

Participatory governance as a model for urban mobility planning

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STEP-UP Training session III

Participatory governance

- * The concept of participatory governance can be defined as sharing governance responsibilities among different stakeholders who have ‘a stake in what happens’ (Wilcox, 1994: 5).
- * Process which allows for the adoption of management models whereby responsibility is shared and decisions are taken by communities rather than by individuals

Why is participatory governance model relevant?

1. People are more and more interested in active engagement to take care for their communities
2. This model proposes more realistic problem solutions as communication between related stakeholders creates a good synergy of experiences
3. Reduces costs of planning and offers more potential for investments

Stakeholders

Administration –
National/regional/local governance

- Have the most power (legally and financially)
- Can in majority of cases directly influence the outcome of investment/proposed solution

Experts – organizations and individuals with the most expertise in a given field, artists, scientists, doctors, universities etc

- Professional insight to problem solving
- See in advance what is the best option available and how will it affect the current situation.

General public representatives –
NGOs, citizen associations and
citizen initiatives

- They have the most legitimation to ask for a change, as they (should) vocalize the experiences of real people regarding an issue

Stakeholder weakness

Administration

- Often lack initiative
- Proposed solutions are not correspondent to actual problems
- Private interest can take over public ones
- Bureaucratic procedures take time

Experts

- No legitimation to implement good ideas into practice
- No support or logistics implement these ideas

General public

- Usually no legal and financial power to make a change
- Lack of capacities to propose a real, sustainable proposal

Participatory governance

Administration

- By working with general public representatives can get an influx of motivation as well as of the field knowledge necessary for a good solution
- Political engagement from public has more legitimation to steer decisions towards public interest

Experts

- Legitimation from the public, legal power from the administrative institutions
- Operative capacities increase by working with others

General public

- They have the most legitimation to ask for a change, as they (should) vocalize the experiences of real people regarding an issue

Participatory governance

- * Participatory governance can mitigate the weaknesses of each stakeholder category by focusing on what they do the best
- * Top to bottom approach focuses more on how to solve a problem the best, by engaging general public
- * Bottom to top approach focuses more on establishing a ground network that can influence the administration

* http://participatory-governance-in-culture.net/uploads/biljeske_EN_web.pdf

Participatory governance – approaches to engage the general public

1. Noticing a problem and detecting public opinion on it.
2. Stakeholder mapping
3. Discussions among stakeholders and further data collecting
4. Mutual course of action
5. Symbolic agreement for cooperation

A lot more ideas can be found here:

<https://www.civicus.org/index.php/es/centro-de-medios/recursos/manuales/611-participatory-governance-toolkit>

Participatory governance example – project REMEDIO in city of Split



Split
79 km²
179'000
inhabitants

The project aimed to foster the use of available low carbon transport systems and solutions through the testing of an operational path in the governance and management of high congested roads

Urban mobility planning by participatory governance model

- * Main problem – traffic congestion
- * First step: detailing the scope of the problem
 - * Public questionnaires and workshops
 - * Collecting and analyzing data on traffic fluctuations (done by hired experts)



Urban mobility planning by participatory governance model

- * Basic data showed that the most congested street was Poljička street, showing signs of overcrowdness even before the touristic season
- * Citizen data showed a noticeable level of dissatisfaction with traffic in general, while bicycle usage was estimated pretty low
- * The questionnaires also revealed which locations would be the most suitable for bicycle stations, which population would be most interested in public bicycle system etc

Urban mobility planning by participatory governance model

- * Stakeholders assembled commented on collected data, giving valuable new insights to the situation
- * Memorandum of Understanding was signed between City of Split and Split Parking, with the purpose of maintaining a public service a public good

Conclusion

- * Limitations of the given example
- * Urban planning responsive to actual needs
- * Participatory governance as a model to improve democracy and quality of life



* Thank you for your attention!

* Literature:

- * <https://www.interarts.net/descargas/interarts2541.pdf>
- * <https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/PDFs/E-Library%20Archives/2008%20Participatory%20Governance%20and%20MDGs.pdf>
- * http://ruamarante.pt/portfolio_page/happycitieshappyplaces/
- * <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/es/centro-de-medios/recursos/manuales/611-participatory-governance-toolkit>
- * http://participatory-governance-in-culture.net/uploads/biljeske_EN_web.pdf