

Review

New examples of territorial democracy: Participatory balance

U. Comite

Department of Business Studies, Faculty of Economics, University of Calabria, Arcavacata - Rende (Cs), Italy.
E-mail: ubaldo.comite@unical.it.

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The work is intended to illustrate the application of the participatory balance as a means by which democratic participation aims to overcome the mistrust between citizens and governors. Participatory balance can be defined as a decision-making procedure which entails opening public administration to citizens so that they participate actively and directly in the decisions made concerning the objectives and distribution of public investments. Thus, balance proposals are jointly discussed and articulated throughout the entire year, taking collective instances into consideration. It may be considered a procedure which gradually improves balance-sheet documents (in particular, those regarding investment plans for public works and services). These documents are discussed by the inhabitants of the area and must meet strict deadlines so as to guarantee the completion of the choices agreed upon. The value of the procedure is highly symbolic as it represents both the concrete wish for a change in the way institutions function, as well as the main means by which to build and consolidate a relationship between citizens and politics. The testing of participatory balance in various contexts has allowed for the public bureaucratic machine to be managed in a highly efficient manner, while the policies and choices arrived at jointly are also more efficient.

Key words: Participatory balance, public administration, citizenship.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increasing need to thoroughly and clearly account for administrative action and the relative economic, social and environmental effects produced within a given area and upon its population. The idea of having citizens directly participate in the management of public administration has led to the onset of participatory balance to establish community budgets. The system calls for dialogue between citizens and politicians during the defining stages of the budget, particularly at the moment of deciding upon how funds will be distributed (Bartocci, 2003). However, defining participatory balance as merely a '*mechanism for management by citizens*' is an oversimplified consideration. It is perhaps this very error that dulls many of the descriptions of the model provided by international institutions. These considerations, which generally analyze the system from an intellectual aspect, limit its definition to that of an '*efficient urban governing instrument*', that is, a de-contextualized description that renders the system mechanically reproducible within other contexts. It is therefore best to call participatory

balance a '*path*' or '*project*' consisting of a series of debates open to all citizens and which is applied in order to designate how a certain portion of capital within the community administrative budget will be spent. Fundamentally, the capital taken into consideration includes funds that are meant to be invested in structures and services for citizens (Bevir et al., 2003). Participatory balance is implemented through assemblies that are open to the public during which citizens decide where and how to invest community funds. This allows for concrete and visible results to be reached in relation to the proposals and indications set forth by the citizens. Furthermore, it provides efficient answers which have an effect on the real needs of that society and stimulates processes that raise the levels of enthusiasm and participation in urban political life (Valotti, 2000). Essentially, the process entails intervening in order to invert traditional decision-making systems, thus establishing a new, more flexible rapport between the community and City Hall. This new relationship is based on the principal of negotiation, which can be potentially

extended to all of the activities carried out by City Hall, however, it is substantially applied to the priorities that emerge within the community, where needs generate citizens who are willing to actively participate in solving problems (Caperchione and Pezzani, 2000). For the most part, participatory balance can be considered a process used to gradually perfect budget documents (particularly, those concerning works and service investment plans). The inhabitants of the territory in question participate in discussions characterized by strict deadlines which are fixed in order to complete the various stages of the projects agreed upon (Borgonovi, 2005).

Besides functioning as an instrument of control, the balance must also necessarily function as a communication tool (Terzani, 2002). It generally oversees the distribution of funds which, for the most part, is derived from taxes paid by citizens, and it is valuable from both a symbolic as well as practical point of view, since it is used in managing money. On the basis of this concept, municipal administrative councils accept to share part of their decision-making power with citizens through the direct intervention of the latter. While the budget is not the only sector in which it is convenient to apply processes intending to renew management through participation, it is certainly a '*strategic*' context that allows citizens to perceive the process as a '*strong signal*,' as it highlights a true willingness to change on behalf of the institutions and represents a key element in strengthening the relationship between citizens and politics (Study Group for Social Accounting, 2005).

Participatory balance is generally internally promoted within various political areas namely, on a municipal level by the mayor and city council, on a regional level by the council and regional leader, on a provincial level by the provincial council, and on a city constituency level by the leader of that constituency, in accordance with his or her collaborators. These indicators are merely guidelines, as it is vaguely possible that participatory balance may start up as a consequence of the pressure applied by political organs of a superior rank (the State, the EU) for instance, through the promotion of incentives and objectives aimed at activating processes which call for participation in the decisions made concerning local budgets (Department of Civil Service, 2002).

