International experiences in Participatory Budgeting

Giovanni Allegretti
Independent Authority for the Guarantee and Promotion of Participation of Tuscany Region, Italy

Centre for Social Studies, Coimbra University, Portugal
“The beginning of a wave of organized social innovation experiments in a specific territory is undoubtedly a “place of the heart” rather than a “place of the mind”, thus exchanges with other older experiences could be an important mirror to reflect on our ongoing path”

I will try to share some distilled and targeted reflections of an 18-years-old period of work in Participatory Budgeting domain, anchoring them to two territories which I wish could accompany you for the near future:
1

[ some premises]
Who am I?

2 minutes, just to get in touch with my path-dependency...

A planner borrowed to Social Sciences (today teaching in a Faculty of Economics)
A former municipal employee and consultant for urban planning and management
Committed in action-research and story-telling techniques
Involved in favoring networking (especially among political authorities - employees)
Coming from a family of politicians and today involved in a techno-political role
Working between the “Supply Side” and the “Demand side” of Urban Polity
A former techno-skeptic (until my students partially re-converted me)
As well-expressed by Eduardo Galeano, I believe that

“The only thing that you can make from up to down are holes”. And the only useful thing which you can build top-down are wells”, so the Scottish experience (as a meeting point between a top-down and a bottom-up movement) interests me a lot....
I believe that the two larger family of participatory practices (BY INVITATION and BY IRRUPTION - Ibarra, 2007) cannot live separately (although they mix in different ways in different periods), because participation is an immanently CONFLICTED space., but their dialogue is increasingly difficult..
Participation must try to offer spaces from which ALL **ACTORS** come out different in relation to when they entered the process....It can capture and put at work different degrees of attention, creating sociocultural capital....
Finally, think that participation can only be understood in a framework of “social construction of reality”, because it is about the construction of “cold rules” to allow “hot emotions” and expectations (and the expression of different types of knowledges and epistemologies). In many cases “perceptions” of citizens are more important than institutional actions, even if done in good faith…
So, the construction of a participatory process could be seen as a continuous game of attraction and repulsion between top-down choices and bottom-up reactions (or *vice versa*), which characterizes the PARTICIPATORY INTENSITY of each phase...
So, it is very important to be constantly careful in shaping and reshaping permanently PBs because they can die for excess of expectations, routinization, etc...

(Source: Allegretti & Alves, 2012)
We must be aware of two macro-categories of participatory processes:

• **(1) the deontological processes (unfortunately the majority).**

  They represent experiences where innovations are valued because “they help to create right relationships among citizens and between citizens and the state”; hence that “democracy worth having simply requires greater citizen participation (participatory innovation), deliberation (deliberative experiments), and rights to information and knowledge (transparency) quite apart from any other effects that these innovations have” (Fung, 2011). This

• **(2) the consequentialist. Perspective:**

  It suggests that it is insufficient to offer citizens the space to participate, without the need for wider goals., and considers innovations to be valuable based on extent to which they would secure additional values including “…policies that are responsive to citizens’ interests, social justice, state accountability, wiser policies, and so on” (id.). Consequentialist processes focus on translating their main objectives into action, using specific tools which guarantee consequentiality and coherence between motivations, aims and targeted results, and evaluating them accordingly.

A new framework of scaling-up
The expansion of an ideoscape

... y nuevos desafíos en nuevos países...
LOST IN WESTERNIZATION?

Portugal has become a pivotal actors in the “export” of Participatory Budgeting from Latin America to other continents, at global level....
CHALLENGE OF SCALING-UP
(COMMITTMENT OF SUPRAMUNICIPAL LEVELS)
can have an inductive effect on local institutions, combatting skepticism,
funding, and giving methodological support and pluralism. In some
Countries (like Kenya, Cape Verde, RDC Congo or Madagascar) there are
national strategies for implementing PB, supported by the World Bank and
coopera...
O governo estadual destinará **R$ 50 milhões à Consulta Popular 2016-2017**

**R$ 28 milhões** distribuídos igualmente entre os Coredes

**R$ 22 milhões** pelo critério de população e Idese
The case of Tuscany could be useful because it makes the will of promoting “a culture of participation” dialogue with the challenge of a solid institutionalisation....

