

Workshop NECE Focus Group Participatory Budgeting (PB) 10-12 October 2013 in Berlin

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1. Agenda and goals of the workshop

1.1 Goals of the focus group PB

1. To develop NECE further:
 - Gathering formats, approaches and actors/stakeholders.
 - Formulating recommendations / desiderata for citizenship education.
2. To raise the visibility of NECE results & sustainability of NECE activities:
 - Gathering & discussing research: results and plans.
 - Developing new models and approaches.
3. To strengthen the networking (on PB) in Europe and internationally:
 - Publishing contributions on PB (NECE-Website, -Newsletter, -Conferences, etc.).
 - Initiating and implementing partnerships and common projects.
4. To provide a thematic grounding for lobbying & advocacy activities and formulate:
 - Common criteria
 - Quality standards
 - Conditions for & indicators of success
5. To enable co-funding & fundraising.

1.2 Agenda of 1st workshop of the focus group PB

1. Exchange on professional backgrounds, experiences, expectations, contributions and topics of the focus group PB members.
2. Presentation and discussion of good practice examples.
3. Working session on the topics of *Practice & Tools* and *Theory & Evaluation*.
4. Definition of future activities, projects and working groups within the FOCUS GROUP PB.
5. Definition of a communication and working strategy for the future and of next steps to take.

2. Participants

The group is heterogeneous as to its practical and theoretical experience with PB. The three main working fields within the group are: theory, practice and the development of online tools. The participants assess the actual level of PB practice in their home countries between high and low. PB is found to still be in a pioneer phase in Europe. There is an increasing interest in it, especially in northern countries like the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and the UK. Spain, which was one of the leading European countries in number of PB projects, has had a big decline of PB due to the current government. In Egypt there is no PB knowledge/practice at all yet. Norbert Kersting's outlook was: In Europe there is a social and political trend to more participation. Therefore governments and institutions are increasingly interested in participatory methods/instruments such as PB. Around 2020 PB might have stepped out of its pioneer phase and be widely established as a common practice.

2.1 Expectations, contributions and topics of the participants

2.1.1 Expectations

1. Optimising PB:

Sharing expectations & problems; learn about trends; optimize budget monitor; see tools from development work travel to Europe; generate more ideas on democratic & social innovation; optimize & simplify PB processes, reduce „bureaucracy“ („Less is more“)

2. Learning about PB:

Hear and tell good & sad stories about PB; learn more about work with adults & PB; learn about PB for developing countries (Egypt); how does PB work on a daily basis? What are the steps?

3. Network & Cooperation:

Work out how the PB network can work; exchange expectations and work on projects together

2.1.2 Contributions

Share PB experience & research in Italy (Stefano Stortone); share methodologies & results (Nelson Dias); share experience with “Budget Maker” (Jochum de Graaf); share best practice with young people (Jenny Southern); share networking knowledge (Anja Ostermann); share knowledge about PB in the world (Ernesto Ganuza); experience with budget monitoring (Roelof Martens); participation and innovation in the field of *Hard to Reach Learners* (Norbert Kersting); study tours (in order to exchange) and collective mapping (Morten Ronnenberg Møller); practical experience in development & implementation of projects and training of multipliers in developmental countries (Suzan S. Fouad); play with cameras & documentation, experience with youth (Gilles Pradeau); IT & Software Development (Kamil Gregor); building incubator of ideas, methods, “wisdom of the crowd”, citizen science (Günter Thauer)

2.1.3 Topics

1. Concerning Definition + Goals:

How can we give representation to citizens on political level? How can empowerment and a strengthening of democracy happen through PB? How can we internationalize citizenship education? Can there be a European strategy & lobbying that roots PB in the countries. Independently from political majorities / governing parties? (How can it look like, what does it need?) What does “empowered citizen” mean & how can this be achieved? What is the tipping point to mainstream PB as a budget practice & how can this be reached? (e.g. fix my street);

2. Concerning *Hard to Reach Learners* and youth + PB:

Hard to reach citizens are still “excluded”; work on youth PB themes – deliberation, pre-vote, interactivity?; support children’s rights and well-being through PB; raise the number of women in discourses; raise safety in society (e.g. reducing poverty and sexual assault) through PB.