THE OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF PARTICIPATORY BALANCE

There are actually no postulated rules. The tools used for discussion with citizens can be '*informal*' (open assemblies, surveys, questionnaires distributed among families, theme-oriented meetings, etc) or of a more '*formal*' nature (municipal or constituency referendums, councils and commissions, etc). Ideally, participatory balance should include two main parallel processes of discussion and decision, encompassing:

(a) Discussion periods established on the basis of the territorial division of the city into various areas, and (b) Discussion periods established on the basis of themes which refer to sectors that involve the entire territory in question as a complex whole.

These discussion sessions is proved necessary both in order to attract and involve segments of the population already organized into groups stemming from association, unionization, or professional cohesion, as well as to discuss '*strategic*' issues of a municipal (or regional) nature, and not only at a community level, thus adding issues which seem '*minor*' to the agenda and that might otherwise be neglected.

Moreover, citizens run the risk of monopolizing the debate, focusing on certain issues as opposed to others; so it is equally important that administration exercises a moderating role in order to calibrate and balance all of the sectors of the intended interventions on the city, thus ensuring that all issues are examined during the debating stage. It would also be best if the subdivision and decentralization of the various territories being examined into identifiable areas were not merely established on the basis of administrative limits imposed by higher ranking offices. Ideally, these areas should be outlined as a result of free discussion among citizens, with a focus on identifiable similarities, and on a sense of attachment on the citizen's behalf to one part of the territory or other (Gherardi and Lippi, 2000).

Participatory balances tend to represent an important means by which to establish a '*balance*' between internal voices and the territories, and which attempt to involve categories of citizens, through a process of '*positive discrimination*,' who do not possess formal political rights (for example, minors and immigrants) (Hinna, 2004). Generally, participatory balance combines instances of direct democracy through assemblies, and instances of representative democracy, within which authorized citizen representatives discuss and approve the delegation of funds in relation to local authorities (clearly accounting for the areas destined to receive funding) which the executive committee, in turn, coordinates in accordance with its own individual proposals. Upon completion of this stage, the executive committee sends the proposals back to the citizens for an individual final evaluation, and finally, the proposals are sent to the council which, legally, is the only body responsible for budget approval.

During public assemblies which address participatory balance, it is useful for institution representatives to be present despite the fact that they are neither entitled to vote on funding delegation nor on the priorities raised by citizens when voting takes place. These criteria are meant to safeguard the autonomous organizational and decisional power of the citizens, thus respecting the principle of self-government by the citizens in relation to various processes.

The eventual assemblies contemplated will prove to be but a small part of the work within the realm of

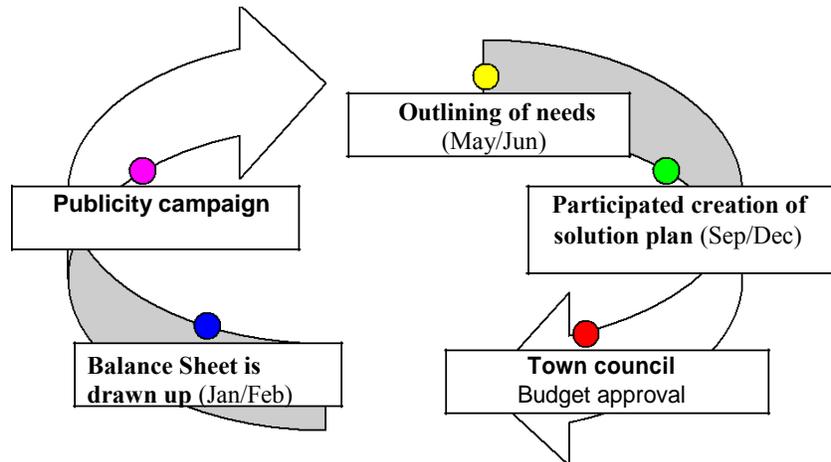


Figure 1. Path to implementing participatory balance.

participatory balance development. Indeed, the ability of the citizens to autonomously organize themselves and spontaneously take action, although important, does not meet the decision-making criteria of the '*participatory balance*' process. Over time, in many cases, this ability has encountered certain balancing mechanisms in light of the possible injustices generally hidden within any mechanism. These forces may legitimize '*strong powers*' (of any given nature) as opposed to strengthening the power of those who, for some reason or other, find themselves at the '*margins*' of society (Mazzoleni, 2005).