✓ 3.6 million inhabitants and 172 (municipalities, a declining number thanks to voluntary merging/fusion)
✓ Voter participation in the 2008 national election: 83.70%
✓ High organised Social capital: 25% of Tuscans state they are “really involved and interested in politics”
✓ About ½ of Tuscans are members of political, economic or social associations (Parties, NGOs, Unions, Business associations, Cooperative organizations)
✓ There is a tradition of strong and widely felt civic sense: citizens participate in local matters more than elsewhere in Italy
Linking Open DATA and memory of experiments: the case of OPEN-Toscana

"I dati sono il nuovo petrolio"

=>

La PA è ricca di materia prima che deve essere estratta e raffinata al fine di poterla trasformare in carburante

=>

ottenere questo risultato richiede alla PA consapevolezza, competenze, conoscenze e comporta uno sforzo organizzativo ed economico

Il progetto

PartecipaToscana è un'ampia iniziativa promossa per la garanzia e la promozione della partecipazione
Working through “call for project” three times a year

- Self-proposed processes with a dialogue for improve it
- An internal commission to evaluate
- Emphasis on innovative methodologies and contents/topics...
- Fostering EMULATION
- No FUNDING for implementation
A comparison (1)

Data Summary of funded projects (law 69/2007 and law 46/2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law 69/2007</th>
<th>Law 46/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period:</strong> 2008-2013</td>
<td><strong>Period June 2014 - September 2015</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the period 2008-2013 have been submitted 220 projects of which 116 are funded results (52.8%):</td>
<td>Over the period considered we considered six funding deadlines of the law: in 2014 June, July (dedicated to schools), October; in 2015 January, May and September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proposed projects</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funded projects</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>projects not funded</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proposed projects</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funded projects</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>projects not funded</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table represents the average cost of a project:

| budget allocated (EUR) | 3655850 |
| average project cost (€) | 31516 |

| budget allocated (EUR) | 1156000 |
| average project cost (€) | 21945 |
THE LESS THE BETTER?
The challenge of a new scaling-up at national level with the new Law on tendering (decree 50, art. 22) which makes Public Debate compulsory for any huge infrastructure in all country.

The new horizon: avoiding the excesses of proceduralisation and maintaining a “living laboratory” of multiple practices and techniques.
The case of Madagascar and the mining areas

La rede de los Presupuestos Participativos como ayuda al enriquecimiento local

PENSAR EN BANCOS DE TIERRAS
INCENTIVES BY HIGHER LEVEL OF STATE can be PIVOTAL

The case of “Solecki Funds” in Poland (since 2009) incentivized more than 1,100 rural communes to solid participatory process. The “tense” collaboration with Poland Watchdog generated added value to their quality showing the need of interrelating forms of participation by INVITATION (formalised dialogue) and BY IRRUPTION (social control)...

Source: SLLGO (Poland watchdog), Poland, 2012
2016-2017 Programme for National Government (lead by socialist Prime Minister Antonio Costa, former mayor of Lisbon):

**ESTABLISHING a NATIONAL PB for SCHOOLS** (approved on March 24, 2016)

**PREPARING a NATIONAL PB for 20017** (Task Force under construction)
[ The Portuguese bet on networking]
But networking was at the base of PB here, and produced hybrids and “contaminations” (2002-2013)
...until the merging with the Spanish PB Network in a difficult period for the neighbouring country...

Fuente: Gauza y Francés, 2012
Co-funding a slow march towards mutual trust

A continuity (within discontinuity) with previous projects and the awareness that multichannel processes (if poorly conceived) end in creating a Darwinian selection among participants and making each channel compete with the others for an audience...
TODAY THERE ARE 83 PBs out of 308 Municipalities Working with the Media has been strategic
25 experiences centered on youngsters
Cronology of PB In Portugal
(2002-2015)

83 ativos en 2015 e 82 suspensos entre 2002 y 2015
A Darwinian selection which killed all “cherry-picking” models
In the confrontation between the TWO MAIN APPROACH TO DECISION-MAKING in participatory processes.