3. Concerning methods:

Focus methodologies, results & indicators for success; relation & interaction between online and offline tools & processes; communication that helps to involve people; good visualization in order to reach people better; reduce and simplify information; use wisdom of the crowd effectively; co-production of services on a base of public-private-partnerships; capacitate communities.

4. Concerning evaluation, indicators and results:

Evaluation of PB results and success-factors; how far can PB result in well-being?

3. Participants’ good practice examples and projects

Wil Post: Budget Monitoring, *Centrum voor budgetmonitoring en burgerparticipatie, Amsterdam (Netherlands)*. Info-management project to increase quality of living conditions in the Amsterdam quarter *East* by creating transparency about the budget spending. “Social right to know where the money goes!”. More than 1000 people from *East* participated (24.000 inhabitants in total). Goals: Expand the project in different countries (e.g. Spain, Poland...)

Günter Thauer: Building a civic foundation in *Wedding, Berlin (Germany)*. Main objective and biggest challenge: to attract people and to make them participate. Once this is achieved, the foundation will reach and negotiate with politicians about PB. Goals: Reach, inform and educate (socially disadvantaged) people, give an idea of the dimensions of amounts of public money.

Petra Grüne: Homepage *buergerhaushalt.org*. Website that collects and provides information on PB projects in Germany. Goals: networking, provide information on good practice and to stimulate the debate about PB. Around 80 municipalities are represented.

Stefano Stortone: *Canegrate Partecipa, Canegrate (Italy)*. Website/online tool that helps citizens and civic groups to implement a PB process. Focus: Involve people in political processes; educate them in order to avoid competition and “lobby decisions” within PB. Goal: How to break down competition and systematize the decision-taking phase.

Jenny Southern: *Young Advisers (UK)*. Network of young people, who stimulate social action by showing decision-makers how to engage young people in community life, local decision making and improving services. Goal: Increase political participation of young people by implementing their suggestions (→ feeling effectivity). PB shall be one instrument for this.

Gilles Pradeau: *Learning to count – a web documentary (France, UK, Portugal)*. Documentation of practices related to youth PB in Europe. Focus: What are the key issues for young people to learn before going into a PB process? In addition: workshops for young people PB and PB documentation (process and outcomes) Goal: PR for PB in the youth sector, educating (young) people before going into a PB process.

Jochum de Graaf: Homepage *Bezuinigingskeuzes (Netherlands)*. Online platform for municipalities to provide transparency about their budget and give citizens the possibility to virtually redistribute the budget. Municipalities fill in their budget data and provide concrete proposal on how to save money. Citizens can vote them, compare their opinion in statistics and contribute own proposals for cuts. Goal: Make public budgets more transparent; find good solutions for budget cuts.

Nelson Dias: *Digital device to support the design, management and evaluation of PB (Global)*. An “online consultant” that allows municipalities to step-by-step develop a PB concept fitting to their needs.

4. Exchange on concepts and practice of PB

4.1 Practice & Tools of PB: A summary of key insights (goals, definitions, criteria)

After defining the main goals of PB as (1) decision-making on the budget and (2) the participatory process (to involve people more in democratic processes, Increase civil society), the working-group *Practice & Tools of PB* identified 2 key-points that are essential for the success of PB:

4.1.1 How can people be attracted to participate in PB?

PB is nothing without the participation of citizens. But often it is hard to reach users. Important factors to ensure the success of participation in PB processes could be:

- Tools for raising awareness about spending: Budget simulator; visualizing the budget; online petitions
- Reaching the citizens: Connecting people; advocacy tools for “normal Joe”; public meetings, conferences in order to raise awareness (e.g. telling them about PB examples in other communities)
- Public relations: Making it interesting for the media, so that they inform about it (reports...); canvassing
- Conclusion: You always need a combination of online + offline tools in the participation process. Effective PB has to be within walking distance. You need top political support.

