 3. Korea: A Porto Alegre in the Far East?

In Japan and South Korea, two rich members of the OECD, the social, economic and political context has little in common with India, and even less with China. Here PB has emerged as a tool for tackling problems linked to the shrinking of resources, incomplete decentralization and the lack of accountability and responsiveness of elected institutions to the needs of their citizens (particularly the poor). In South Korea, citizen participation has a strong tradition, as mass mobilization was a decisive factor in the progressive democratization of the country in the 1980s. It has been strengthened by three legislative reforms: the 2005 Local Referendum Act, the 2006 Act on the Local Ombudsman Regime and local petitions against the abuse of local finance and the 2007 Local Recall system, by which elected mayors and councilors may be removed from office. What added value could PB represent in this context, where decentralization has been conceived as a curious mixture of deconcentration and devolution, and local authorities have far less autonomy in practice than suggested by the Constitutional Article 117 (1987) and the recently amended legislation (1994–1995)?

The answer is certainly linked to the context in which the size of local government debt and the borrowing capacity of local government was placed under tight control by the central government in 2000. Today, South Korea is probably the most complex Asian country in terms of PB, having the largest number of experiments (Pan Suk Kim, 2011). The concept was initially introduced in a bottom-up process (through NGOs as the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice), but its diffusion has been stimulated on a top-down basis by the national government. The key principles were imported from Brazil and re-elaborated locally, giving birth to a slimmed down version of the participatory democracy

model. In July 2003, the Ministry of Government and Home Affairs issued “guidelines for citizens’ participatory budgeting” to all local governments (Rhee, 2005). The first experiments started in 2004. The Buk-gu (northern district) of Gwangju Metropolitan City (population 1.4 million) was in the front line to become the Porto Alegre of Korea (Kwack, 2005), followed by Dong-ku district in Ulsan and (one year later) by the northern district of the same city, and Suncheon municipality. In August 2005, the Ministry of Government and Home Affairs proposed a revision of the Local Finance Law, stating that mayors “can enact and execute the procedures for citizen participation in the local budget process”, and inserted a list of instruments that could fulfill this goal. The Daedeok-gu of Daejeon Metropolitan City and Ansan-si of Chungnam-Do prepared their legal framework in 2005, while many other cities waited for the “Standard Local Bylaw for Citizen Participatory Budget”, which was provided in 2006. The number of experiments rose to 22 in 2006, and reached 75 (out of 241 local authorities) in 2008. Since then, there have not been many developments, in terms neither of quality nor quantity, as depicted by Pan Suk Kim (2011), although some new cases – such as the Yeonsu Gu District in the city of Incheon and Suwon (1.2 million inhabitants, capital of Gyeonggihad province) – recently started an experiment (2011), training citizens and civil servants also in materials translated from European and Latin American PB. Today, the Hope Institute in An-guk Dong is an important player in the South Korean PB, which organizes local training courses to qualify social and institutional actors on PB.

#### **Box 22:**

#### **How does participatory budgeting work in Korea? The case of Dong-ku**

Dong-ku (Ulsan municipality) is the most famous participatory budget in South Korea. This self-governing district is home to around 186,000 of the 1.1 million citizens of Ulsan metropolitan city, an industrial town located on the south-eastern edge of the peninsula. In 2004, PB was proposed by the newly elected district head, a member of the Democratic Labour Party. This came in response to the request of local NGOs, such as Ulsan People’s Solidarity

for Participatory Democracy and the Ulsan Coalition for Economic Justice. A task force and an advisory committee were set up to propose the initial design. This met with reluctance among many officials and council members, as well as skepticism among citizens. After a broad discussion, the Ordinance of Participatory Budgeting was enacted, whose main goals were to improve financial transparency and accountability, and strengthen participatory democracy (Songmin, in Sintomer et al., 2013). PB consists of locally-based meetings in which every resident in the area can participate, and a city assembly that gives a pivotal role to a citizens’ committee on PB (subdivided into five thematic committees). This committee is appointed partly by means of open recruitment and partly through recommendations made by community organizations. All members are trained in their tasks at a so-called “participatory budgeting school”. In the past five years, 306 programs have been proposed; 37.9 percent of them were included in the draft budget and another 25 percent were categorized as long-term projects to be implemented gradually. In the second part of the cycle, the thematic committees prioritize the projects, while a central role for consolidating budget proposals is played by a PB council (which includes five representatives from each thematic committee, the District Head of Dong-ku and his four high officials).

The budget proposal is given final approval in a third stage, by the plenary of the citizens’ committee. The feedback phase happens after every cycle: an evaluation meeting is held to judge PB performance. The suggestions are elaborated by an advisory committee (composed of district council members, professors, NGOs and high public officials), which states the new rules for running PB for the next fiscal year. The Dong-ku PB has undergone continuous development. For example, the number of meetings and the criteria for assigning members to the citizens’ and thematic committees have been changed.

