

# TOWARD A HYBRID LOGIC OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

## ABSTRACT

### **Purpose**

The research aim of this paper is to verify the development over time of the different institutional logics associated with the adoption of Participatory Budgeting (PB) in local government.

### **Design/Methodology**

A qualitative research on a selection of 10 Italian cases was conducted. These cases were mapped using an adaptation of Sintomer's model of PB. The survey, based on interview with managers responsible for PB implementation, was then repeated after three years in order to record the main changes and interpret them on the basis of the same model of analysis.

### **Findings**

The results show that the development of PB is characterized by the spread of two emerging logics (managerial and community-building logics), that replace or coexist with the traditional political logic. The different logics can coexist within government, with different degrees of conflict or coexistence, and the result can also be considered to be a hybrid logic.

### **Originality/Value**

There are many studies focusing on the design and results of PB, while much less is known about the underlying values and logics that are sought through PB and its role under the New Public Governance agenda. This paper, using the institutionalist approach, investigate logics behind the choices and behaviours of the various actors, in order to highlight the social and cultural meanings that lead to, and are pursued with, these choices and behaviours.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Public sector reform has resulted in increasing attention being paid to the issues of deliberative and participatory governance, introduced with the aim of enhancing government legitimacy. In this perspective, Participatory Budgeting (PB) can be considered among the tools adopted to give more political power to citizens. It does not have a single mode of implementation, and several variations involving different technical solutions have developed in different contexts over time (Sintomer *et al.* 2010). An important role in the development and global spread of PB can be attributed to the first experience in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1989.

The wide influence of this symbolic model has helped to convey a conception of participation as a means to end the legitimacy crisis of representative democracy in several Western countries, and the social injustice common in less developed economies (Wampler and Avritzer 2004). However, less is known about PB from a public management perspective.

It appears that there are many studies focusing on the design and results of PB, while much less is known about the underlying processes of PB and its role under the New Public Governance (NPG) agenda (Bingham *et al.* 2005).

This paper applies the theoretical lens of neo-institutional theory to explore and discuss the changing logics of PB, using a longitudinal analysis conducted on a panel of ten Italian cases. More precisely, its research aim is to verify the development over time of the logics related to the adoption of PB in the Italian local government.

The results show that the development of PB over time has been characterized by the spread of emerging managerial and community-building logics that replace or coexist with the previously promoted political logic. PB is therefore leaving behind much of its original role (*political logic*) to become a useful tool for change and innovation in order to improve public sector performance (*managerial logic*). The adoption, implementation and use of PB also reflects the need to establish, restore or increase citizen participation and empowerment (*community-building logic*). However,

these logics are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, they can coexist within governments, with different degrees of conflict or coexistence, and the result can also be considered as a hybrid logic.

The paper is structured as follows. The second section discusses the concept of citizen participation and the main international trends in PB using the theoretical lens of institutional logic. The third section presents the research context, method and sources. The fourth and fifth sections present and discuss the results of the empirical longitudinal study. The final section presents the conclusions and limits of the work.

## **2. THREE INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS TO INTERPRETE PB IN ACTION**

Institutional logics can be defined as overarching sets of principles that prescribe how to interpret organizational reality, what constitutes appropriate behaviour, and how to succeed (Thornton 2004). This concept was employed to identify a specific set of models for motivating and organizing societal arenas or societal subsystems (Thornton *et al.* 2012). However, when the prescriptions and proscriptions of different logics are incompatible, they generate challenges and tensions for the organizations exposed to them (Greenwood *et al.* 2011). Many of the most important dynamics of tension and change observed in modern organizations and organization fields can be fruitfully examined by considering the competition and struggle between various categories of actors committed to contrasting institutional logics (Scott 2014). Van Gestel and Hillebrand (2011) suggest that change processes are usually seen as a struggle between competing institutional logics, as dialectical in nature, and as involving many individual and collective actors. Reay and Hinings (2005) suggest that competing logics can co-exist with tension over an extended period, but may be limited in scope. They also suggest that one dominant logic emerges, but only temporarily, and one change is followed by another.

Based on this perspective, institutional logics can be used to interpret the goals, procedures and outcomes related to the adoption and implementation PB. More precisely, three different “trends” (Sintomer *et al.* 2012, p. 16), or better, three underpinning logics can be identified with reference to

the promotion of civic participation in government, that can be called political, managerial and community-building logics (He 2011; Cabannes and Lipietz 2015).

PB is mainly based on a *political logic* as it is seen as a value and an instrument in renewing systems of government. In the process governments are reinventing local democracy, invigorating politics, and significantly altering the distribution of political and symbolic resources (Goldsmith and Weiner 2001). At the basis of this understanding of the concept, and the promotion of the theme, is the crisis in the traditional model of political (democratic) legitimacy typical of western countries (Skocpol and Fiorina 1999). According to the political logic, PB is seen as a tool to facilitate a bottom-up approach to policy and decision making, and the building of a new polity – participatory democracy – in the context of representative democracy’s perceived failure (Cabannes and Lipietz 2015). In this sense, participation can be interpreted as an instrument capable of predisposing citizens to the idea of collectivity and sociality, in the aftermath of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime.