4.1.2 How can we make PB a political priority and convince politicians to engage in PB?

A PB process has to have real outcomes and influence on the decision-making, otherwise citizens become frustrated and leave the process. So first of all the politicians/municipalities/decision-makers have to be convinced of introducing PB as a decision tool and of sharing their power on budgets-decisions.

Also, the mentality for decision making in the society has to change: citizens have to learn how to reach consensus (instead of everyone fighting for his rights against the others i.e. cooperation instead of competition amongst citizen groups).

4.2 Theory & Concepts of PB - A summary of key insights (goals, definitions, criteria)

The working group defined the following topics that are essential to be discussed/worked on further concerning theory and concepts:

- PB vs. representative/direct democracy (dualism between left or right / spending or cutting)
- Deliberative methods (e.g. as a tool to raise inclusion)
- Define criteria for evaluation,
- Know about “Hidden Agenda” (E.g. do governments really want to empower people by a PB process or is their goal just to cut the budget?)
- Define criteria for the use of tools & methods
 - What budget is being worked with? Public money or other sources?
 - What level is being worked on? Neighborhood, city, municipality?
 - Does the focus lie on empowerment or on decision-making?

5. Project and ideas pool for the focus group PB

5.1 Citizen tools (empowerment)

- A neighbourhood-fund budget simulator. (The existing tools aim at municipalities as users, use the same model for neighbourhoods.)
- (Interactive) Tools for groups/communities to experiment PB methods. Learn how to build your own PB and do it.
- Create a systematic database.
- Create tools for ‘micro’ level.
- Visualization of PB practice in Europe, e.g. with a crowd mapping using *ushahidi* (www.ushahidi.com)
- Re-allocation in May 2014 for the European election: Make PB a topic in the European election.
- Integrate open data to contribute to an open spending discussion

5.2 Promotion (Advoc, Lobbying, Marketing, Campaigning)

- Promoting PB in the Netherlands & other countries by examples from other EU countries.
- Set up, support and training to set up Youth Cabinet style groups in other countries and internationalize it, as a way of increasing youth PB involvement.
- Designing & facilitating an online PB course with videos for the first 2014 semester (sharing examples in order to grow a community of PB practitioners).
- Expand learning of PB concept and tools for new groups (e.g. in developing countries)
- Target GpS: Municipalities, Communities, Students/ Universities
- Economize PB → Work on how to show the return on invest.

5.3 Knowledge Management

- Collection, discussion & systematization of existing practices and examples. Concerning: Criteria (definition, success, goal) and effects.
- Regular exchange and meetings (which could also have new formats like webinars, hackerdons, sketchatons...). Concerning: Open PB, increase access, strengthen and expand the network and existing players, identify further stakeholders
- Create a Database with an overview of EU-Good Practice.
- Write a (e-)book with best practice as an overview of the data base.
- Evaluate & define criteria for PB consequences on administration and civil society across Europe.
- Collection of PB methodologies across Europe – An European Project?

6. Working session on future activities and projects of the focus group PB

6.1 Knowledge Management (Kamil Gregor, Ernesto Ganuza, Norbert Kersting, Roelof Martens, Nelson Dias)

Idea: A database of participatory budgeting cases, which would provide structured information on participatory budgeting (PB).

The database could be used for - among other things - dissemination of knowledge and experience, education and comparative research about PB. An added value of the database - especially when compared to existing databases of PB activity - would be its international scope and usage of English language. The database would be built in an iterative process consisting of several phases:

1. The database would be designed by PB experts. This includes mainly defining a PB case and defining variables describing a PB case and their value range.
2. The database would be developed by a coder. This is a technical part of the process.
3. Data on PB cases would be gathered into the database by external experts or PB practitioners.
4. Quality of data gathered would be controlled by external PB experts. Main focus of the quality control process would be factual accuracy and completeness of information. Each time this process is completed, an iteration of the database is produced. Feedback on the database and its content may then be used to change any aspect of the process and repeat it to produce next iteration. New variables and/or cases can be added in next iterations. Thanks to the iterative process, the database can grow from simple and limited to complex and extensive.