The proliferation of participatory budgets in Korea and the adoption of bylaws have not necessarily led to very creative processes (Kim/Kim, 2007). Despite some homogeneity of rules, which tend to imitate the minimum standard of



ministerial documents, the quality of PBs is uneven (Hwang, 2005; 2008). However, a number of tools (such as internet surveys, online bidding, cyber forum, online bulletin boards, public hearings and seminars) have been provided in order to foster non-exclusive processes for all citizens in every phase, and the tradition of citizens' budget schools and budget policy seminars is one of the most important South Korean contributions to the global debate on PB. Two of the main constraints which limit the growth of many experiments are the reduced timeline for discussion (largely determined by the national framework for budget approval deadlines) and the rigidity of local budgets. These are so dependent on non-negotiable transfers from the state that participatory processes often become a way for government to pass on difficult decisions to the people and let them deal with it instead of a way to put the local creativity of citizens to good use. Although in South Korea a specific knowledge-exchange network on CPB doesn't exist, several experimenting cities have been in touch through the "Learning/Educating Cities" network.

#### **Box 23:**

##### **The Korean D-Brain**

It is worth underlining that in 2010 the Republic of Korea was ranked first in both the e-Government Development Index and the e-Participation Index from the UN Global E-Government Survey. Taking advantage of such a situation, in 2007 a tool called the "Digital Budget and Accounting System" (or "D-Brain") was adopted and has been a leading model for innovative digital budgeting ever since. The D-Brain is "an integrated web-based system providing the public real time analysis on government's fiscal activities including budget formulation, execution, account settlement and performance management" and so allowing a more efficient fiscal policy. In several Korean cities, the D-Brain offers an important tool to web-based PB systems from budget preparation to auditing. Citizens in South Korea can control the process of budgeting even in cities which do not have co-decisional spaces: this happens through internet surveys, online bulletin boards, online bidding, cyber forums, public hearings and the so-called "budget participation corners". The Budget Waste Report

Center also offers a hotline to prevent central government agencies and local government offices from abusing their budgetary duties through citizen participation. The nationwide ICT infrastructure, but also the high ICT literacy have been behind the success of the D-Brain.

#### **4. Japan: Participatory Budgeting for Taxpayers**

The constitutional monarchy of Japan shares some problems with Korea, such as the strong influence of national parties on local elections, the decline in local election turn-outs (below 50 percent), the increase in officials' corruption cases and the rigidity of national transfers to local budgets, which still represent over 60 percent even after the Omnibus Decentralization Act and the 2005–2007 "Trinity Reform" of local finances that empowered municipalities (UCLG, 2008). In Japan, local governments have wide functional responsibilities and account for over half of total public expenditure and 10 percent of GDP. This strong formal role goes hand in hand with extensive power given to citizens to demand local referendums, the improvement or abolition of ordinances, audits and even dissolution of the local assembly, as well as dismissal of the mayor, council members or officials. Despite this, in the 47 prefectures and 1,798 municipalities, citizen participation in public policy decision-making is not very frequent, especially in the field of financial planning (Matsubara, 2013). The first attempt to involve people in budget issues met with the active involvement of some grassroots organizations, which were allowed to legalize their status in 1998. After 2003, various processes involving citizens and grassroots organizations in the discussion of public budgets were launched. The Coalition for Legislation to Support Citizens' Organizations distinguishes several types: disclosure of the budget-making process (sometimes merely a process of information transfer); counter budget-making by citizens' committees; public consultation on the budget; direct budget management by citizens; and participatory transfer of 1 percent of resident taxes to non-profit organizations (Matsubara, 2013).



The most distinctive example is the city of Ichikawa, where the participatory budget uses 1 percent of resident tax revenues for non-profit projects. In 2004, the mayor (who in Japan is elected separately from the local assembly and must propose the budget to the council) approved an ordinance based on a Hungarian model. Through participation he hoped to gain the support of citizens for his budgetary policy in a difficult financial situation. Ichikawa is a sleeper community next to Tokyo, with 474,000 inhabitants (230,000 of whom are taxpayers and a quarter are commuters) and a transit of 540,000 persons/day. The idea of organizing a participatory process for the potential amount of 3.8 million yen (around US\$ 40,000), which represented 1 percent of tax revenues, was to support and revitalize the non-profit sector. Every taxpayer is entitled to vote by internet, and can choose up to three organizations to be funded, according to his/her needs or wishes and on the basis of activity plans put forward by the non-profit organizations and discussed in public assemblies (sometimes with the use of drama and other artistic means). A special 1 percent committee, which screens plans and funded activities, has also been created. The local government distributes the money according to the votes. The process stimulates the grassroots community organizations, requiring them to make their mission and fundraising approach better known, and promotes citizens' interest in the use of their taxes and in the budget mechanism. Five years after the process was launched, voter turnout was around 5 percent (around 9,110 voters), but has not opened up other segments of the budget to citizens' decision-making. The organizations which propose activities have jumped from 81 to 130, and the funded amount has risen from 12 to 20 million yen (US\$ 130,000 to US\$ 210,000). Interesting choices have been made by citizens of projects benefiting vulnerable groups, such as a swimming program for mentally retarded persons.

