

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF **PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING**



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WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a public budget. Different communities, such as municipalities, counties, schools, or other organizations, can decide to allocate part of their budget for PB and give their members an opportunity to directly propose, discuss and vote for project ideas that will be implemented. Hence, citizens participate in a series of open, deliberative meetings to discuss community issues and determine spending priorities, by having a direct role in deciding how and where resources should be spent - PB gives ordinary people real decision-making power over public money, to significantly improve their quality of life, in a relatively short period of time.

Participatory budgeting was introduced in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in 1989, with an objective to establish a balance between the traditional institutions of representative electoral democracy and the participation of members of the public in the political decision-making process. The intention was to enable citizens from historically excluded groups to make choices that will affect how their government acts. To simplify, participatory budgeting programs provide poor and historically excluded citizens with access to important decision-making venues. Since then, the process has been replicated in many countries worldwide, with necessary adjustments to local context. PB has spread to over 3,000 cities around the world, and has been used in counties, states, housing authorities, schools, universities, and other institutions.

The process allows citizen engagement in policy making and represents an example of more equitable governance. People become engaged in defining government policies, through a transparent process that is also more efficient for the implementing institution. Participatory budgeting has been recognised as an efficient way to use public resources and improve the fiscal performance of governments, including the issue of reducing corruption. It represents a successful model of combining participatory, direct democracy and representative democracy.

By introducing participatory budgeting, local authorities nurture the principles of good governance¹, as defined by the Council of Europe, and thus deliver better services to their citizens. PB supports the view that people, their legitimate expectations, and needs should be the focus of policy and decision-making by government at all levels, through regular elections, but also through wider forms of participation and deliberation. By opening the governance process to citizens and making it more transparent, governments and public officials become more accountable, build trust in public institutions, improve legitimacy and efficiency of their work. The Council of Europe encourages autonomy of local self-government units, and within their responsibility for the interests of the local population, promotes participatory processes for involving local communities in decision-making, by setting up clear rules and procedures.



¹Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the principles of good democratic governance (EN / BG)

OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

After numerous PB cycles implemented over the years by governments and communities worldwide, it has been found that PB has a positive impact on well-being and governance, education and learning, as well as civil society and political participation. It is a process that not only positively contributes to good urban governance, but what is most important, it links democratic processes with concrete and perceptible results in the short term. It strengthens democracy through the dialogue of public authorities and their citizenry.

Based on the People Powered **Participatory Budgeting Theory of Change**, short-term outcomes and long-term impacts of PB are grouped in three categories, depending on the target audience:



PEOPLE



COMMUNITY



GOVERNMENT



PB OUTCOMES AFFECTING PEOPLE

- ▶ PB participants acquire new civic and deliberative skills and competences, as well as knowledge for participation in democratic processes
- ▶ PB participants adopt new attitudes, values and dispositions to solve conflicts
- ▶ PB promotes stronger participation in government, including voting in regular elections, but also non-electoral, individual-level of political participation
- ▶ PB participants develop stronger relationships with diverse community members, educational institutions, organizations and government, based on trust
- ▶ Different PB designs and implementation can narrow or widen the civic engagement gap, caused by unequal opportunities to participate in civic and political spaces.



PB OUTCOMES AFFECTING COMMUNITY

- ▶ Stronger budget literacy among community leaders has positive impact on well-being
- ▶ Greater community participation, especially in cases where more money per capita has been allocated through PB
- ▶ PB supports establishment of new civil society organisations (CSO), stronger and more connected organizations, rise of new coalitions and alliances
- ▶ PB facilitates less formal collective action
- ▶ PB provides new funding opportunities for citizen initiatives
- ▶ PB is associated with lower infant mortality (municipalities using PB in Brazil have lower infant mortality than comparable municipalities without PB, as well as municipalities in Brazil that use specific social justice rules than comparable municipalities that don't use these rules)



PB OUTCOMES AFFECTING GOVERNMENT

- ▶ Municipalities using PB generate more local tax revenues mostly because their citizens believe that the government is working on their behalf and can be held accountable
- ▶ Governments get a clear picture of public priorities, therefore, public money is being spent differently
- ▶ New public infrastructure and programs are being introduced due to PB - creative and innovative solutions for identified needs and challenges
- ▶ New decision-making practices and new spaces for co-governance are being created
- ▶ PB supports stronger connections with government, local organizations and residents
- ▶ PB results in more efficiency in public expenditure.