The first is growing fast, because it is intended to produce more responsibilization of social actors, while the consultative methods need to be associated with a structure of accountability and feedbacks. So, apparently the consultative are more “controllable” and generate less loss of power, but practically they cost much more and guarantee much less positive effects.
PBs by tipology (2002-2015)

Los PP consultivos fueron mayoritarios hasta 2011 (77% murieron por ser consultivos)

- **114 (69,5%)**: DELIBERATIVO
- **47 (28,7%)**: CONSULTIVO
- **3 (1,8%)**: DELIB. CONDICIONADO
PB by party (2002-2015)

- INDEP. 4
- PSD COLIGADO 8
- CDS PP 1
- PS COLIGADO 2
- PCP 2
- CDU 7
- PSD 48
- PS 92
PB by value (2015) in Portugal
4 to 1 millions of €
Resources distributed through co-decisional PBs in Portugal

71.356.500,00 € (2002-2015)

17.256.500,00 € (24% / 2015)
STILL MINIMAL? Main PBs by value (2015) in Europe
36 to 105 millions of €

- Barcelo: €36,000,000
- Madrid: €60,000,000
- Paris: €105,000,000
Between Quality and quantity...
Several examples try to increasing quality and *demodiversity* is possible using “hybrid structures.”

Raising numbers through “variable geometries.”

**RANDOM-SELECTED PANEL OF CITIZENS (HIGHER DELIBERATIVE QUALITY and MAJOR DEMO-DIVERSITY)**

**SELF-MOBILIZED CITIZENS (MORE COMMITMENT, HIGHER LEVEL OF SPECIFIC SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE)**

**SPECIFIC TARGET GROUP Y**

**SPECIFIC TARGET GROUP X**

**INTEGRATED WISDOM**

**PARTICIPATION THROUGH ICTs TOOLS**

**SPACE OF CO-DECISION**

Raising numbers through “variable geometries.”
PB: an articulated “participatory technology

Decision Making Cycle (DM)

DM1 Preliminary enabling actions and definition of the rules of the games
DM2 Information and Ideas Brainstorming
DM3 Identification of local needs and gathering of proposal
DM4 Analysis and co-design of Proposals
DM5 Vote to define priorities
DM6 Integration in Public Budget

Implementation Cycle (I)

I2 Detailed Planning
I3 Selection of the delivery procedure
I4 Authorization and other financial procedures
I5 Implementation of the service/work
I6 Management
I7 Monitoring and Feedback

Specific emphasis on the implementation cycle
1) Highly depends on political will

2) It deals with microeconomics and mainly at local level (even if not only, nowadays...)

3) It is mainly focused on expenditures (and within these on capital investments) while rarely dealing with revenues

4) Tends to produce fragmented and scattered choices when is not linked to participatory planning.

5) It still has reduced synergies with other innovations (ethical banks, local currencies)
If we look to European PBs we can notice some common features, which frame their identity:

**LIMITS:**
1) They tend to be “slowly experimental” and lightly progressive in time
2) They mainly focus on expenditures
3) They allocate low percentages of (mainly) capital-resources to PB (max 5-6% of investments).
4) Technologies tend to be used to “simplify” the management, not to attract new complexity
5) They tend to be shaped to maximize the contribution to the improvement of public administration (**SUPPLY SIDE** of political reform) so not very interested to social inclusion, gender mainstreaming or civic empowerment.
6) They rarely focus on **SOCIAL JUSTICE**
7) Rarely they have and state clear their “explicit goals”
8) “Rotation” of beneficiaries disperses social capital

**European PBs’ common VIRTUOUS ASPECTS:**
1) They tend to be **methodologically more refined** (using consolidated techniques for participation)
2) They tend to go beyond “capital investments” and expand to more immaterial issues and events
3) They are **well organized in terms of space and “neutrality”** of moderation
4) **Scaling-up** to higher institutional levels than the municipal one.
5) the development of Youngsters-oriented PBs
6) Recently they started to dialogue with other participatory processes happening at local levels (*trying to put themselves in continuity with them*)
BROUGHT SEVERAL BENEFITS:
In terms of number of participants
of quickness of institutional answers
of increasing public control on institutional (and PB) behavior
of attractiveness for those who have few time for face-to-face meeting…

THEY BROUGHT NEW PROBLEMS:
New exclusions (digital divide, differences in alphabetization)
Superficiality in the use and laziness in participation (click-activism)
Redundancy of proposals (and self-referenciality in voting)

Thus, the brought AMBIGUITIES:
In terms of conflict between channels of outreach and involvement
(competition for attracting participants)

MBUT MAINLY THEY BROUGHT A NOT-FULLY USED POTENTIAL:
In terms of inclusion
In terms of transparency
In terms of responsiveness
So, ICT tools often were SUPERPOSED to the original face-to-face PB model, denying its original philosophy of a space for community-building or community strengthening, and transforming it into a FAST-FOOD SUPERFICIAL DEVICE, producing new exclusions in relation to digital divide and different IT-alphabetization levels...