Other Japanese cities have been stimulated by the Ichikawa experiment, and some have decided to open up voting to non-taxpayer groups, such as Eniwa, a new town of 68,000 inhabitants in Ishikari district (Hokkaido island). The term "participatory budgeting" is coming into use. In

2009, Ichikawa organized a "1 percent summit", which gave rise to a whole network of cities that are interested in participating together in this very peculiar version of the community development participatory budget. In 2010, the annual meeting was held in Ichinomiya and in 2011 in Saga (population 240,000; Saga Prefecture). In 2012 nine cities were particularly active in the network. The Summit is intended to jointly identify ways to hybridize different models of PB and stabilize Japanese experiments, which are very fragile, because they are highly dependent on the will and policies of mayors. Even if it mainly affects programs, without involving facilities and public spaces, the Japanese model of PB remains interesting because of its capacity to empower communities. It represents a variation of the community development model. Other different models of PB in Japan are being developed recently (Koga, 2013).

## 5. Timid Tendencies in the Rest of Asia

There are few – and often soon interrupted – experiments with PB in other Asian countries. In Indonesia, PB has been promoted by umbrella-NGOs such as the Indonesian Forum for Transparency in Budgets through campaigns designed to enhance budget awareness among local communities and local authorities, but also to promote participatory practices as a catalyst of democratization within an authoritarian political environment (Sri/Mastuti/Neunecker, in Sintomer et al., 2013). Exchange with PB actors around the world has been promoted with the support of UNDP, the Asian Development Bank and other international institutions, mainly with an anti-corruption focus. In a country where no formal mechanism for direct citizen participation exists, many organizations act as watchdogs, monitoring development projects or local budgets. With the lack of substantive reforms on the government side since 1999 and 2000, only a few experiments have managed to respond concretely to issues raised by civil society. The program has resulted mainly in a gradual establishment of "preconditions" for PB (Allegretti, 2003; Antlo, 2004; Raza/Thébault Weiser, 2006), which seems still to be at a very early stage.

In Bangladesh, the only reported PB experiment is fairly “spurious”, being more part of a participatory planning exercise than a specific tool (Rahman, 2004), while in the constitutional monarchy of Thailand, a few cities have introduced PB as a daily management tool and experiments were launched at the beginning of the century when the term “participatory budgeting” was still unheard of. In Khon Kan (population 130,000), a dynamic center in the north-east, PB was adopted as a means of addressing the growing level of public resistance and conflict regarding local development projects, and to respond to a strong demand for civic participation, which had emerged from the active participation of local residents in the constitution-drafting process in the late 1990s. No co-decision-making takes place, but consensus is often reached through deliberation (Suwanmala, 2004).

In the Middle East, plans to extend PB experiments to Arab countries were attempted in Yemen, Palestine and Jordan, in the framework of a “knowledge transfer” project entitled “The Arab Initiative for Equitable Budget” involving – between 2008 and 2010 – several NGOs with the support of the Rady Institute at San Diego State University and the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). Jordan has produced the most sustainable commitment. In this country, where women have voted only since 1974 and political parties were recognized only in 1992 and are still very weak in comparison with the tribal organization of society, cooperation with foreign countries on specific development projects is an element of strength. The first two experiments, which took place in 2009–2010 within the framework of the project “Participatory Budgeting Coalition, the Arab Initiative for Equivalent Budgets”, were implemented in the northern municipality of Sahil Houran and in the central historical city of Madaba (around 60,000 inhabitants). Financial aid was received by the two cities from Spain to implement some projects. In 2012, an agreement between the Dutch Embassy and the small NGO “Partners-Jordan. Center for Civic Collaboration” made it possible for the project to implement an important follow-up, so that six municipalities (well distributed around the country) started PB in 2013. The first two rounds of public

assemblies (including the vote of priorities by citizens) happened under the supervision of State representatives, due to the temporary “suspension” of mayors during the months before new municipal elections. In the end of 2013, the NGO “Partners-Jordan. Center for Civic Collaboration” started to collaborate with three new experiences of PB in the Palestinian territories, under the supervision of the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ).

## 6. Oceania: E-democracy and Community Building

In Oceania, the term PB is not frequently used by policy-makers, although some academic institutions have been promoting studies based on an international perspective. In New Zealand, the debate on the issue is very young, although the community planning experiment in Christchurch (started in 1993 and awarded a prize by the “Cities of Tomorrow” network) had been the inspiration of some of the first German PBs. In 2012, the growing interest in PB in this country was due to the Pacific Centre for Participatory Democracy and to the Green Party, which – together with the local committee of IAP2 – organized several training sessions and conferences with foreign experts on the issue, and some experiments may begin in 2013.