LONG TERM IMPACTS OF THE PROCESS INCLUDE

- ▶ Educated and active residents
- ▶ Stronger political and civic participation
- ▶ More trust in government
- ▶ Stronger civil society
- ▶ Healthier and safer communities
- ▶ Expanded political imagination
- ▶ Co-governance
- ▶ More revenues
- ▶ More responsive and equitable public spending
- ▶ More transparency and accountability of local administrations.



BASIC NECESSARY PRECONDITIONS

Before planning a participatory budgeting process, initiators need to consider whether the community meets the following necessary conditions that are essential prerequisites for successful implementation of the PB:

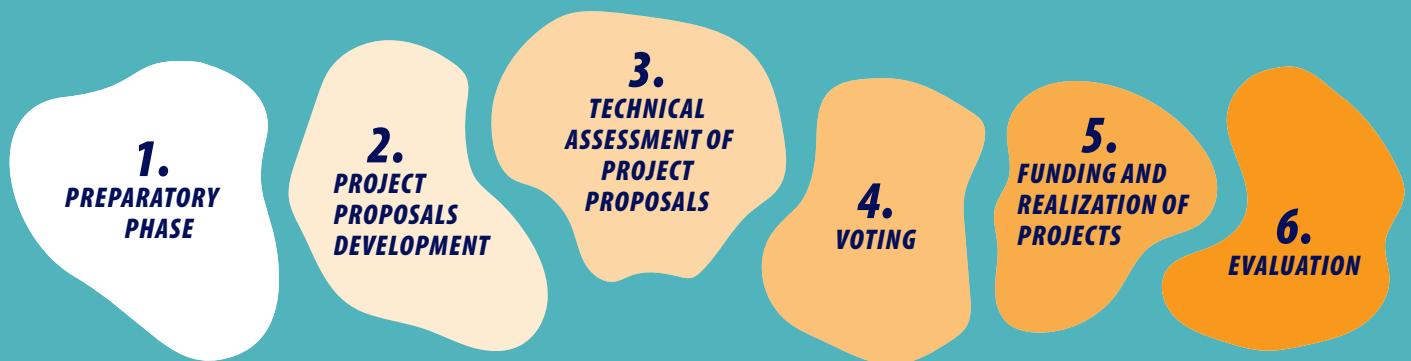
1. Clear political will and support from public authorities, i.e. the Mayor or other municipal decision-makers - strong political will ensures successful implementation of PB cycle, in particular the final phase, when selected projects are being transferred into tangible investments in a dedicated time period
2. Awareness of available capacities
3. Capacity building for all relevant stakeholders of the process
4. Availability, support and motivation for participation from municipal officials, as relevant actors of the process - relevant for the project's sustainability
5. Inclusion of civil society organizations and citizens in general (in all stages of the process) - relevant for the project's sustainability
6. Clear definition of the budget allocated for implementation of projects selected by the citizens
7. Clear definition of PB methodology
8. Clear technical criteria that must be satisfied by project proposals to be considered eligible for the final stage of voting
9. Transparent and effective dissemination of information towards all stakeholders, and citizens in particular
10. Branding of the project as citizens' ownership

When the aforementioned preconditions are not met, it is advisable to put PB on hold until local conditions improve. However, other initiatives can be undertaken to set the ground for successful PB implementation, such as introducing more transparency into the budgeting process, organization of public forums and debates with civil society about the budget itself, and opening different channels of two-way communication for citizens to express their needs and demands towards the local government, as well as for the government to keep the public updated.