Elected political representatives and civil social organizations play an important role in obtaining an '*equally distributed justice*,' as they are expected to support the introduction of the most '*objective*' criteria possible that will be considered when establishing which citizen should benefit from intervention, and which structure require improvement. These criteria are to be used in the evaluation of the congruency of the selected areas deemed in more urgent need of major intervention. In fact, citizens could spontaneously support methods based on work ethic so that those who participate more must reap more benefits for their territory.

The '*transparency*' of the mechanisms with which investment needs and distribution are evaluated represent, to date, one of the major guarantees that Institutions are responsible for providing. They must carefully assure that all information divulged is done so to the most widespread extent and that all information is clear and readily available, thereby raising awareness and rendering the process more effective (Massei, 2002). Currently, there are some standard rules to be followed within the internal structure of many participatory balances, rules intended to guarantee equity. The rules are based on point-systems in which points are attributed to various judgement factors in order to identify the urban areas that are in more urgent need of intervention.

One of the major responsibilities of the administrators

will be precisely that of assuring rapid realization of all works included in the budget. This is fundamental in preventing the feelings of disappointment among citizens due to the failure to complete necessary and urgent works which generate feelings of mistrust which might in turn lead to a decrease in participation in the assemblies (Pulejo, 2005).

The constant presence of elected authorities (namely, the most representative (Figures 1) during discussions with the inhabitants will have multiple objectives: (1) That of listening to citizens and interacting with their requests and proposals, all the while evaluating costs, feasibility and coherence in relation to the strategic development objective within the territory; (2) That of constructing '*reference scenarios*' thus giving value to the experience of the authorities' own technicians; (3) That of formulating expense proposals which clearly highlight the reasons behind their own indications, criticisms and corrective suggestions; (4) That of monitoring the process of participatory balance in order to identify its limits and the opportunities for both positive change, as well as for a more widespread participation.

Participatory balance stresses the term balance (for a long time, thought to convey an almost '*politically neutral*' and purely technical value while hiding a strong intrinsic element pertinent to the '*realm of political choice*') as a control tool to be used by citizens on the representatives elected by them, and which must be '*transparent and intelligible*.' Its political content must act as a tool utilized to determine the '*ends*' of the urban government, even prior to optimizing the means needed to obtain them, thus collectively building the concept of '*common good*.' Fundamentally, this is an example of a true opening of the administrative machine to the control on behalf of the citizens and their direct involvement in the most important choices made, pertinent to their territory (Rogate and Tarquini, 2005).

The experimentation of participatory balance within

various local contexts has facilitated the attainment of a high '*governing efficiency*' along with the efficiency of the politics undertaken. These conditions are often the result of the building of shared choices which allow for the creation of '*social agreements*' that embrace weaker citizens, as well as through the growth, over time, of political consent on behalf of many of the administrations that have dared to risk this type of opening of control to the direct intervention by their very own citizens (Steccolini, 2004).

GLOBAL, MONO-THEMATIC AND PROJECT PARTICIPATORY BALANCE

Participatory balance is therefore a process of direct democracy through which, each year, citizens autonomously choose how and where to designate and invest the resources of local organizations. The problem with participated or participatory balance (depending on whether the initiative derives respectively from administration or as a result of pre-established shared governing plans) constitutes an attempt to try to overcome the crisis created in current western politics due to the mistrust existing between governments and their citizens (Tanese, 2004). The main inspirers are:

1. Free participation of all citizens, excluding any special status attributed to community organizations;
2. Combinations of direct and representative democracy, in which institutional dynamics attribute the defining of internal rules to its participants,
3. The assignment of the resources to be invested compliant with a combination of general and technical criteria (all the while taking account of financial limits).

The instrument being discussed tends to pursue three objectives:

1. The reconciliation of citizens in relation to politics through the idea of a shared urban government;
2. The activation of various governing systems of the '*res publica*' since a widespread participation should bring about more legitimate and fair property management;
3. The broadening of public participation by overcoming the current state of passive participation by citizens.

After all, the formation process of participatory balance must be marked by a willingness to work '*from the bottom upwards*,' thus inverting the traditional geometries of power. Therefore, there must be a disposition towards re-discovering the active role of citizens in directing the promotion of an idea of collective government, which pays due attention to knowledge, local identities and relationships (Lane, 2000).