In Australia, where a high degree of autonomy and local policy differentiation exists among the different states (UCLG, 2008, 2010), the debate on PB has a longer but asymmetric history. Taking advantage of a tradition of studies that tried to bridge the gap between gender analysis and gender-responsive budgets, some states have elaborated rules for transparency with regard to public budgets. For example, the Local Government Act of the State of Victoria (passed in 1989) requires councils to advertise in local newspapers the fact that they have formed a proposed budget and people can then submit requests to the government for additions or deletions. Most often, these procedures do not go beyond informal “selective listening” (Demediuk/Solli, 2008). In 2009–2010, an electronic voting experiment took place in the Australian federal state of New

South Wales (NSW) as an attempt to mitigate the effects of the economic downturn and stimulate local economies. Within the funding of the Community Building Partnership program, in the electoral district of Heathcote, the district's citizens could decide collectively through the internet the allocation of the funds that the government had made available, thanks to the personal engagement of a local MP. Every registered citizen had five votes to cast (with a maximum of three votes for each project), in order to decide which causes were the most deserving of existing funds. This experiment involved more than 20,000 participants, but was not repeated. Others have been under way since 2012. The most original took place in the city of Canada Bay (50,000 inhabitants, State of New South Wales) guided by a labor mayor. PB was intended to determine the range and level of services, and how they were to be paid for, covering a AUS\$ 74 million budget for a four-year period. Although the council retains the final veto on citizens' proposals, the experiment has been set as co-decisional and citizens' choices were accepted by the municipality. The quality of deliberation has been fostered through the creation of a randomly-selected jury of 30 people from over 1,500 invitations.

The second experience – located in the city of Greater Geraldton (around 35,000 inhabitants, in the State of Western Australia) - has started in 2012 with a small pilot project, which put 30,000 AU\$ into discussion with residents of three marginal neighborhoods for deliberating on park maintenance and rehabilitation. A special attention was given to the participation of aboriginal groups and their cultural rules, as already happened in the other participatory processes already undertaken by the same municipality. Later on, a series of training events and discussions among councilors and city managers, with the active support of the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute (CUSP) of Fremantle and the Association of Local Authorities (WALGA), made the mayor take the decision of dare more for 2013 and try to submit to a participatory budgeting procedure (which addresses to voluntary self-mobilized participant as well as to a commission of randomly-selected citizens) a larger slice of investments to be discussed in the

framework of the Sustainability Strategy and the Strategic Plan for Geraldton 2029.

As in other former British colonies influenced by the community-development tradition, it is possible that a new hybrid model of PB that merges PB and the participatory planning principle will emerge and expand in the coming years.

## V. Learning Processes

Having reached the end of our journey around the globe, we know that the phenomenon of PB has spread across the continents in different ways. By linking PB and traditional forms of participation, Africa, too, has embarked on its own path. The same goes for Asia and Oceania, where experiments are under way with deliberative polling and taxpayers' budgets. Consequently, the issue of transfer should be raised once again. In the process of disseminating PB, networks have played and will continue to play a crucial role, which we would again like to underline. The present essay has also made a contribution in this direction by providing information on the worldwide dissemination of PB. But where might things go from here? To find an answer to this question, in this last section we will attempt to summarize some of the general trends.

### 1. Networks and Municipal Partnerships: Framework for Cooperation

Given that some municipalities find themselves in the same situation, and that it would make little sense to "reinvent the wheel" every time, it would obviously be helpful to pursue an exchange of PB experiments. Networks, in particular, seem to offer a suitable framework, as do municipal partnerships. In particular, cooperation between municipalities in industrialized countries and in the Global South could provide a framework for transfer. What networks exist and what are their characteristics?

When we look at PB around the world, we see that the existing networks display a variety of features. The first is the nature of membership. On one hand, there are official networks for which membership must be applied for, and that are administrated from a central office. This was the case, for instance, with URBAL 9, coordinated from Porto Alegre. On the other hand, there are networks that do not describe themselves as such, yet whose members are linked through joint projects. These include development cooperation projects, such as those supported by GIZ in the Dominican Republic or the Swiss Agency for Development

and Cooperation in several countries in Africa. Alternatively, the users of a resource website can also be seen as members of a network. The Service Agency Communities in One World and the Federal Agency for Civic Education, for instance, both offer a central website for Germany. The website is also available in English in order to foster international exchange. A similar situation applies with respect to the "Orçamento Participativo Portugal" website in the lusophone world, the Finnish internet portal and the PB Unit for the United Kingdom, which, after closing in 2012, has recently been substituted by two separate entities: the PB Network (a volunteer structure of exchange) and PB Partners (a new professional consultancy service). Here we see that the geographical/linguistic frame of reference is a second distinguishing feature.

Some networks are organized nationally, others internationally, and some even on a transcontinental basis. As well as URBAL, these include the Africities Forum and the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy (CISDP), which were formed as official branches under the umbrella of the federation of cities called United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), whose Gold Report III (2013) dedicates a session to the relationship between PB and the effectiveness of public services. The International Observatory of Participatory Democracy (OIDP) in Barcelona should also be mentioned, as well as its offshoots, such as the African Observatory of Participation. From the German perspective, the latter is perhaps the most interesting network because it holds annual meetings, maintains an international website, provides instruments and awards prizes. Not infrequently, associations of this kind address exclusively procedural issues.