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING METHODOLOGY

There is no single or “best” methodology for PB, it tends to differ greatly from one place to the other, depending on the particularities of each region, its historical context, civic culture, available resources, organization of public administration and civil society. Nevertheless, participatory budgeting follows a number of key stages, as explained below, which every well designed PB process should follow.



1. PREPARATORY PHASE

SITUATION ANALYSIS

To be able to select or design the most appropriate solution according to each local context, the first suggested step is to do a situation analysis to see to what extent the main principles are respected and the preconditions met. This primarily refers to exploring the existing priorities and themes as set out in the local strategic documents (and PB compliance with them), and legal requirements that might ease or aggravate participatory processes, review of (possibly) existing participatory practices, possibilities of integrating PB into the budget and assessing the overall support PB might receive from local governing bodies.

STAKEHOLDERS MAPPING

As part of the preparatory phase, it is important to create a map of local actors/relevant stakeholders interested in the process and possibly opposed to it. This will also serve as an indicator of how ready the community is to take on this participative endeavor.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

At this phase, the government needs to decide on the amount and origin of the resources necessary for the municipality to implement the process and for funding the projects selected by the citizens. The amount of allocated money depends on what it will be used for, on the size of the municipality and the size of the total municipal budget. Usually, the amount allocated for funding PB projects ranges between 1-15% of the total available budget. It is important to keep in mind that the amount allocated sounds compelling for citizens to participate and feel like it's worth their time. Depen-

ding on how large and complex the process is, resources also need to be allocated for building the entire process and implementing it (staff costs, operating costs like design, printing, promotion campaign, etc.).

Depending on the size of the municipality and available budget, resources can be allocated as a lump sum at the municipal level or divided into smaller amounts for each municipal district. The second variant will prevent proposals from smaller districts from being outvoted relative to proposals from larger districts.

During the initial phases of PB implementation, it is recommended that municipalities concentrate on the execution of smaller-scale, communal projects. Examples of such initiatives include localized enhancements to educational institutions, streets, parks, libraries, and other public spaces. This strategic approach aims to prevent local administrations from being overwhelmed by extensive investment projects. By prioritizing modest-sized endeavors, municipalities can implement the winning projects faster, often within a one-year timeframe. contributes to citizen satisfaction with the visible positive impact on their communities.

DIALOGUE AND ALLIANCES

The next step is to open up the dialogue with relevant stakeholders to get more supporters and legitimacy for the project. This includes:

- ▶ Agreement within the government (the cabinet)
- ▶ Support from the most relevant representatives of the civil society
- ▶ Support and early involvement of the elected councilors.

PB MODEL AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following step is to select or design the most appropriate PB model, based on a consultative process, carried out with local actors in a participative manner. It is suggested to revise the selected model each year, depending on the evaluation results from the previous implementation year. In addition to the PB model, it is necessary to define eligibility criteria against which project proposals will be assessed, and accordingly, released to a final stage of voting. It is valuable to transfer PB model and implementation steps into a written material, such as "PB Rulebook", to be updated with each new cycle.

MANAGING TEAM

To ensure successful implementation of PB, it is of utmost importance to recruit a team of motivated and trained people, in charge of managing the entire process. Managing team can be supported by a group of trained volunteers and civil servants from relevant administrative departments, but also by external associates in charge of technical/digital support, promotion activities, or even evaluation services. Nevertheless, it is recommended to keep the know-how among internal capacities, to ensure long-term sustainability of the project.