Another area of participatory significance is more closely connected to *managerial logic*, with regard to how administrators introduce PB and how PB can strengthen and introduce managerial innovation (He 2011). In this case the rationale of PB is to optimize and improve the efficiency of scarce public resource and service delivery (Cabannes and Lipietz 2015). The managerial logic is associated with the profound shift from input to output-democracy, the argument being that there has been a shift from input-oriented (procedural) forms of democracy towards a form of democracy (performance), which is more tied to the outputs of policy-making (Peters 2010). According to the managerial logic, PB is considered a useful tool to renew and improve administrative performance in the public sector, overcoming the limitations of the traditional conception of the mode of governance of public administration, and also allowing for a correction of distortion produced by the managerialist wave of recent decades.

Finally, also the *community-building logic* can be referred to PB. This concept is more strictly connected to a cultural (and social) dimension of citizen participation. In this sense, citizen participa-

tion can be interpreted as an instrument that brings people closer to the idea of community and sociability, and combats feelings of dissatisfaction and alienation. The community-building logic is characterised by active citizens and NGOs, who consider citizen participation in the budgeting process as a political right, and demand the power to decide the allocation of budgets in local communities (He 2011). In contexts of declining public trust towards political parties, politicians and public organizations, PBs emerges as a tool to reinforce or strengthen links between actors, to deepen social ties and improve governance (Cabannes and Lipietz 2015). The underlying rationale of community-building logic is connected to the need to establish new societal priorities and the construction of new relationships between citizens and governments. Inclusion in decision-making processes is political by nature, and in this sense can be considered a useful tool in building a sense of community. There are studies (i.e.: Cuthill and Fien 2005, Ebdon and Franklin 2006) that support the idea of civic participation in local government as a foundation for rebuilding social capital, strengthening democratic governance and facilitating sustainable community outcomes.

According to this view, this third kind of underpinning participation logic is strictly linked to the spread of good governance, and PB is seen as an operational tool to promote the NPG vision. In this respect, supporters of deliberative democracy underline that, in accordance with an NPG-inspired approach, participation risks becoming a process of the identification and combination of individual citizens' preferences, without affecting the limits of individualism characteristic of the neo-liberal vision of society. In these terms, the use of instruments of participation is seen as an expression of the typical characteristics of the "neoliberal citizen": self-regulation, responsibility for their own problems, and a non-conflict partnership with the state (Leal 2007). In the same sense, Baiocchi and Ganuza (2014, p. 42) observed: "from this perspective, PB becomes a good tool to promote greater accountability, and give voice to citizens in public decisions, improving good governance from outside of the administrative machinery". In summary, the fear is that PB will become something distant from an instrument capable of changing the bourgeois state from within, as had been hoped and imagined after the rapid success of the Porto Alegre experience.

More generally, it is possible to read the evolution of PB as a progressive expansion of NPM and NPG as the main cultural paradigms that focus on different logics. Under the influence of NPM, the managerial logic dominates PB, the concept of “citizenship is likely to be diluted and even lost other than in term of the possibility for some public scrutiny of budgets” (He 2011, p. 122). Under the influence of NPG the community-building logic dominates PB, and the participatory tool is used to encourage the involvement of citizens in government activities and deliberative democracy (Bingham *et al.* 2005). However, these logics are not mutually exclusive: they can, and do, coexist within governments – and can also lead to internal tensions.

In order to represent the three logics above mentioned and investigate about possible changes in the underpinning logics of PB practices over time, a model of analysis, based on the conceptual scheme provided by Sintomer *et al.* (2008), was drawn. In their study, the result of international research on the European context, from a typical sociological and political perspective, Sintomer and his collaborators (2008) defines six PB models, and draw an hexagon to represent them. Upon considering further political and cultural variables, the authors subsequently linked the identified PB typologies with a variety of conceptual models of civic participation.

Considering the approach employed, and the significance of participation, as acknowledged by the literature, this paper suggests dividing the six models of PB into three large categories of meaning, highlighting the main macro-objectives pursued, as set out in section 2. It is, therefore, possible to acknowledge experiences based on different logics that have as their main aim (Figure 1):

- to correct the distortions of the mechanisms of representative democracy and recover “democratic effectiveness” in systems of government (*political logic*);
- to improve government and management activity (and ideally administrative modernization), endeavouring to improve decisional processes and implement more efficient and effective activities (*managerial logic*);
- to strengthen social cohesion, focusing on the quality of relationships in order to obtain a community building effect (*community-building logic*).

**[INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]**

From graphic point of view, a triangular map was obtained in order to classify real experiences of PB. It is clear that the various models of PB represent a rigid schematization of reality, which may cover cases with the simultaneous presence of elements that can be traced to two or more models.