Hence, we can draw a third distinction, namely between pragmatic and political networks. Although it is not always possible to separate the two, this is an important distinction that municipalities wishing to join these networks should note. PB networks in Latin America, for instance, have generated a great deal of technical information, but they usually also have a strong political component, except for those that were initiated by international organizations.

When we consider the development of networks, we note that purely political networks have since been superseded by networks for pragmatic cooperation, or networks that do both. A further change involves language. Due to the engagement of municipalities in Latin America, Latin languages were dominant for a long period. In many networks today, communication also takes place in English, due primarily to the involvement of international organizations such as the World Bank. Thirdly, these networks are now increasingly not only dealing with PB, but are also opening up to new, related themes. This in turn is creating opportunities for new links. Municipal partnerships are also suited to cross-cutting cooperation of this kind. So far, networks have been more important than bilateral municipal partnerships. However, given that German municipalities do not maintain a high presence in international PB programs, it is municipal partnerships that have the potential for exchange on PB. The Service Agency Communities in One World is particularly active in this respect.

#### **Box 24:**

#### **Municipal partnerships with the South: a springboard for PB?**

The reluctance of German municipalities to get involved in international PB networks might be because many of these networks conduct their dealings primarily in Latin languages. We should not forget, however, that a number of towns and cities in Germany already maintain close contacts with counterparts in the South. Bielefeld, for instance, has a twinning arrangement with Estelí in Nicaragua, which began PB in the 1990s and has emerged as a pioneer. This was a model for other municipalities, such as Nandaimé and San José de los Remates. An exchange on experiments of this kind might also be an interesting option for other European towns and cities with their partner municipalities of the Global South.

In November 2012, the city of Cascais in Portugal and that of Maputo, capital of Mozambique, signed a cooperation agreement on exchanges related to participatory processes. A totally new “imaginary” was born after the EU-funded “PARLOCAL” project fostered – between 2010 and 2012

– mutual exchanges between employees dealing with participation in cities with PB experiments in Spain, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay (Allegretti, 2012a).

South-to-South twinning and cooperation agreements linked to PB are developing. In 2011, Porto Alegre’s Observapoa, the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Kerala State and the ISS Institute in India started a joint cooperation agreement, while in December 2012 Porto Alegre Municipality and Yaoundé’s 6th District signed a mutual understanding agreement for co-working on PB issues. The official signing was an important moment at the VI Africities Forum in Dakar.

In November 2012–March 2013 GIZ organized with the Municipal Development Partnership (MPD-ESA) a Blended Learning Course on PB conceived as a follow-up of the World Bank Institute course held in 2008. The targeted countries are Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, and it includes a series of peer-to-peer cooperation projects with exchanges of local technical experts among the different cities experimenting with PB. The African section of UCLG is also promoting peer-to-peer cooperation through the PB award.

## **2. Global Trends**

As already indicated, there is no single telos towards which participatory budgets all over the world are moving. If we look at the developments described, we can rather identify three different trends that reveal something about the impacts of participatory budgets. They also represent three different levels of intensity.

At the highest level we see PBs that aim to change prevailing conditions fundamentally, a goal that they achieve as one component of a broader movement for renewal. These experiments mark a break with previous practices and are based on interaction between governments and grassroots movements, because PB is not introduced only on a top-down basis but is also due to a large series of civil-society

actors who call for and drive the process. These budgeting procedures are about overcoming social injustice and achieving sustainable development. Doing so means breaking with established traditions of patronage and corruption. When civil society is mobilized, the pressure it exerts helps to achieve this goal. We have seen many cases of this kind of development in Brazil and Latin America. For a long time the Porto Alegre experiment stood as one such example, and this has now been repeated in Latin America a hundred times. Another example of this kind of experiment is Kerala in India. Perhaps some village participatory budgets in Africa (as in Congo, Cameroon, Senegal or Madagascar) can also be seen as part of this trend. There are few such cases in Europe. There has not yet been an experiment comparable with Porto Alegre in a European city, however.

The second trend involves the use of PB to drive a reform agenda forward. Although it does not involve a break with tradition, this kind of participatory budget does generate real and visible effects. The local government is the lead actor here, but citizens are not absent. There are at least a few clear rules, or a routine that allows established practices to become the rule. Objectives vary widely. In most continents participatory budgets have been linked to administrative modernization. In many cases PB was designed to deepen decentralization processes, and to turn the new autonomy of municipalities into a living and felt reality for citizens. The same applies to the social effects. In this second category we see PB being used rather as an instrument to address “burning political issues”. The aim of the PBs that follow this trend is mainly that of improving the lives of socially disadvantaged groups, while retaining the basic structure of the system and existing patterns of allocation. The greatest impact for reform, however, involves the communicative dimension. PBs worldwide represent an improvement in the relationship between local governments and their citizens. Although effects going beyond that are usually not so pronounced, local governments have proved open and willing to implement suggestions put forward by citizens, which can be seen as a confidence-building and trust-inducing measure. In the Global South and Eastern Europe, this kind of PB is often supported by international organizations.