PREPARATION OF MATERIALS

Preparatory phase also includes preparation of all necessary materials and forms, such as forms for submitting project proposals, evaluation questionnaires, voting ballots, instructions for facilitators, project eligibility assessment forms, etc.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

Finally, throughout the whole project preparation and implementation phase, it is crucial to ensure transparent and continuous communication with the public. Successful information and communication campaign will affect citizens' turnout to PB workshops, and nurture positive attitudes towards PB, despite the general lack of trust in public institutions and participative processes. Therefore, the government has to open a dialogue with citizens already in the preparatory phase, in order to inform them about the process, their role as protagonists in decision-making, opportunities and benefits for the community, as well as to keep citizens regularly updated about the process and included in all phases of the process, from preparation to inauguration of selected and implemented projects. It is essential to engage groups that are least likely to participate, such as low-income communities, communities of color, immigrants, and youth - their participation makes PB inclusive. It is suggested to use different channels and methods of communication, including public events (forums, info days), online and social media marketing, printed materials (brochures, posters, flyers sent out directly to citizens' address, etc.). In case there are existing local public engagement processes, PB should be connected to it, and incorporated into their agenda in terms of situation analysis and information campaign about the PB.

2. PROJECT PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND VOTING

In general, communities conduct annual PB cycles that consist of workshops or meetings with citizens where project ideas are being collected and designed into proposals, technical evaluation of collected project proposals, voting for proposals, and implementing the winning project proposals. After the implementation phase, the planning process starts again and PB becomes an integral part of decision-making practices.

1) CITIZENS DESIGN PROJECT PROPOSALS

At public meetings or workshops citizens gather to present and discuss proposals which are further developed or joined with other similar proposals. All project proposals can be taken into the second step of technical assessment or preliminary voting can take place to narrow down the number of proposals. It is possible to include other methods of project proposals submission, such as online digital platforms.

Citizen workshops or meetings can be organized at municipal level or at the level of municipal districts/boroughs/wards. This mostly depends on the size of the municipality and on the distribution of PB budget - whether it is allocated as a lump sum municipal PB budget, or certain amount of resources is reserved for each municipal district and can be used exclusively for projects proposed and voted for by the residents of each specific district.

2) TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

The managing team, with the support of experts from relevant administrative departments, assesses project proposals against predefined criteria, such as:

- ▶ is the project feasible concerning its cost, available resources and work duration
- ▶ is it under the jurisdiction of local authorities
- ▶ does it have an environmental effect
- ▶ does it serve the public good
- ▶ is it in compliance with local strategic and sustainable development goals?

Positively assessed proposals reach the following voting phase. If there are minor technical obstacles identified in a project proposal, project proposal “owners” should be consulted to reach a possible solution without compromising the essence and objectives of the project.

3) VOTING BETWEEN TECHNICALLY ELIGIBLE PROJECT PROPOSALS

Citizens vote for proposals they consider a priority for their community. Proposals with the highest number of votes enter the funding and realization phase. Voting can be organized in person, through ballot boxes, online (using different e-voting platforms) or as a combination of both. When introducing digital tools into the process, it is important to keep in mind issues such as privacy protection and cybersecurity, as well as digital literacy and the digital divide.

3. FUNDING AND REALIZATION OF SELECTED PROJECTS

Government implements winning projects, while involving citizens to monitor and troubleshoot problems as they arise. This stage includes the public procurement phase, works and project inauguration. As main protagonists of the process, citizens participate at inauguration as project owners.

4. EVALUATION OF THE PROCESS

Evaluation should take place throughout the entire process of PB preparation and implementation. It is preferable to gather data from all process participants, before project implementation (in terms of expectations, support towards participatory methodologies and previous knowledge about PB) and after the project cycle ends. It is preferable to gather extensive and disaggregated data (by age, gender, occupation, etc.) to be able to follow the evolution of PB, its success and its contribution to democratic political culture in a community.