With respect to this profile, it is worth noting that, currently, there are three types of participatory balance

that can be identified:

1. Global participatory balance (being experimented within the community of Porto Alegre since 1989). In this case, the portion of current fixed expenses (for example, costs covering staff salaries) and the portion of capital account expenses concerning urgently needed public works (for example, maintenance or expansion costs of school buildings) are isolated and taken out of context. Subsequently, part of the resources available in the budget are designated to the creation of the budget document through participation, making uses of instruments such as citizen assembly convocations or involving associations which perform within the territory, etc.;
2. Mono-thematic participatory balance, which only calls for some of the sectors included in the budget to be involved in the participatory project, for example, investments concerning social services;
3. Project-based participatory balance, which is used for the allocation of services '*deriving from the bottom*,' and which appeals to associations or institutions within the territory (churches, parties, unions) (Allegretti, 2003).

THE CARRYING OUT OF PARTICIPATORY BALANCE

Firstly, it is necessary to create a permanent debating forum within the local administrative building, setting up an office for the councillor delegated to oversee the participatory balance. The office will obviously constitute the actual place where the initial meeting and final synthesis will take place. Secondly, it will be necessary to predispose a system of constant monitoring of the territory, to be considered an opportunity for citizen voices to be heard. Furthermore, constant monitoring will provide discipline during the moments of participation that make up the heart of the debate which arrives at a conclusion when the final decision is reached. In extremely small areas, collective involvement can be generalized by calling specific public assemblies to which all of the citizens may be invited. In larger groups, it will be necessary to identify the associations, organizations and institutions existing within the territory in an attempt to achieve effective involvement (Allegretti and Ricciardi, 2002). Once the stages described previously have been completed, it will be necessary to test the local organizations' ability to create professional work groups that are driven by a common political will for renewal, and by strong popular support through the issuing of studies and arrangement of conferences during which confrontation with may take place in an attempt to verify whether the proposed project can be deemed feasible or not. At the end of this process, the financial planning service takes care of supplying the draft of the budget destined to the internal departments of the organization, paying attention so as to satisfy the decisions made regarding resource

allocation. This stage is of an entirely technical and executive nature.

Through this procedure, the participatory balance allows citizens to have an active role in the decision-making process, thus favouring the creation of public politics via the widest possible range of decisions arrived at jointly.

TIME CYCLE OF PARTICIPATORY BALANCE

The expression '*cycle*' is meant to indicate the continuity with which the sequence of stages within participatory balance is repeated each year in order to become active.

The right to participate

Participation is a right of the people that is granted to:

- a. All citizens registered in municipal voters' lists;
- b. Citizens who are residents of the community but who have not yet become voters and are 16 years of age;
- c. Immigrants and stateless persons who have been residents of the community for at least 3 years;
- d. Non-resident professionals and business owners who work permanently within the community

Time-frame

The participatory balance time cycle, which runs from May to December, is broken down into the following stages.

Stage I

Outlining of needs (May-June): The objective of this stage is gathering proposals made by citizens and cases of poor service which have been pointed out.

Participants: Involved all citizens who can make proposals and point out situations within a one-month period via the appropriate paper documentation (poor service signal form and proposal form) or via an equivalent digital procedure.

Form of participation: Community assembly.

Stage II

Creation of the priority grid (July-November): The objective of this stage is that of verifying the feasibility of the proposals gathered, and the drawing up of work plans.

Participants: Administrative staff, citizens, local associations and companies, partners in specific proposals. The form of participation is participatory planning boards.

Stage III

Choice of priorities (December): The objective of this stage is that of defining the priority grid by gathering the preferences expressed by citizens.

Participants involved: All citizens may contribute during a one-month period, by completing and submitting the appropriate paper form (preference indication form) or via an equivalent digital procedure.

Form of participation: General assemblies and individual participation.

Institutions and forms of participation: Community assemblies. Community assemblies are called to gather initial proposals during the phase defined as outlining of needs. The community assemblies are open to citizens of the community without any delegation or representation mechanisms. Everyone has equal rights of speech and access to the documentation and operating systems concerning the participatory balance cycle.