### **3. RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHOD**

Italy has traditionally been a country with a Napoleonic tradition of the rule-of-law state with a high level of bureaucracy, and its local government has often been defined as a clientelistic/patronage model (Di Mascio 2012). During the 1990s the Italian public sector involved a strange mix of traditional, French derived administrative doctrines and NPM ideas (Ongaro ???). At the beginning of the twenty first century, the intensification of international networking at regional and local levels facilitated the introduction of new bottom up ideas and national reforms based on new performance management concepts and tools, with the aim of increasing efficiency, transparency, and levels of satisfaction among citizens (Grossi and Mussari 2008). Despite the detailed framework of national rules, there are still strong regional and cultural differences (Ongaro and Valotti 2008).

In this scenario, Italy was the first European country to pioneer PB and has been at the centre of different waves in the diffusion of PB (Bassoli 2011). This process began in 1994, when the local government of Grottammare, a small town in the centre of Italy, adopted a PB model inspired by Porto Alegre. A unique case, Grottammare can still be seen as iconic, not only in the Italian context, and taken as a model of reference. Indeed, the last ten years have witnessed the emergence of new experiences and a progressive spread of the phenomenon. Between 2002 and 2009, over 160 experiments were launched in Italy, and there is talk of a general condition of “creative chaos” (Sintomer and Allegretti 2009, p. 127). The impression is of a very unstable situation: new experiences are born every year, many are interrupted after the first cycle, and those that continue over time intro-

duce significant changes in the way they are managed. These changes are not only of a technical nature, but also affect the meaning and – it could be said – the underpinning logics of PB, and citizen participation in general.

Some academics have highlighted this possible cultural transformation of PB. According to Baiocchi and Ganusa (2014, p. 30), PB was born and developed in Brazil “alongside Real Utopian thinking”, with the main function of ensuring the effective empowerment of citizens, and transforming a bourgeois neoliberal democratic system in deep internal crisis. These functions were to be an integral part of PB, not only in its South American version, and any other valence pursued would be a type of betrayal of the original mission of PB, or otherwise represent a weakening of its revolutionary force. It is significant, in this regard, that Melgar (2014), a sociologist analyst of PB, has recently titled a paper on the well known experience of Porto Alegre: “*A time of closure?*”.

In these terms, Cabanne and Lipietz (2015, p. 26) state: “An important challenge remains in terms of carrying out research and critical analysis on the multiple forms of self-denominated participatory budgeting. This is a pre-condition for deepening the debate and understanding its democratic contribution, over and beyond its potential for responding to managerial and governance ambitions. This is both an invitation and a demand”.

With the aim to answer this call, a qualitative research was conducted on a selection of 10 Italian cases. The decision was made to build up a sample without reference to the average characteristics of the population surveyed, yet which was still capable of considering the main typologies of previously mapped cases, which can be seen as a panel. Since there were no active experiences in major cities or regions at the time of the first survey, it was decided to include three small municipalities in the panel (Castel Maggiore, Grottammare, Pieve Emanuele), along with four medium-sized municipalities (Arezzo, Bergamo, Modena, Reggio Emilia). In doing so, the aim was to include the most significant cases recognised by the literature (think about Grottammare and Pieve Emanuele) and other experiences that can be considered the most rooted over time. One province (Cagliari), one district of a metropolitan city (District XI of Rome) and one small-sized district (the District of

Saione, in the Municipality of Arezzo) were also selected in order to represent different tiers of government.

These cases were mapped using the previously proposed adaptation of Sintomer's model (see figure 1). The survey was then repeated after three years in order to record the main changes and interpret them on the basis of the same model of analysis.

The managers of these selected cases were interviewed by phone using semi-structured questionnaire. Each manager was interviewed at least twice. In two cases also consultants that played a key-role in PB design and implementation were been interviewed. In the two district cases the elected officials who governed the districts were the respondents, as there were no managers employed at this level of government. The result is a panel of interviewees composed of a variety of actors (politicians, managers, and consultants).

The information obtained was integrated with that collected from institutional websites, and previous analyses. The second cycle of analysis was conducted in 2012 with reference to the 2011 PB cycle, utilizing the same methodology and the same panel.

#### **4. MAIN FINDINGS**

The data and information collected has been revised in order to facilitate a spatial comparison between the entities involved and a temporal comparison between the two survey cycles. The principal results are presented in two tables, each dedicated to a different profile of investigation.

**[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]**

The first table reports information about the origin and duration of the selected PB cases. Firstly, the study aimed to investigate the reasons behind the decision to experiment with this type of instru-

ment, in asking respondents to identify the main objective pursued by the promoting actor. Respondents could choose only one answer, but had the possibility of adding different options to those suggested in the questionnaire. The survey results are varied: in 3 cases the stated objective was to restore a fully democratic significance to political mechanisms, following the logic typical of proponents of deliberative democracy; in 3 other cases, the emphasis was on the issue of improving social cohesion; in the other 4 cases different answers were collected. In the case of Saione, PB was introduced as a tool to allow residents to manage municipal funds earmarked for the development of the territory; participation, in this case, can be seen as a tool to enhance community identity and regulate inter-institutional relations. In the case of the Province of Cagliari, the initial goal was to allow certain stakeholder categories to be involved in decision-making processes, in order to reinforce community relationships; the basic reason for this approach is related to the fact that the provinces in Italy are an intermediate tier of government. In the case of Bergamo the aim was to improve the relationship between the administration and citizens from the perspective of horizontal accountability. Finally, there is the case of Castel Maggiore, where the stated purpose was explicitly to improve the resource allocation process.