STAGES

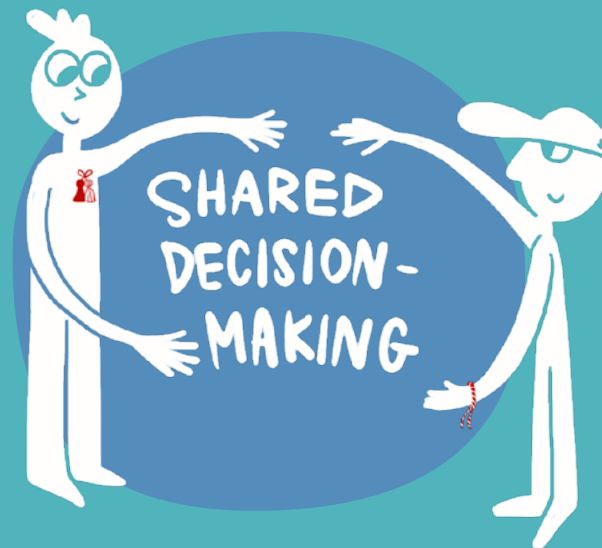


SPECIALIZED PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING MODELS

Participatory budgeting can be used in many different contexts, allowing different target groups to have a greater say in decisions about the spending of public funds, such as young people and students. This tool of democratic participation can be adapted and used to create decision-making opportunities relevant and appealing to young people.

INTRODUCING PB BRINGS MANY BENEFITS FOR YOUTH, SUCH AS:

- ▶ learning about democratic models of decision-making,
- ▶ experience of positive citizen engagement from the earliest age
- ▶ stronger community and cooperation between pupils, young people and institutions they belong to
- ▶ stronger chances for future engagement in decision-making processes.



THEY ALSO GAIN IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- ▶ critical and analytical thinking
- ▶ skills in the area of team-work, research and presentation, advocacy and project management
- ▶ insights into the functioning of their community and possible ways how to address specific problems
- ▶ basic understanding of financial planning
- ▶ knowledge about participation in decision-making processes
- ▶ sense for community well-being and social responsibility.

When starting youth PB, it is always preferable to apply an empowering, bottom-up approach, in order to involve young people in designing processes that work best for them.

PB MANAGING TEAM

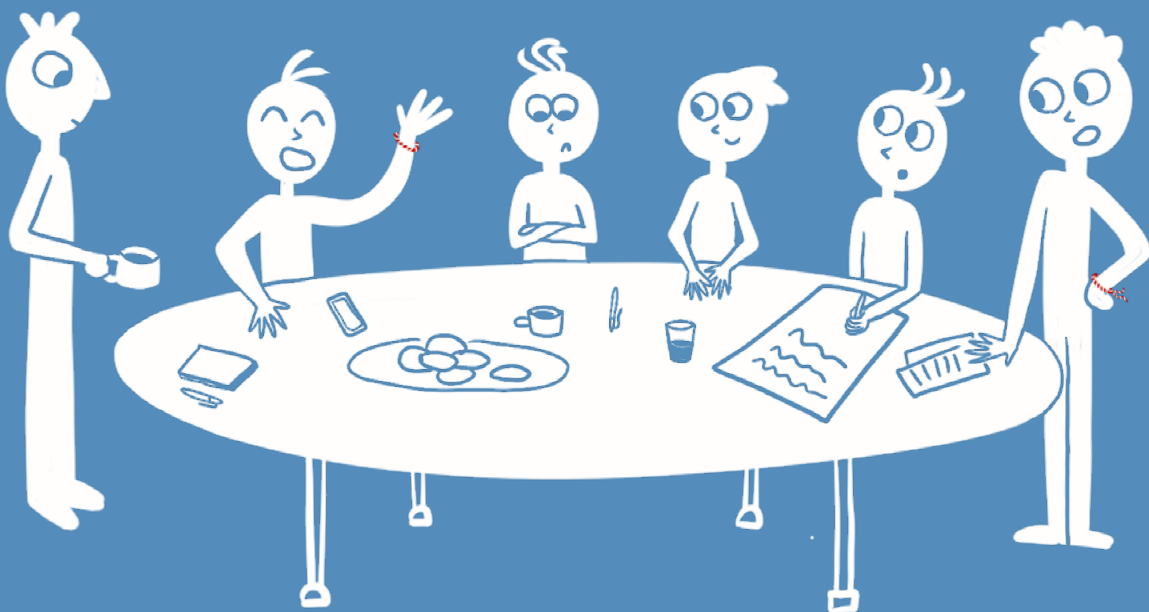
The team responsible for designing and implementing the entire process should always involve young people, in addition to other stakeholders, depending on whether you are implementing participatory budgeting within a formal educational setting, such as a school or within a wider community, such as a municipality.