General assemblies

General assemblies can be called during the final deliberation phase, in an attempt to illustrate to the citizen the priority grid which must in turn be completed with the preferences expressed in stage III or at the end of the cycle, during which results are presented to the citizen. The general assemblies have the function of informing the citizens of the progress of the participatory process. General assemblies can be called several times in different places, and at different times so as to promote the most extensive involvement possible of distinct population groups.

Participation planning boards

Participation planning boards are created when the citizen (or group of citizens) who has brought forth a proposal, offers to actively participate in constructing the relative work plan. The boards can gather until the plenary assemblies have been called, since the work plans must be defined in due time in order to proceed to stage III. The boards are thus composed of citizens who request to be included, and by civil servants in charge of the sector that the proposal refers to, as well as territorial (Figures 2), both public and private, who may be involved

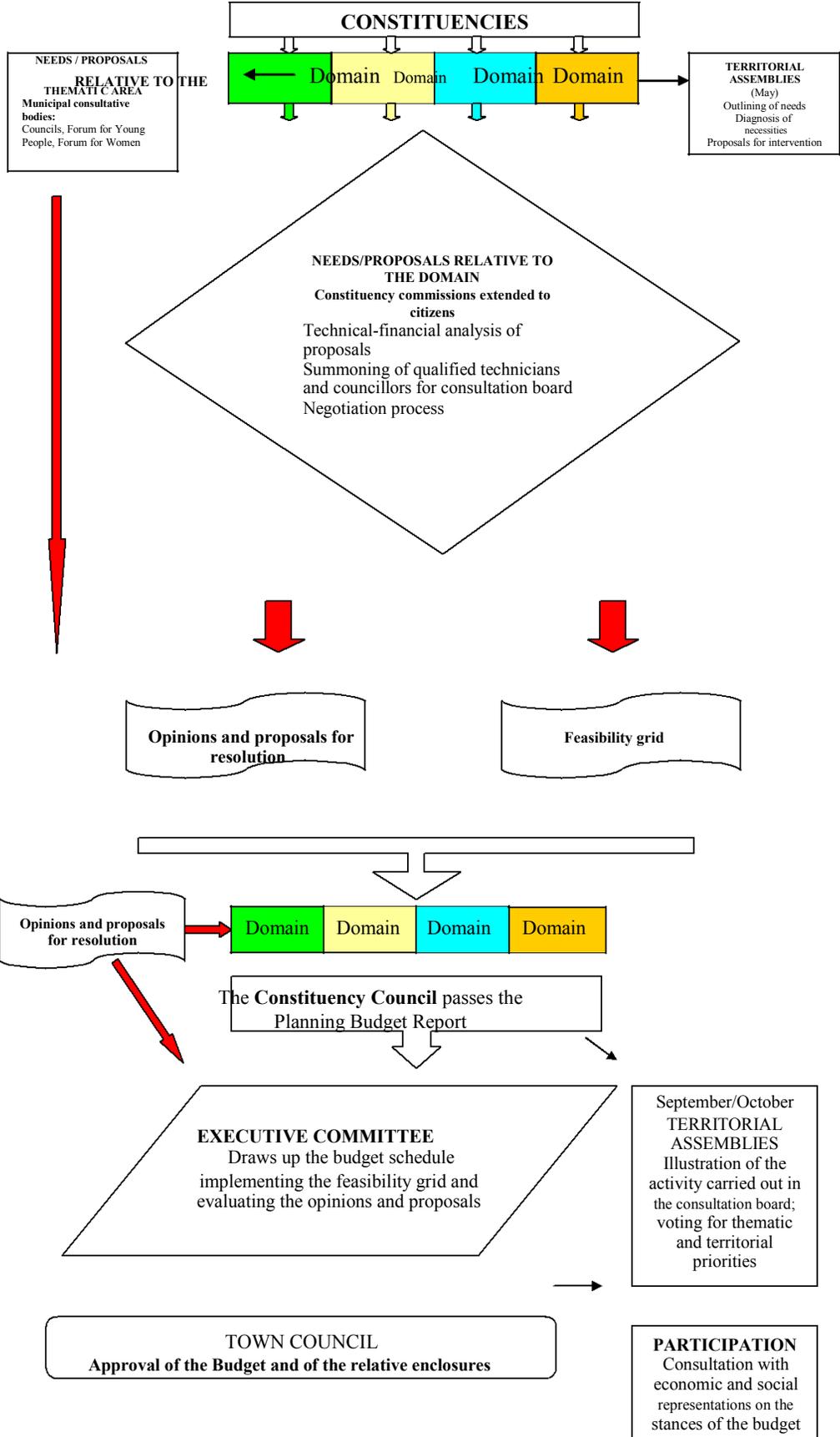


Figure 2. The political stages of participatory balance

in the activation of the boards. The participation office has the task of composing and calling for the boards to take place on the basis of the proposals it receives and the availability expressed by citizens, combining, wherever possible, proposals which are similar or pertinent to the same themes.