In the vast majority of the panel (9 out of 10 cases) the origin of the adoption of PB involved a sponsorship initiative of a political nature and a top-down implementation process. Individual political figures, often the mayor, played a strong role in the decision to adopt PB, making PB a distinctive feature of their political program, and promoting its adoption from the top down. The initiative did not have an explicit managerial origin in any of the cases examined. The Grottammare case is notable: in this example the introduction of PB was due to a push by a civic movement that, by making participation its main issue, was able to become a political force and attain power.

From a temporal point of view, the analysis confirms that, apart from the Grottammare experience, which is recognized as a pioneering European case, the PB phenomenon has truly emerged in Italy over the last fifteen years. In four cases (Pieve Emanuele, Bergamo, Reggio Emilia and Cagliari), the use of PB was suspended due to changes in local government, and is unlikely to come back into

play in the short term. In two other contexts (the District of Rome XI and the Saione District of Arezzo), the political intention to continue the experience has to contend with obstacles of a financial and institutional nature. In the Roman case, there are difficulties associated with the loss of administrative and accounting autonomy, and financial constraints due to the cutting of some regional subsidies, which undid progress that had, up to that point, been viewed positively by the Municipality. In the case of the Saione district of Arezzo, despite funding difficulties, the Municipality, recognizing the validity of the praxis, has pledged to ensure that the experience will continue. In the other four remaining cases, the PB experience was still on-going at the time of the second survey. The following table shows information about the technical features of the implementation of PB. The aim is to reveal the underlying PB model in each experience under consideration.

**[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]**

With regard to the participation mechanisms of the PB cycle, initially the assembly in territorial organization (typically in the form of neighbourhood assemblies) had a central role in almost all cases. Based on this fact a relevant influence of the Porto Alegre model can be assumed, even though the declared motivations at the origin of the adoption of PB were different in some cases. The interviewed managers confirmed this inspiring role played by a political logic.

It can also be said that significant differences arise on this point between the two surveys: in the 2011 cycle, in 4 of the 6 examples that are hypothetically active, changes had been introduced in the three-year period considered.

In this regard, the transformation in Modena appears to be quite symbolic, as it was decided to abandon the institutions and tools typical of PB, at least according to the Porto Alegre model, to focus on working in a more streamlined fashion (through focus groups, workshops, and open space technology) on specific themes of intervention. The opportunity to move from a territorial logic to research-based methodologies, which are seen to be more streamlined and engaging, has been re-

ported by many respondents, beyond the fact that these changes had already been implemented at the time of the survey.

A similar trend results from the analysis of the thematic areas covered by co-decision. The first PB implementations were focused on public works. It should be remembered that much inclusive praxis can be traced back to participatory urban planning experiences. Subsequently, the range of issues under consideration has gradually expanded; areas of intervention have spread to social policies, covering youth, culture and sport. Even for this investigative profile some changes can be observed between the two cycles surveyed, and it can be said that, in addition to the forms of citizen involvement for the selection and implementation of specific interventions, participation is starting to take on a role in the regulation of policies regarding issues of particular social sensitivity.

Turning attention to the financial resources allocated to co-decision, half of the submissions state that budget resources are predetermined. Indications as to the criteria for their quantification were found to be generic, which suggests *ad hoc* decisions were taken for each PB cycle.

According to the survey results, the co-decision is only attributed with a binding value for the governing bodies of the organization in 4 cases, in which the budget was pre-set. In the other 6 cases, resolutions passed through PB only have a benchmark value for government bodies, and the instrument plays the role of a public consultation on budgetary planning. This profile also emerges from the analysis of the structural transformation of participatory practices underway in Modena; while in the first survey the co-decision was acknowledged as having a binding value, in 2011 it was attributed with a valence of a more advisory nature.

Finally, one can assert that the survey confirms two important trends. Firstly, *it is difficult to repeat the use of PB over time*: the experience was wholly active in only 4 cases at the time of the second survey, even if the special circumstances of the District of Rome XI and the District of Saione should be taken into account, where the interruption was caused by conditions of an exogenous nature, and the political will would have been to continue the initiative. Furthermore, *in ongoing experiences there is a trend towards innovation in the praxis*: important developments can be observed

in 6 cases. PB has not yet found its own definitive character; the impression is that of a phenomenon that is still in the development phase.

Those profiles that have seen the greatest change concern:

- a *less dogmatic approach towards assemblies as a fundamental tool* of participation, as evidenced by the use of other instruments (focus groups, message boards, open space technology, etc.);
- the *transition from a territorial to a thematic organization* of participation;
- a *preference for thematic micro-projects*, which make it easier to monitor performance, provide visible results, and which can be evaluated in the short term;
- the fact that alongside the participatory planning of investment in urban planning, which continues to have an important role, *forms of participation are being developed regarding regulatory activities* (such as the definition of urban planning regulation, social, youth, and cultural policies, etc.). This also regards the current difficulty in ensuring adequate financial resources to make significant investments.