In case of school PB, the team should include representatives from the entire school community, including students, teachers, administrative staff, the principal and parents.

In the case of municipal PB for youth, in addition to young people, the team should include representatives of the local government, educational institutions, NGOs working with young people, members of youth city councils, youth organizations, students or individuals interested in municipal matters. It is important to keep the group representative and the process of member selection open and transparent.

This core team should be provided with support from relevant municipal departments, in case the process is held at the municipal, larger scale, level, such as the department responsible for education, youth or participation.

It is important to invest time and resources to prepare and train people responsible for designing and implementing the process - this can be done by reaching out to external support of experts who can provide advice or share their own experience. The purpose of the training should be to familiarize participants with the concept and principles of participatory budgeting, to learn how to adapt the process for different settings or to design a process that would work best for their context.



PROMOTING THE PROJECT AND SHARING INFORMATION

To ensure great turnout of young people and ultimately success of the project, it is necessary to share information about the PB process to potential participants. There are many tools and methods for sharing information, for promoting the project and extending learning activities, such as:

- ▶ Capacity-building workshops for teachers, youth workers and young people co-designing the process
- ▶ Thematic lessons at school (or intra-curricular content related to PB)
- ▶ Notice boards at school or in the community
- ▶ Sharing information by students or teachers during lessons (as ambassadors of the project)
- ▶ Open consultations, info-stands
- ▶ Promotional films and videos
- ▶ Materials and publications on the website
- ▶ Social media posts, including thematic groups on social networks
- ▶ Events (i.e. public events with guest lectures from PB experienced city or school)
- ▶ Educational brochures, leaflets.



Success in mobilizing participation through peer groups and networks is a sign of a vibrant Participatory budget process.

DEVELOPING PROJECT PROPOSALS

A fundamental step in developing project proposals is providing support to young people to gain appropriate skills to think of an idea, elaborate on it and eventually present it as a full proposal for a final decision-making process. Teachers, youth workers and parents have a very important role here, by guiding young people in generating new ideas and designing projects suitable for their PB process. This means helping them understand the context they live in, to identify possible problems they encounter and possible solutions to them, as well as help them gain confidence and improve presentation skills. The entire process should be creative and fun (especially when working with younger pupils) to stimulate interest and innovative projects.

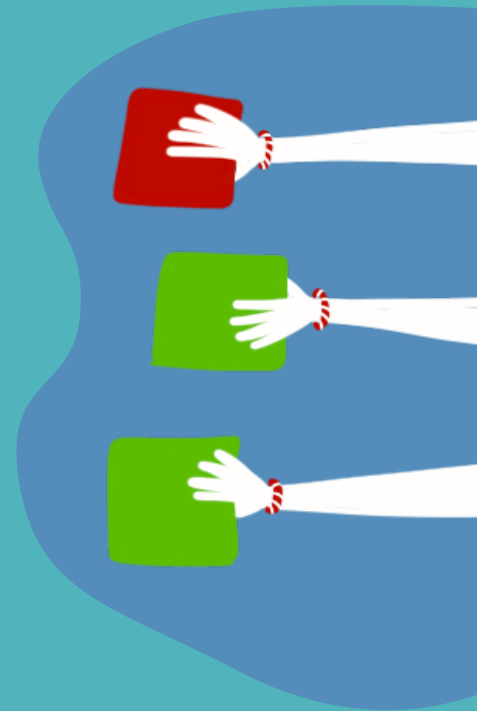
VERIFYING PROJECT PROPOSALS

Based on clear and predefined rules, project proposals need to be verified as eligible or not. Young people and children should be involved in the process of verification, with an intention to support those bringing forward their proposals, instead of short-listing or pre-determining which projects can go forward to the final vote. Through this process, young people can be advised of potential improvements they could make to their proposals, with regards to the objectives, their budget, or the activities.