6.2 Citizen Tools (Günter Thauer, Stefano Stortone, Jochum de Graf)

Idea: Set-up an information online platform for the PB users.

It should include the following parts:

- List of Frequent Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Glossary of public budgeting terms
- Visualizations tools to facilitate the raw figures of the public budget: e.g.:
 - mapping tools (googlemap, openstreetmap etc.)
 - Data wrangler: <http://vis.stanford.edu/wrangler/>
- E-learning unit

The tools have to be adapted to the different target groups of the citizen. The traditional tools for participation like town hall meeting, round table, etc. are still a must for the participatory budgeting. (=blended learning)

6.3 Promotion (Advocacy, Lobbying, Marketing, Campaigning) (Gilles Pradeau, Wil Post, Jenny Southern, Petra Grüne, Suzan S. Fouad)

- Book with good practice examples (information also for people that don't use the internet)
- Promotion videos
- Online courses
- Best practice workshops
- Facebook group European PB that is connected with the national PB facebook groups

7. Outlook and next steps

7.1 Follow-up Dates

14. – 16. November: NECE Conference

Meet again; expand with new partners; platform to get funds. Present the FG PB in a pitch (15th November). Focus Group Session (16th November): See existing, following thread, lobbying founders.

January 2014: Parliamentary evening by NECE

April 2014: 2. Focus Group meeting

7.2 To Do's

What	Who	Until when
Design a mission draft	Coordination: Norbert Kerstin + Group <i>Knowledge Management</i> ,	NECE Den Haag / 14.11.2013
Make a draft for online-courses	Gilles Pradeau	NECE Den Haag / 14.11.2013
Make a mock-up of the database	Kamil Gregor	NECE Den Haag / 14.11.2013
Start working on a proposal for the funding of the database	Coordination: Roelof Martens + Kamil Gregor, Nelson Dias, Ernesto Ganuza	NECE Den Haag / 14.11.2013
Distribute links and info concerning citizen tools	Günter Thauer	No date fixed
Create an online platform for the network to exchange information	Günter Thauer and Kamil Gregor	No date fixed
Provide contacts from all to all participants (mailing list)	lab concepts	a.s.a.p.

8. Some questions that emerged in the workshop

- What are the roles and needs for PB in Europe/northern countries?
- PB depends on political majority and elections, which means it is not a stable process. Can there be a European strategy in order to overcome this?
- What is going to be the tipping point to make PB the dominant model in Europe and to introduce it in the mainstream budget?
- How can we make the world a better place by making budgeting smarter?
- How can we engage "Hard to Reach Citizens"? (mainly: women, migrants, youth)
- How can we empower citizens and what does an empowered citizen mean?
- How far can PB result in well-being?
- What can happen before the vote? (How can we educate citizens in this state of the process?)
- How can we avoid competition in decision-making processes (e.g. voting for projects)?
- How do we get more people involved?
- How does PB work on a daily basis?
- What can we learn from the experiences with PB in the global south?
- How can we make processes less complicated, in order to avoid an "information overkill"?
- How can we reach the administrations? (not just the citizens)

9. Links & Literature

- <http://www.canegratepartecipa.org/>
- <http://www.bezuinigingskeuzes.nl/>
- <http://www.youngadvisors.org.uk/>
- www.usahidi.com
- <http://wheredoesmymoneygo.org/>
- <http://www.fixmystreet.com/>

Please find the thesis of Prof. Kersting's lecture **Participatory Budgeting: Types and Trends** described in the following publications:

- Kersting, Norbert 2012: Electronic democracy. Toronto BB publisher.
- Kersting, N. 2013a: Ungleiche Teilnahme an demokratischen Verfahren. in Hammer, K. Bürgerbeteiligung in der Stadt. Wien AK: 1-15.
- Kersting, N. 2013b: Online Beteiligung. in: Voss, K. (Hrsg) Elektronische Partizipation. Wiesbaden VS.
- Kersting, N. 2013b Electronic Participation: From invited to invented space. In International Journal of Electronic governance 4(2013)