Some of the participatory budgets of this second type show traits of a third type, in which PB is largely of a symbolic nature and in which there is a yawning gap between the proclaimed objective and the reality. Here the aim is no longer really to consult citizens. The meetings are used rather to legitimate a path that has already been embarked upon, and that those responsible no longer wish to change. This might involve an austerity policy. The symbolic participatory budget is in general of a consultative nature and can be found both in established democracies and in authoritarian regimes. In the latter case, sometimes it represents an ostensible openness that in reality does not exist. In such a case, participation is designed to placate the population and international financial donors.

What will be the future of PB, in an era characterized by a global financial crisis and of the mode of development it has fostered in recent decades? Will a sufficient number of experiments pertaining to the first and second trends really help to improve the services delivered by public administrations? Will they lead to further democratization, with a reduction of corruption and clientelism and increased legitimacy of political action? Will they manage to foster social justice, at a time of growing inequalities in most states in the world? The future is open. One thing seems clear: after less than three decades, a growing number of actors are seeing PB as one potential tool that could help us to face the huge challenges of the twenty-first century.

# Appendix

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## Websites on participatory budgeting

Note: It would be impossible to give all internet pages on participatory budgeting. We list only those that include experiments at the national or continental level.

### National

#### Argentina

[www.rapp.gov.ar/index.php](http://www.rapp.gov.ar/index.php)

Rede Argentina de Presupuesto Participativo The official website of the Argentine Network of Participatory Budgeting, offering news on different cities experimenting with PB in Argentina, but also on the network's activities.

Language: Spanish

#### Brazil

[www.ongcidade.org/site/php/comum/capa.php](http://www.ongcidade.org/site/php/comum/capa.php)

NGO Cidade in Porto Alegre. Various documents and analyses on participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre and Brazil.

Languages: Portuguese, English

[www.redeopbrasil.com.br](http://www.redeopbrasil.com.br)

Network of 70 Brazilian cities experimenting with PB (coordinated by Canoas Municipality) Offers news on different cities experimenting with PB in Brazil, but also on the network's activities.

Language: Portuguese

#### Chile

[www.presupuestoparticipativo.cl](http://www.presupuestoparticipativo.cl)

The official website of the Chilean Network of cities experimenting with PB, also involving the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Provides information on events and training sessions.

Language: Spanish

#### Dominican Republic

[www.fedomu.org.do](http://www.fedomu.org.do)

Association of Local Authorities of the Dominican Republic. The central platform for the implementation of PB in the country, containing various documents and information.

Language: Spanish

#### Germany

[www.buergerhaushalt.org](http://www.buergerhaushalt.org)

Federal Agency for Civic Education; Service Agency Communities in One World/Engagement Global gGmbH, Germany. Overview of German PBs with current information, blogs, case presentations, background documents, bibliography, maps and so on.

Language: German and English

#### Peru

[http://presupuesto-participativo.mef.gob.pe/app\\_pp/entrada.php](http://presupuesto-participativo.mef.gob.pe/app_pp/entrada.php)

Official website of the Government of Peru. It provides a large amount of information and documents (although not systematic). Language: Spanish.

[www.redperu.org.pe](http://www.redperu.org.pe)

NGO Red Peru. Provides support material for PB practitioners in Peru. With documents and case descriptions.

Language: Spanish

#### Portugal

[www.op-portugal.org](http://www.op-portugal.org)

NGO In-LoCo and Center for Social Studies Coimbra. Central platform for PB in Portugal containing various documents, videos and training facilities (for example, a tool for conceiving and monitoring PB experiments, called INFOOP, [www.infopb.org](http://www.infopb.org)).

Language: Portuguese

#### Spain

[www.presupuestosparticipativos.com](http://www.presupuestosparticipativos.com)

Network of Spanish Cities. The Network was founded as the Spanish branch of the Local Authorities Forum, which meets in the context of the World Social Forums. The website provides information on national PB meetings, cases and materials for practitioners.

Language: Spanish

**United Kingdom**

[www.pbnetwork.org.uk](http://www.pbnetwork.org.uk)

Is the brand new specific website of the Network of PBs in United Kingdom, promoted with the aim of nurturing mutual learning between public employees, politicians and associative bodies involved in the ongoing experiments in the country.

Language: English

**Jordan**

[www.partners-jordan.org](http://www.partners-jordan.org)

Jordanian NGO, with a project on PB in six cities called "Participatory Budgeting, People's Voice in numbers".

Language: Arab and English

**Regional and continental****Near East**

[www.pbcoalition.com](http://www.pbcoalition.com)

Coalition of Human Rights NGOs – First regional website to promote PB in Jordan, Bahrain, Yemen, Lebanon and other Arab countries.

Languages: Arabic, English

**North America**

[www.participatorybudgeting.org](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org)

NGO Participatory Budgeting Project. The promoters of this website are researchers. The objective is to promote participatory budgeting in North America. Training materials and information on current events.

Language: English

**General pages and worldwide networks****[www.infoop.org](http://www.infoop.org)**

(or [www.infopb.org](http://www.infopb.org)) Association In-LoCo (Portugal), supported by European Union Funding (Equal programme). A worldwide database designed as a PB observatory and a tool which helps to conceive, manage, monitor and evaluate a participatory budget.