DELIBERATION AND DECISION-MAKING

In the stage of proposals presentation, deliberation and final voting, young people should be supported to feel confident and skilled enough to present and engage others with their ideas. Tips on how to prepare a good presentation can be shared, as well as the importance of speaking slowly and calmly, keeping a positive attitude, and using visual tools that communicate ideas well.

By this stage, young people should understand that deliberation should be at the very heart of any participatory budgeting process. Hence, the idea of any strong and direct democratic process is not about competition and conflicts in opinion, but rather about wide public discussions as a way to resolve differences, build trust and reduce misunderstanding.



PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION

In this moment young people make their idea a reality, and here is the opportunity to widen the project circle and welcome others to get involved in the implementation stage. Teachers or facilitators should help to develop a clear plan of how to implement the project. Young people usually need support when considering key actors to be involved, legal procedures to be respected, timeframe, available budget, key tasks and possible risks. Often the managing team organizes a celebration to gather contributors from different groups, to share experience and progress of the winning projects, as well as to witness the difference that has been made to young people, the school or a wider community.

OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

When developing and implementing PB with young people and children, it is important to keep in mind the following principles:

Equality and fairness - treat all participants equally, provide them with the same number of opportunities to present their ideas or cast their votes, also protect them from being pressured to vote in a particular way;

Voluntary participation - all young participants, particularly school pupils, should not feel pressured to participate in class; in case a student refuses to participate in the voting that should be respected;

Access to voting - everyone should have access to voting, and support should be provided to pupils with physical disability or when facing language or learning barriers;

Multiple votes - this is to be considered as an option since multiple voting can help to widen connections and extendw support across schools or communities;

Transparency and clear rules - it is important to communicate all rules and procedures clearly, especially when younger children are involved;

Publication of results - it is important to publish the results of the process in a way to reach everyone concerned; this provides an opportunity to share the hard work and commitment shown by young people, and the skills they have developed

Providing support to unsuccessful projects - this support can encompass signposting to other sources of funding, connecting teams with successful projects or with external help to further develop project proposals and re-apply to a future round of PB if possible.

Recognizing and rewarding participation - participation can be acknowledged through certificates, ceremonies, school credits, qualifications or other unique experiences; this way we celebrate the relevance of participation and encourage further engagement.



DIGITAL TOOLS FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In recent years, the use of digital platforms has become increasingly common when engaging citizens in different processes of decision-making. This trend was additionally accelerated by the COVID pandemic, when several comprehensive digital participation platforms emerged and practitioners had to adapt quickly.

The wide offer of civic-tech tools allows a choice between purchasing a ready-made solution, customizing an open-source platform or developing tailor-made solutions.

Digital platforms can successfully support in-person engagement, by allowing citizens to participate in collective activities, such as:

- ▶ proposing new projects
- ▶ deliberating to agree on shared decisions
- ▶ planning how to use public spaces
- ▶ voting on how to spend public budgets
- ▶ prioritizing potential options
- ▶ drafting policies and legislation.



Using digital solutions brings many benefits, such as:

- ▶ reaching more people than via meetings, because residents can take part when they're not busy and without traveling;
- ▶ lower costs compared to traditional outreach methods;
- ▶ integration with other participatory democracy processes, such as by collecting ideas for in-person deliberation;
- ▶ automated analysis of large amounts of resident feedback;
- ▶ easier follow-up communications with residents based on their interests and ideas;
- ▶ more open and transparent decision-making.

Nevertheless, before deciding to use a digital participatory platform and choosing one, take into consideration the strategy behind your participatory process, as sometimes success in engaging people can be achieved through some basic online forms or "old-school" tech tools like WhatsApp, Weibo, Microsoft Teams. It is also recommended that participatory processes and digital tools start small, with a pilot program. This way, we learn what works best for the community and avoid misallocating resources.