These changes are leading to a conceptual and technical repositioning of PB logics. Figure 4 represents the current trends, and demonstrates how most of the analysed cases are still active, and adopting hybrid models of PB, with a shift toward the centre of the graph. The position of individual cases in the graph and their movement was identified by comparing the information gathered from the research with the previously analysed modelling based on Sintomer's approach (Table 1) and involving the interviewed managers.

In the second session of analysis the four cases that were still active (Saione had become part of the Arezzo case, as it is part of that municipality, while Rome XI was temporarily suspended, thus the PB cycle characteristics for the year 2010 were evaluated) demonstrate the accentuation of this combination of elements typical of diverse approaches, with a shift towards the centre of the triangle in the graph. Only in the experience of Castel Maggiore were no changes detected.

## [INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

This trend highlights the search for logics of participation in which the idea of having to challenge traditional forms of representative democracy is less strong, with functionality enhanced through inclusive practices capable of increasing the sense of social legitimacy of political power and improving administrative performance.

In light of this it can be assumed that there appears to be a transition, from the predominance of PB as a direct expression of the attempt to implement innovative forms of participatory democracy, towards hybrid logics promoted to support emerging styles of good governance.

### **5. DISCUSSION**

The analysis shows the risk of a “dangerous” close connection between PB activity and the political affairs of the institutions in question. This confirms what had already been observed by Allegretti (2012): the identification of PB with a political logic and actors that promoted its implementation has, in such cases, led to the end of the praxis when there is a change in the political majority or the councillor in question was replaced.

PB also has an essentially political logic the cases where it is promoted with the aim of regenerating the traditional democratic system. It eventually ends up being seen as an instrument of political consensus and the strengthening of social cohesion. The perceptions declared by the managers interviewed confirm that, in 8 out of the 10 investigated cases, the most important benefits have been in terms of social cohesion and improved relations with citizens, with a good degree of satisfaction among the public. In the other 2 cases they stated that the main benefit involved the rationalization of the decision-making process.

The research findings of the first session of the survey highlight a strong and often explicit reference to the early applications of the Porto Alegre model (especially in cases of Grottammare, Pieve Emanuele and the District of Rome XI) and, more generally, to a conception of participation as an

instrument for the promotion of more direct forms of democracy. The second session profiles a type of hybridization of the participatory logic employed. Authorities attempt to build their own participatory arrangement, made up of a set of instruments, possibly integrated with each other, and an appropriate style of governance. The declaration of Mr. Valter Canafoglia, manager of the municipality of Modena, is significant in this regard: *‘The municipality wanted to correct participatory mechanisms by focusing on the quality of relationships, even if with small groups, and encouraging involvement in technical roles (self-management). PB had an initial function of ‘opening up’ the field’.*

Where PB continues to be used, it plays the role of a symbol of the theme of participation, leading other instruments in reconciliation with the population. The managers interviewed are convinced that the issue of participation will be very important in the future, and that there could be room for a new generation of PB. According to Mr. Pierpaolo Fanesi, consultant of the municipality of Grottole, and one of the leading Italian experts on the subject: *‘the future depends more on the attention paid to decision-making processes, and less on deciding the use of portions of the budget. There are spaces in regulatory activities (e.g.: the preparation of the planning of works or town planning) at the expense of PB in the strict sense’.*

This is clearly an evidence of a shift from territorially-based PB models towards thematic and actor-based models. More precisely, the analysis of participation organization and mechanisms, and the kinds and topics of co-decision, results in the co-existence of elements typically referable to different logics. The political logic is no longer self-dominant; there is a clear commingling with the managerial and community-based logics. This confirms the idea of Cannabes and Lipietz (2015, p. 11), who affirm that ‘these logics are not mutually exclusive. In fact they can, and do, coexist within municipalities – and can lead to internal tensions’. It also appears to be significant that 6 out of the 10 managers interviewed identified the emergence of internal conflicts as one of the main problems of the PB experience.

The prospect for the future is therefore a less ideological hybrid model of PB. Melgar (2014) speaks of depoliticized participation, in which PB could represent the cultural reference and technical framework within which more specific and innovative praxis of participation might be allocated. As Maria Grazia Di Gaetano, official of the District of Rome XI, says: *'Despite its difficulties, PB can still work and have a future. The crucial question regards the ability to mediate the needs of representative democracy with the needs of participation'*.

The need for more hybrid concepts of PB, and to facilitate coordination and interaction between different inclusive instruments and praxis, has already been highlighted by academics studying the operational aspects of participation (i.e.: Allegretti 2012). There are also those, such as Avritzer (2009), who claim that adequately institutionalized top-down forms of power-sharing, which promote more attenuated participatory governance models than bottom-up models that may involve a degree of social antagonism, such as Porto Alegre, work better and for longer.