Individual-based participation from a REMOTE position creates a “one-to-one” connection between each citizen and a politician, but no “sharing” among in habitants which could increase what Jon Elster called “the civilizing force of hypocrisy”...
MOREOVER...

Technologies tended to reinforce the existence of conflicting channels of participation (on-line and of-line ones), running in parallel and often conflicting for the same audiences...
4 [ some answer to face these problems]
The goal of reducing “gatekeepers”, transforming them into “facilitatos”, to easier self-organization (the system of charters of principles and ruling documents)
Writing self-ruling documents and/or at least **Charters of principles**
STARTING TO DISCUSS WITH PEOPLE AROUND REVENUES (not only expenditures). The case of Milton Keynes (UK), Caminha (Portugal) and Canoas (Brazil) [http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/)

Voters were given three options to chose from: a 5% rise, a 9.8% rise and a 15% rise. Over 46% backed the 9.8% rise while nearly 24% plumped for a 15% rise in their taxes. Over 45% of the voters took part in the ballot - a figure 20% higher than that for the last council elections and a greater turnout than London managed when the capital voted to have a directly-elected mayor.
Extending social control to the implementation of co-decided works... (community-based monitoring)
Using methods to favor solidarity and redistribution through recognition of communities, rather than through technocratic approaches (multicriteria analysis in Rome IV)
The specificity of PBs: Re-learning that economics is a field allowing different alternative choices and not just an unchangeable mainstream...

Experience of cooperatives, fair-trade experiences and social currencies being funded within PBs
CARAVANS as collective visits to overcome “affective maps”
THE USE OF ART to reduce CONFLICTS, to amuse people and to PREFIGURE A FUTURE DIFFICULT TO BE IMAGINED....

Roma IX, Recife Sevilla y Carnide (Lisboa)
TRAINING FOR ACTIVISM:

Info on structural choices are provided to better the deliberative quality of PBs.
Empowering, giving tools to better understand

Using “freirian” pedagogies for promoting self-learning (Seville, Guarulhos) is fighting against indoctrination and showing to people that they are protagonists...
Facing together new challenges....

http://empatia-project.eu

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 687920.
Changing the way of voting for priorities…can change results
The new frontiere of NEGATIVE vooting

Old functioning

The case of NY (2015)
LEARNING FROM FAR.

The profitable contacts with civic hackers of TAIPEI....(a rare bottom-up PB)....
Beyond intransparency and the lack of vision (the top-down case of Cameroon)

http://cameroon.openspending.org/en/
Rethinking the use of technology for building a participatory system around PB (the case of Canoas)
As in the anti-seismic structures, we would like the different channels collaborate to the “participatory system” at least in the phase of production of outputs.
THREE LEGS/PILLARS

1) Service provision  
(between commons and the market)

1) Political goals  
(interconnection, networking, emulation in increasing intensity of process’ steps)

1) Research  
(production of sharable data, awareness-raising on how cooperation takes shape during processes)
That’s why in our game “EMPAVILLE” and in the platform “EMPATIA” for us is very important to mine data.

To discover questions which relates participants with decision taken.
The importance of supporting evaluation

Assessment of their knowledge about the territory. Checking their views about politics in general. Asking for their suggestions of improvement.

Opinion about the level of income of the municipal board

Knowledge about the salary of the Mayor

Opinion about the availability of participatory facilities

Evaluating the level of participation of the youth
SUMMARIZING: Key Elements of Effective PB

**Qualitative:** of dialogue and discussions. Technical experts engaged in invited spaces e.g. workshops, taskforces.

**Quantitative:** number of public mobilised; town hall meetings; citizen forums.

**Accessibility:** of information & data, venue, consideration for disability; documentation available and user friendly.

**Timeliness:** notifications; time keeping during the forums; sufficient time to engage.

**Decision making/ Participants contributions influence decisions/making**

**Reports, Documentation & Feedback** to stakeholders

**Appropriate audience/ participants** (those to be affected by decisions) Meaningful input by participants

**Clear Objectives of the Public Participation**

THINGS MUST HAPPEN, otherwise the weakest loose motivation!
Thanks for your patience!

Doubts and challenging questions are Welcome

- giovanni.allegretti@ces.uc.pt
- allegretto70@gmail.com