Extraordinary participation planning boards

In attempting to meet the objective of strengthening the forms of participation planning and to amplify the potential growth of participation from co-decision to co-realization, it is possible to activate extraordinary boards outside of the participatory balance cycle and relating to interventions which have already had financial approval via existing planning instruments. Extraordinary boards can be divided into two categories:

1. Boards which are directly derived from past cycles, pertinent to the implementation of proposals already passed throughout the course of previous years;
2. Boards called directly by municipal administration regarding issues of particular interest.

In each case, it will be necessary for the participation office to coordinate the agendas of the extraordinary boards, coming to an agreement, case by case, with those responsible for the municipal sectors involved, as well as regarding the form and method to be followed and finally on the eventual extra funding required in order to be completed should there be a request for funding or expertise not already available. In the case of boards called directly by administration, it is equally necessary that such indications be officially communicated by the Borough Council Clerk's Office overseeing Participation, before the onset of stage I of the cycle.

Participation tools

Paper work

Paper work aims to rationalize the proposals and notices gathered, thus giving citizens the possibility to intervene on the process though not through direct participation in assemblies. The required forms include: 1. Registration form (only distributed and gathered during community assemblies); 2. Form for identifying cases of poor service; 3. Proposal form; 4. Preference indication form.

Operating plans

The operating plans are the result of the work done in stage II of the cycle, and summarize the results regarding feasibility verification carried out by workers of local organizations who are responsible for compiling these

results, as well as for the participation planning boards. Each proposal registered will have an operating plan. Operating plans are presented as a development of the requests gathered (in which the original texts written by citizens are kept and to which the following areas of filling forms is necessarily added.

1. Activation method: Program, that is, a definition of objectives and ways of meeting them.
2. Implementation method: Resources, That is, a prospect of completion costs defined according to cost groups and indicating wherever possible, and the nature of the income to be considered. Furthermore, besides the areas indicated previously, the opinion expressed by the civil servants responsible for the municipal sector being referred to can also be added.

Priority grid

The priority grid is the chart which indicates all the proposals gathered that have been deemed feasible. The chart will thus be completed by indicating the preferences expressed by the citizens where, based on the number of preferences received, it is possible to define an order of importance among the proposals and in doing so, create a genuine scale of priorities. The priority chart is the document which is handed in to the municipal council at the end of the cycle in order to be integrated into the scheme of predicted balance it must have.

THE DELIBERATIVE PROCEDURE

The expression deliberative procedure refers to the complex of mechanisms which regulate the modalities adopted by administrations to receive citizens' requests.

The deliberative procedure entails two separate moments, regarding the two main actors of participatory balance, which are the citizens and the administration.

Citizens' outlining of priorities

During stage III of the cycle, citizens outline priorities, by indicating their preferences and drawing up the priority grid.

For one month, all the citizens can point out their preference by filling in a specific set of forms, according to the following modalities:

1. Directly during popular assemblies;
2. At the Urp, job centre and town library;
3. Online, using the website services.
4. Mobile post of participation office. During stage III, the mobile post of the participation office will be in operation and present at events, initiatives, fairs and markets during the whole period of final deliberation.

At the end of stage 3, the priorities which have received most preferences will have to be identified independently from the municipal sectors involved and from the type of budget.

Participation areas: Typology of proposals

Criterion of general interest

The proposals put forward during the cycle of participatory balance cannot harm the rights and prerogatives of other citizens. It is not possible to put forward proposals which penalize or discriminate sectors of the population according to criteria of race, gender, religion or political culture.

Indications of poor service

The proposals put forward during the cycle of participatory balance cannot concern activities relative to ordinary administration work. However, as the gathering of citizens and administrators generates the demand for clarifications and specific interventions with regard to cases of poor service, in order to give the chance to point out the latter, a specific procedure has been drawn up, which consists of a form used to signal cases of poor service, available during community assemblies, which pertains to the following municipal sectors: Environment, general affairs, communication and public relations, taxes, public works of maintenance, local police, and public education.