This is a situation where more emphasis is placed on the concept of citizen involvement, rather than co-decision, losing sight of the concerns of proponents of deliberative democracy. The results of the investigation also demonstrate that the process of PB only leads to binding decisions for officials in 4 of the 10 cases examined, and furthermore in the case of Modena this has been reduced to an expressly consultative role. It can therefore be said that the instances of the supporters of more direct forms of democracy are absorbed by the dominant paradigm of NPG, in which civic participation is seen as an instrument of a new style of governance (Bingham *et al.* 2005).

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

While studies of civic participation have thus far focused on different aspects (such as the level of inclusion of citizens, the authenticity of participation, its quality, and costs and benefits), there is still much to discover about the meaning and effects of the various methods of implementation of inclusive tools such as PB (Cabanne and Lipietz 2015).

This paper contributes to the scientific debate on citizen participation presenting and discussing how different institutional logics (political, managerial, and community-building) are influencing the current practice of PB. Italy was the first European country to experience the application of PB, and is still distinguished today by the number and innovative capacity of these experiments, which Sintomer and Allegretti (2009, p. 127) have described in terms of “creative chaos”. The longitudinal analysis of the cases constituting our sample has confirmed a marked instability in PB practices, in terms of both fragility and volatility (Allegretti 2012). It was of particular interest to focus on the latter phenomenon: by analysing the changes in surviving cases, between the first and second survey sessions, it was possible to observe changes involving the PB models and their underlying logic. Previous studies have already noted such an evolutionary trend in PB models (in particular: Sintomer et al. 2012). Some contributions (He 2011; Cannabes and Lipietz 2015) have presented analysis from a neo-institutionalist perspective that highlights the simultaneous presence of different logics. In particular, He (2011, p. 123), with reference to China, states that: ‘the three logics are not clear-cut; they intertwine. While some elements of the three logics are compatible and mutually complementary, others conflict and undermine each other’. This contribution not only confirms this prospect, in a context very different from that of China, but also highlights a trend of convergence towards a hybrid logic, in which elements typical of PB models based on different logics coexist. On the other hand, in almost all the cases analysed, the survival of PB was made possible by the introduction of changes capable of integrating elements from different logics.

This “new generation” of Italian PB is characterized by a decrease in the dominance of the political logic. In practice, as suggested by Baiocchi and Ganuza (2012 and 2014), this may be a move away from the concept of PB as an instrument in the transformation of democracy, according to the original vision of the iconic experience of Porto Alegre, to marry the most logical and pragmatic expression of the paradigm of NPM, and especially of NPG.

In short, this is a future very different from that hoped for by the proponents of deliberative democracy, which is more consistent with the approach typical of NPG, in which participation is seen and

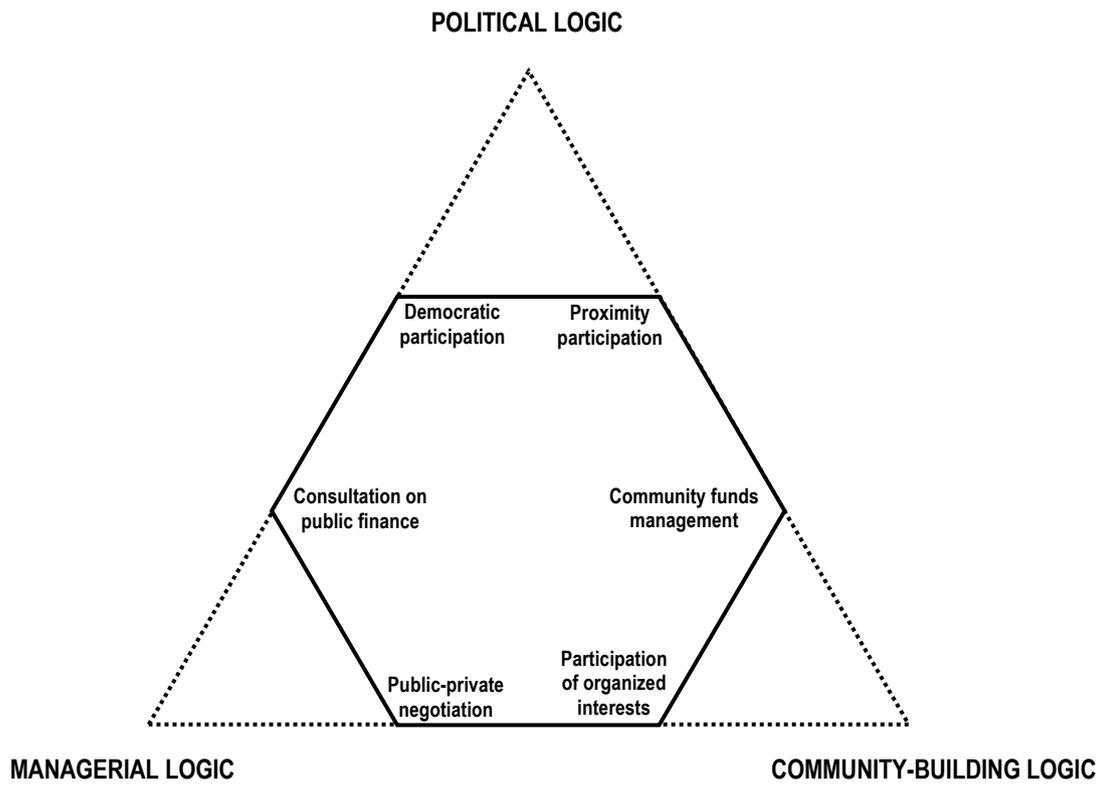
used as an instrument of “new governance” (Bingham et al. 2005), rather than a tool to overcome this kind of paradigm.