Other important issues to be considered before opting for an online participation tool are:

- ▶ the digital divide, manifested in disparity of internet access, speed of connections, cost of data plans, ownership of personal devices, familiarity with technology;
- ▶ skepticism towards giving personal information, especially in cases of long registration or identity verification;
- ▶ fear or restraint from telling the government what to do, due to historical or current oppression and various forms of inequality;
- ▶ public perception of how much feedback is given through digital platforms is really taken into consideration;
- ▶ capacities to provide technical training and support to users.

Guide to Digital Participation Platforms (by People Powered) reviews different participatory democracy tools and platforms and demonstrates how to choose, set up, and run them.

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

The Brazilian city of Porto Alegre started the first full participatory budgeting process in 1989. Since then, PB has spread to over 3,000 cities around the world, and has been used in counties, states, housing authorities, schools, universities, and other institutions.

[Porto Alegre's \(Brazil\) participatory budgeting](#) is the oldest PB process in the world, beginning in 1989 and continuing into the present. The budgeting process follows a yearly cycle and is open to all citizens of voting age.

[Cascais \(Portugal\) participatory budgeting](#) started in 2011 and has not stopped since then. It was awarded with an URBACT good practice label in 2017.

[Decide Madrid \(Spain\)](#) is the city's official open governance platform launched in 2015, based on an open source civic technology called [CONSUL DEMOCRACY](#), and is used to engage the public in decision making. The platform follows a very user-friendly approach, notably through its three main phases to submit, support and vote initiatives.

[Tartu participatory budgeting](#) was the first PB process in Estonia, launched in 2013. Enables its citizens, aged 16 and more, to decide how their city should spend 200,000 EUR annually.

[Chicago](#) was the first city to implement participatory budgeting in the US back in 2008. Participatory budgeting in Chicago became a success and is now implemented in various city districts. The proposal submission and voting are managed online, giving the community a chance to engage with the projects more regularly and at their convenience.

[New York City PB](#) started in 2011 when a couple of city council members launched a PB process to allow residents in their district to allocate part of their capital discretionary funds. Over the years, the process has grown to include a majority of Council Members, giving communities real decision-making over more than \$30 million in taxpayer money on an annual basis.

[Cluj-Napoca \(Romania\) participatory budgeting](#) started in 2012 and has been successfully implemented since. The programme was followed by a participatory budgeting process for youth, established in 2015 under the name [Com'ON Cluj-Napoca](#).

[Pazin \(Croatia\)](#) was the first city in Croatia to introduce participatory budgeting in 2014, and since then has been successfully implemented in nine cycles. Later on, other Croatian cities introduced their own PB models, such as the [City of Trogir](#), the [City of Rijeka](#), the [City of Dubrovnik](#).

[City of Kutná Hora \(Czech Republic\)](#) where PB has been implemented in primary and high schools, but also at the city level, where students effectively manage the city's participatory budget, due to their previous experience in school PB.

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

[People Powered](#) - Global Hub for Participatory Democracy that provides support to participatory democracy initiatives, including [participatory budgeting](#), by providing various [resources](#) on top tools, guides, and materials on participatory democracy;

[Participedia](#) - a global network and crowdsourcing platform for researchers, educators, practitioners, policymakers, activists, and anyone interested in public participation and democratic innovations;

[BePART](#) - an online platform for practitioners from institutions and civil society to share their examples how best to engage citizens in political decision-making;

[EU Democracy Reform Observatory](#) - an initiative that fosters the debate on modernizing European democracy and provides recommendations on how to make democracy and decision-making more legitimate, participatory, and effective in the EU;

[EU Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy](#) - provides services, guidance and tools to support the development of socially robust policy through citizen engagement practices;

[YouthPB](#) - a platform that provides tools and ready-made solutions for supporting youth engagement, in particular youth PB

[DYPALL Network](#) (Developing Youth Participation at Local Level) - a European platform of over 80 civil society organizations and local authorities from more than 30 countries, that aims to involve young people in decision-making processes at local level.

The member states of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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