Therefore, when the report is drafted, these indications will be forwarded to the competent offices directly by the department of participation. Citizens will be able to verify replies from the administration directly during the plenary assemblies which will be held after about six months.

Town and community priorities

The proposals put forward during the cycle of participatory balance must be addressed to the citizens of the whole territory.

Municipal sectors involved

It will be possible to present proposals and point out priorities of intervention in the following macro-areas of the town's activities: Environment and productive activities, formation, right of education, culture, youth policies and sport, policies for the management of the territory and public works, and social services.

Participation areas: Veto right

If at the end of the cycle, the priority grid contains

proposals which, despite being formally '*feasible*', the administration considers to be in clear contradiction with the policies ordinarily adopted, there is always the possibility to apply a veto, which will obviously have to be motivated by a negative viewpoint of the town executive committee. However, the administration guarantees financial cover in the participatory balance, of at least 2/3 of the priorities, that is at least 4 out of 6 priorities indicated by the citizens.

In case of approval of the budget, the allocations and relative budget chapters of reference which will be needed to intervene on the priorities indicated by the citizens, will be made public through online divulgation and each family will receive a pamphlet titled '*Budget to the Citizen*' (Table 1 and Figure 3).

From the analysis of the citizens' evaluation in relation to the efficiency of participatory balance, the important fact which emerges is how this mechanism is considered positively by most people interviewed (Figure 4)

CONCLUSIONS

For decades, the trend to move from the top downwards, by organizing forms of sovereignty in hierarchical levels *bottom-down*, that is from top to bottom (Central Government - Region - Province - City Hall) was the principle which deprived citizens not only of the real power to determine territorial development, but also of the faith in the power which a City Hall can practically carry out. Participatory balance is intended to invert this trend by moving from the bottom, through the activation of what is defined a *bottom-up* (that is from the bottom upwards) process and giving back a part of sovereignty directly to the hands of the citizens.

Therefore, it is necessary to invert the cycle described, by testing participative practices. The return of citizens and the constant attempt to make them responsibly involved in planning decisions aimed at delineating new shared scenarios, can truly represent the moment for communities to re-qualify consciously their towns, towards a more responsible management of common resources (Anselmi, 2001).

The participative process, whose balance is the most important act but not the only, is presented as a way to identify and represent needs, organize responses, guarantee their feasibility, fill the information deficit, with increasingly accurate approximation, during the various stages of the process, and which keeps a gap between the two negotiation sides (citizen and administration). All this can also be seen as a pedagogic process, in which both citizens and local public power, bring themselves into question and mark a '*bilateral growth*' at the end of which '*both parties can implement the faculty to read and valorise the territory*'.

Basically, the real benefits introduced for the community by the processes of participation are proportional to the political will of who governs. This

Table 1. Moments intervening between budget development and participatory balance.

Budget development procedure	Cycle of participatory balance
Management analysis	<p>Stage I: Outlining of needs</p> <p>This stage is carried out before the onset of the budget development procedure</p>
Executing subjects: Financial services and town executive committee	Executing subjects: Community assemblies
Preliminary definition of management objectives	Each proposal registered in the report is held as a possibility of management objective and transferred from the town executive committee to the functionaries gathered in a conference on services specifically summoned
Executing subjects: Town executive committee	Executing subjects: Participation office
Prerearrangement proposal of executive management plan	<p>Stage II: Creation of operating plans.</p> <p>Each functionary is responsible for the drawing up of the operating plans of their own competence, which have to be entered or enclosed with the proposal of the executive management plan which will be transferred and evaluated by the town executive committee</p>
Executing subjects: Responsible functionaries and town executive committee	Executing subjects: Participated planning boards
Prerearrangement preliminary schedule yearly and multiyear budget	<p>Stage III</p> <p>The indication of the citizens' preferences and definition of the priority grid is done in parallel.</p>
Executing subjects: Financial services	Executing subjects: individual citizens
Onset of the balance session	The town executive council confirms among its management objectives the proposals contained in the priority grid, confirming the corresponding allocations in the schedule of yearly and multiyear budget. The detailed operating plans are furthermore enclosed with the provisional and programmatic report
Executing subjects: Responsible functionaries and town executive committee	
Definition of executive management plan on the grounds of the budget schedule decided by the town council	Implementation of intervention priorities
Executing subjects: Town council and relative commissions	
Executing subjects: Responsible functionaries and town executive committee	

principle needs to be constantly monitored, so that the search for effectiveness of territorial policies is never replaced by a simple search for their '*efficiency*' (in terms of means and resources used); if ever, the latter should

be obtained as an '*effect*', that is as one of the results of political processes centred on the search for equal distribution and of a progressive democratization of the administration of common goods and of community