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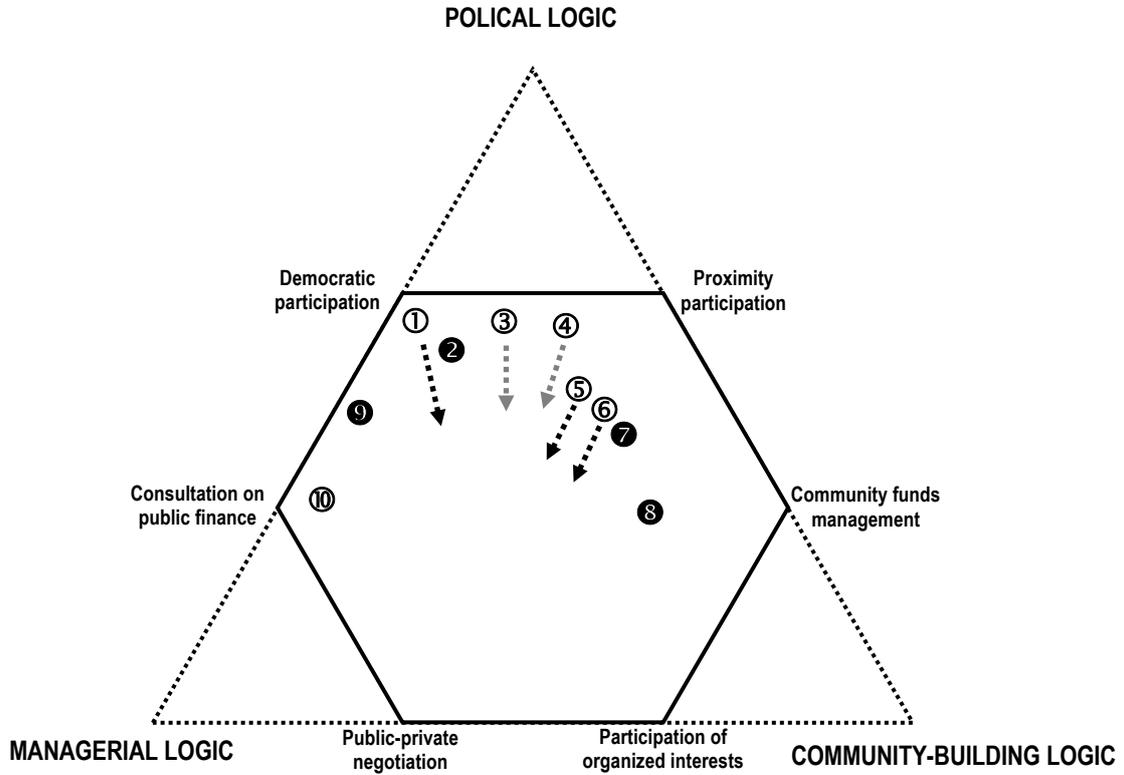
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FIGURE 1 *PB logics and models*



*Adaption by: Sintomer et al. 2012: p. 19; Cabannes and Lipietz 2015, p. 11.*

FIGURE 2 *Current trends in the PB models*



Legend		
① Municipality of Grottammare	⑤ Municipality of Arezzo	⑨ Municipality of Bergamo
② Municipality of Pieve Emanuele	⑥ Municipality of Modena	⑩ Municipality of Castel Maggiore
③ Disctict of Rome XI	⑦ Municipality of Reggio Emilia	○ Operative cases and suspended ones by external factors
④ District of Saione (Arezzo)	⑧ Province of Cagliari	● Interrupted cases by an internal choice

TABLE 1 *A sample outline of the Italian experience: The origin and duration of PB*