Languages: Portuguese, English, Spanish, French and Italian (although the opening page is only in Portuguese: when you register the other languages appear)

**[www.oidp.net](http://www.oidp.net)**

International network for cities interested in participatory democracy (mainly Europe and Latin America) The organization is hosted in Barcelona. Organizes annual meetings and provide various documents and films.

Languages: Spanish, English, French, Portuguese and Catalan

**[www2.portoalegre.rs.gov.br/urbal9](http://www2.portoalegre.rs.gov.br/urbal9)**

Network URBAL, supported by European Union Cooperation network involving Latin American and European cities promoting PB. Information on cases and projects.

Languages: English, Portuguese, Spanish and French

**[www.presupuestoygenero.net](http://www.presupuestoygenero.net)**

UN and Development Organizations. The website promotes gender budgeting and participatory budgeting in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Language: Spanish

**<http://democracyspot.net/2012/09/10/directory-of-online-budget-simulators-games>**

A webpage in a very important blog coordinated by the researcher of the World Bank Institute Tiago Peixoto, where all the links to online simulators for PB are listed.

Language: English

**<http://gabinetedigital.rs.gov.brand>  
**[www.participa.rs.gov.br](http://www.participa.rs.gov.br)****

The official pages of the Digital Cabinet and the PB of the Rio Grande do Sul State in Brazil.

Language: Portuguese

**<http://osallistuvabudjetointi.fi>**

Webpage dedicated to PB in Finland by a group of young militants of the International Open Budget project.

Language: Finnish

**<http://portoalegre.cc>**

Social network created by the Municipality of Porto Alegre, together with several partners (who today manage it) with the goal of developing new tools to deepen the quality of deliberation of participatory processes.

Language: Portuguese

**[www.vallis-colapis.hr/index.php/en/lag](http://www.vallis-colapis.hr/index.php/en/lag)**

The official website of Vallis Colapis and its PBs.

Language: Croatian

**Facebook Pages**

Communities and single pages to share information and promote discussions about PB have been multiplying rapidly in recent years because they allow broad penetration of society with very reduced or even zero costs (the same has not happened with Twitter, where PB pages are still very few). Here we list some of the most significant pages that are contributing to the international debate:

[www.facebook.com/bilanciopartecipativo](http://www.facebook.com/bilanciopartecipativo)

A new small community for participatory budgeting in Italian

[www.facebook.com/gabinetedigitalrs](http://www.facebook.com/gabinetedigitalrs)

Official page of the Digital Cabinet of Rio Grande do Sul State, which manages several tools, including the State-level PB.

[www.facebook.com/groups/151001644969273](http://www.facebook.com/groups/151001644969273)

A new group specifically devoted to electronic/digital PBs. In Portuguese

[www.facebook.com/groups/278917175561062/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/278917175561062/)

A new page with news and discussions about PB in the United Kingdom. In English

[www.facebook.com/groups/participatory](http://www.facebook.com/groups/participatory)

The biggest community of information and discussions about PB in English (almost 2000 members in the end of 2013).

[www.facebook.com/OrcamentoParticipativo](http://www.facebook.com/OrcamentoParticipativo)

A small page about PB in general. In Portuguese

[www.facebook.com/orcamentoparticipativo.portugal](http://www.facebook.com/orcamentoparticipativo.portugal)

The oldest and biggest page for discussion and information about PB in Portuguese, rooted in Portugal (around 1,680 members in September 2013)

**Table on countries with participatory budgets at the end of 2012**

World region/countries	Number of PBs (min.-max. estimated)
<b>Total</b>	1269–2778
<b>EUROPE</b>	474–1317
<b>Latin Europe</b>	<b>64–83</b>
France	5–10
Italy	18–25
Portugal	16–18
Spain	25–30
<b>Northern Europe</b>	<b>85–117</b>
Germany	70–93
Iceland, Finland	1–3
Norway, Sweden	4–6
United Kingdom	10–15
<b>Eastern Europe</b>	<b>325–1117</b>
Albania	1–2
Bulgaria	0–1
Croatia	0–2
Russia	14–10
Poland	324–1102
<b>AMERICA</b>	626–1138
<b>North America</b>	<b>13–18</b>
Canada	1–1
Mexico	5–10
United States	7–7
<b>South America and Caribbean</b>	<b>613–1120</b>
<b>Southern Cone</b>	<b>40–60</b>
Argentina	25–35
Chile	15–22
Uruguay	0–3
<b>Other South American Countries</b>	<b>430–884</b>
Bolivia e Ecuador	10–15
Brazil	255–330
Colombia	15–25
Peru	150–514