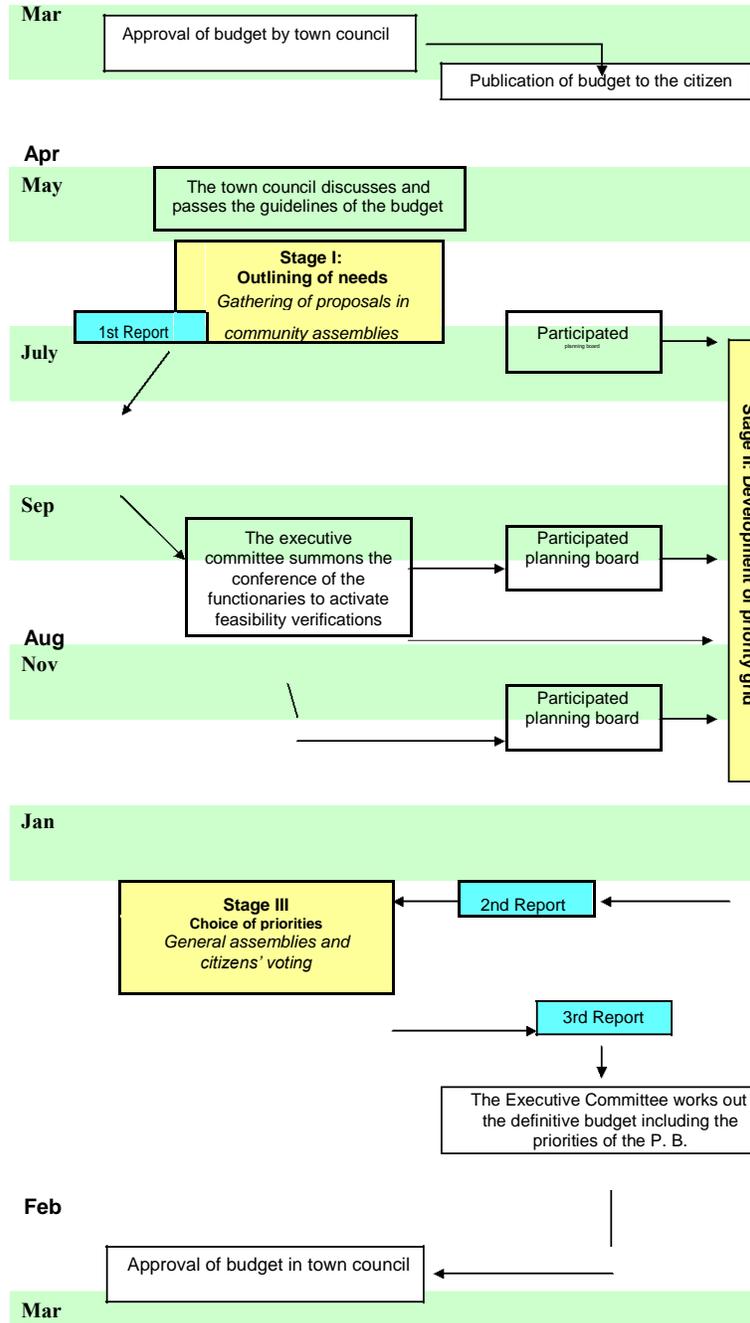


Figure 3. Time path of municipal budget and participatory balance.

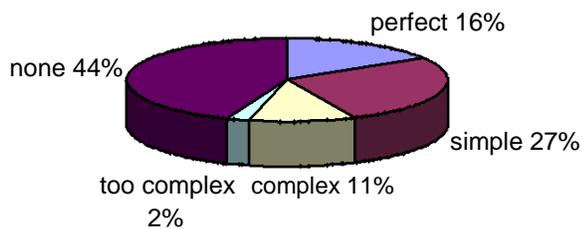


Figure 4. Opinions expressed by the population with regard to the validity of participatory balance. Source ISTAT (2009).

resources (Rebora, 1999).

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