	(1) Municipality of Grottammare	(2) Municipality of Pieve Emanuele	(3) District XI of Rome	(4) District of Saione (Arezzo)	(5) Municipality of Arezzo	(6) Municipality of Modena	(7) Municipality of Reggio Emilia	(8) Province of Cagliari	(9) Municipality of Bergamo	(10) Municipality of Castel Maggiore
<b>Number of inhabitants</b>	15,000	15,000	135,000	30,000	100,000	180,000	160,000	555,000	116,000	17,000
<b>Main initial goal</b>	<i>Giving significance to the concept of democracy</i>	<i>Giving significance to the concept of democracy</i>	<i>Giving significance to the concept of democracy</i>	<i>Promoting the territorial community, targeting municipal policies</i>	<i>Increasing social cohesion</i>	<i>Increasing social cohesion</i>	<i>Increasing social cohesion</i>	<i>Improving community relations</i>	<i>Improving relationships with citizens</i>	<i>Improving the resource allocation process</i>
<b>Supporting body</b>	<i>Civic movement</i>	<i>Mayor</i>	<i>President of the District and Delegated Counsellor</i>	<i>President of the District</i>	<i>Budget and Participation Counsellor</i>	<i>Mayor</i>	<i>Budget, Devolution and Participation Counsellor</i>	<i>Finance and Budget Counsellor</i>	<i>Municipal Council</i>	<i>Mayor</i>
<b>Period</b>	<i>Since 1994</i>	<i>From 2003 to 2007 (Interrupted)</i>	<i>2003-2010 (Temporary suspended)</i>	<i>From 2005 to 2010 (Absorbed by the Municipality of Arezzo)</i>	<i>Since 2007</i>	<i>Since 2006</i>	<i>From 2007 to 2008 (Interrupted)</i>	<i>From 2007 to 2009 (Interrupted)</i>	<i>From 2006 to 200 (Interrupted)8</i>	<i>Since 2003</i>

TABLE 2 A sample outline of the Italian experience: The participation structure

	(1) Municipality of Grottammare	(2) Municipality of Pieve Emanuele	(3) District XI of Rome	(4) District of Saione (Arezzo)	(5) Municipality of Arezzo	(6) Municipality of Modena	(7) Municipality of Reggio Emilia	(8) Province of Cagliari	(9) Municipality of Bergamo	(10) Municipality of Castel Maggiore
<b>Participation mechanisms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies on territorial basis</li> <li>• Neighbourhood committees and technical boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies on territorial basis</li> <li>• Technical boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Assemblies on territorial basis)</li> <li>• <b>Social groups meetings</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies on territorial basis</li> <li>• (Technical boards)</li> <li>• <b>Thematic assemblies</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies on territorial basis</li> <li>• <b>Technical boards</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Assemblies on territorial basis)</li> <li>• (Technical boards)</li> <li>• <b>Focus groups</b></li> <li>• <b>Workshops</b></li> <li>• <b>Open space technology</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies on territorial basis</li> <li>• Technical boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Technical boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemblies on territorial basis</li> <li>• Technical boards</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic assemblies</li> </ul>
<b>Decision topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Productive activities</li> <li>• Youth policies</li> <li>• Environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Youth policies</li> <li>• Culture and sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• (Environment)</li> <li>• (Social policies)</li> <li>• (Culture and sport)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• <b>Social policies</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Public works)</li> <li>• (Productive activities)</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Youth policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Culture and sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Culture and sport</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Productive activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Culture and sport</li> <li>• Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public works</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Social policies</li> <li>• Productive activities</li> <li>• <b>Education</b></li> </ul>
<b>Preset budget</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (increased)	Yes	No	No	No	No
<b>Nature of decision</b>	Binding	Consultative	Binding	Binding	Binding	<b>Consultative</b>	Consultative	Consultative	Consultative	Consultative

**NB:** Those characteristics present in the first survey and not the second are reported in brackets, while those present only in the second survey are written in bold.

## APPENDIX

At the time of the first survey, after a brief description of the research project and its most important aims, the interview guidelines were structured in three sections.

The first section collected information on the adoption of PB. The following topics were discussed with the interviewee:

- Promoters of PB (political or managerial figures, grassroots).
- Declared goals at the basis of PB adoption.
- Other participatory tools that were implemented at the time of the first adoption of PB.
- Impact on organisational structure.
- Possible institutional changes (modification of statute, issuing of new rules, guidelines, etc.).
- Possible role of consultants.

The second section was focused on the characteristics of the methodology used to implement PB. In particular, the following topics were discussed:

- Actors involved in the process (lay citizens, interested citizens, organized groups of citizens, etc.).
- Communication and training strategies toward PB recipients.
- Participatory mechanisms (assemblies, focus groups, e-voting, etc).
- Topics of co-decision.
- Amount of resources to allocate on the basis of PB.
- Nature of the co-decision (binding or consultative).
- Reporting tools focused on the participatory process.

The third section singled out the interviewees' perceptions on the usefulness of PB on the basis of their experience. To this end, the following topics were discussed:

- The extent to which initial objectives and targets had been met.
- Assessment of collaboration with internal actors.
- Assessment of level of participation in terms of quantity and quality.
- Assessment of main participation outcomes.
- Main benefits and criticisms for the public entity.
- Unexpected negative effects.
- Future agenda for improvements.

With the second survey, three years later, the interviewees were asked about the changes that had occurred since the previous interview. In particular, they were asked to explain:

- Technical innovations introduced in the PB cycle, and the motivation behind them.
- Changes in their perception of PB;
- Interpretation of modifications in the logics underlying the PB model.
- Reasons for possible interruption or suspension of PB.