<b>Central America</b>	<b>143–166</b>
Dominican Republic	140–160
Nicaragua, Salvador, Costa Rica	3–6
<b>Other Caribbean countries</b>	<b>0–10</b>
<b>AFRICA</b>	110–211
<b>Francophone Africa</b>	<b>93–178</b>
Benin	1–1
Burkina Faso	3–4
Cameroon	27–57
Congo	10–29
Madagascar	33–59
Senegal	19–28
<b>Anglophone Africa</b>	<b>15–30</b>
Malawi	15–30
South Africa	
Tanzania	
Uganda	
Zambia	
Zimbabwe	
<b>Lusophone Africa</b>	<b>2–3</b>
Mozambique	2–3
<b>ASIA</b>	58–109
<b>Middle East</b>	<b>0–4</b>
Jordan	0–4
<b>South and Southeast Asia</b>	<b>5–16</b>
Indonesia	0–5
Sri Lanka	1–1
Thailand	4–10
<b>Northeast Asia</b>	<b>53–89</b>
China	7–10
Japan	6–9
South Korea	40–70
<b>OCEANIA</b>	1–3
Australia	1–2
New Zealand	0-1



## Main Acronyms Used in the Text

Africities .....	Pan-African forum of local authorities which, since 2000, has gathered every three years to discuss the evolution, tasks and challenges of decentralization in the African continent.	PT.....	Partido dos Trabalhadores; Brazilian Workers' Party.
ASSOAL.....	Educational association in Cameroon promoting local development and participatory budgets (born in 1998 as the Association des Amoureux du Livre).	SALAR .....	English Acronym for SKL (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting), the Swedish Association of Municipalities and Regions.
BPB .....	German Federal Agency for Civic Education.	UCLG.....	United Cities and Local Governments; global association of municipalities. Born in 2004 from the merger of several other organizations of cities; headquarters in Barcelona.
CIGU .....	Centro Internacional de Gestion Urbana; international NGO with headquarters in Ecuador. Accompanying urban planning and participatory budgeting processes.	UNDP.....	United Nations Development Program; development program of the United Nations.
ENDA-TM .....	Environnement et Développement du Tiers Monde; NGO in Senegal working on North-South development cooperation.	UNICEF .....	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund; Children's Fund of United Nations.
FEDOMU.....	Federación Dominicana de Municipios; Confederation of municipalities in the Dominican Republic.	UNIFEM .....	United Nations Development Fund for Women; development fund of the United Nations for women.
GIZ .....	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (former GTZ, DED and InWEnt).	UN-HABITAT..	United Nations Human Settlements program.
IED Afrique....	Innovations Environnement Développement; educational NGO in Senegal.	UNO .....	United Nations Organization, United Nations.
MDP .....	Municipal Development Partnership. This is a mixed organization which provides capacity-building facilities with the aim of enabling effective self-governance at local level in Sub-Saharan Africa, working in strict collaboration with UN-Habitat and other international organizations.	UNV.....	United Nations Volunteers; program of the United Nations supporting voluntary projects throughout the world.
NGO .....	Non-governmental Organization.	URBACT.....	EU program for sustainable development in towns.
PGU-ALC .....	Programma de Gestion Urbana para America Latina y Caribe; municipal UN action program under the umbrella of UN HABITAT.	URBAL .....	EU program supporting municipal cooperation between cities in Europe and Latin America.
PB .....	Participatory budgeting.	USAID.....	US Organization of Development Cooperation.
PBs .....	Participatory budgets.	WBI .....	World Bank Institute (Washington, DC, USA).
PBP.....	Participatory Budget Project, NGO committed to PB in the United States.	WUF .....	World Urban Forum; global event organized by UN-Habitat every two years





## About the Authors

Yves Sintomer is senior fellow at the Institut Universitaire de France, and professor for political sociology at the Department of Political Science at Paris 8 University. Since 2009 he has also been guest professor in Neuchâtel University, Switzerland. He directed the research project “Participatory budgets in Europe”, which was located at the Marc Bloch Center, Berlin and carried out in cooperation with the Hans-Böckler Foundation and Humboldt University, Berlin. He has published many books on the topics of participation, political theory and urban sociology and has advised some French and European NGOs and local authorities on the topic of citizen engagement.

Carsten Herzberg is scientific project manager and head of the research project “Democratic Control of Public Utilities”. He obtained his PhD grade at the University Paris 8 and the University of Potsdam. He is also member of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Standing Group on Democratic Innovations steering committee. Carsten Herzberg has conducted research on citizen participation and participatory budgeting in Germany, Europe, and Latin America from a comparative perspective. He was research associate at the Franco-German Marc Bloch Research Centre for the Social Sciences in Berlin as well as at Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main.

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- a partner for municipal development cooperation geared to achieving international development goals, and sustainable and participatory urban development – here and among our partners in the South
- a promoter of the exchange of international expertise with municipal experts in developing and emerging countries
- experts in the professionalisation of municipal project partnerships and twinning arrangements
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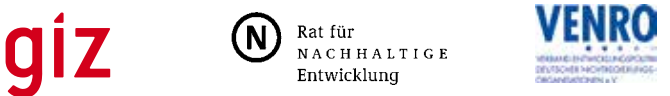
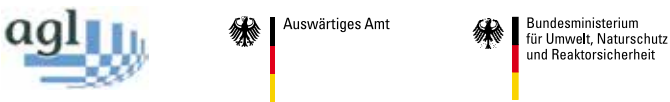
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