

## Public Participation in City Governance Decision-Making: Theoretical Approach

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*The paper deals with the analysis of the theoretical aspect of public participation in decision-making processes relying on one of the theories of this phenomenon, namely democratic theory.*

*The issue of public participation itself is not a new phenomenon; interest in it has been either increasing or decreasing from time to time. An imperative of developing the ways of "public involvement" in decision-making processes on issues related to life has not lost its importance and is still relevant nowadays.*

*Public participation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon therefore in order to understand its essence it is necessary to analyse it as a multi-sided phenomenon from different perspectives. Different paradigms: psychological, sociological, economic, political and legal shape the forms of questions on participation and answers to them; moreover, participation is related to such issues as individual motivation and socio-political structures and processes in communities among them. Therefore the number of conceptions has been increasing and different theoretical approaches have been noticed. In order to understand practical problems firstly a deep theoretical analysis is necessary to show what motivates people participate solving community problems or, on the contrary, prevents them from doing it. As it has been noted, literature sources on public participation are related to theoretical works in other fields; the authors of this work have confined themselves to the analysis of one field, which approximates to the theories of democracy as the basis for further analysis of public participation in order to identify the basic principles of public participation. This study dissociates from comprehensive analysis of public participation concepts and analysis of other theories such as social capital, rational choice and communication planning, which explain the abovementioned phenomenon. Although the importance and expedience of these theories is unquestionable for comprehensive and complex analysis of the concept of public participation, the first step doing it and basing further analysis is summing the context of democracy. Thus the main object of the paper is public participation at the local governance level where democracy is put into practice best. Especially taking into consideration that local people know their problems best, thus the exercise of democratic rights and freedoms is most optimal participating at the local level.*

*This analysis makes reference to the works of such*

*authors as Dachler, Wilpert (1978), Holford, Edirisinha (2000), Sisk (2001), Larry (2002), Held (2002), Blaug (2002), Farrelly (2004), Landman (2005), Gaventa (1999, 2006), etc. and Gallie (1956), Lipset (1959), Dahl (1961, 1965), Schumpeter (1966), Pateman 1970, Hunter (1953), etc. cited in the above-mentioned authors.*

*Although the focus of this paper is local democracy, general explication of the context of democracy and discussions on global changes in democracy form the basis for analysis of local democracy. The authors of the paper start a discourse with analysis of a wide and debatable concept of democracy and proceed to summing of participatory and representative democracies important in this context. A link between democracy, governance and the theory of local governance (pluralism, elite and urban regime theories), which explains urban governance, has been identified. Regardless of the drawbacks of the abovementioned theories, they are instruments to be used evaluating situations and developing right scenarios in response to those situations.*

*Summing up it may be claimed that although democracy has spread wider than ever before different ratings and researches diagnose its critical state what influences public participation and the relevance of researches on this phenomenon. And, on the contrary, public participation (e.g. low political activity) evidences dissatisfaction with democracy as a form of governance. Democracy, generally speaking, is a form of governance based on collective decisions. As governance is a decision-making process, a link among decision-making, governance and democracy is evident.*

Keywords: *urban governance, public participation, democracy, theories of democracy.*

### Introduction

The issue of public participation is not a new phenomenon: during the last 50 years studies on the issue have been gaining and losing popularity. An imperative to develop new means of public involvement in decision-making processes on life affairs has not lost its significance or relevance (Montiel, Barten, 1999). Public participation is a multi-dimensional issue, therefore "in order to fully understand participation it should be analysed as multi-sided phenomenon, from different perspectives" (Parada, 2005). "Different paradigms arising from psychology, sociology, economics, politics and law subjects

shape questions on participation and answers to them; moreover, participation is related to the issues of personal motivation, abilities to debate and lead, problems in group dynamics or organisational factors and socio-political structures and processes in communities and among them. Therefore an increase in conceptions and the diversity of theoretical approaches have been noticed. As participation in practice, policy-oriented discussions and theoretical researches go beyond the boundaries of any subject of social sciences, it is evident that literature on participation “transcends” *micro* and *macro* problems” (Dachler, Wilpert, 1978), what explains why in order to carry out comprehensive analysis of public participation in urban governance decision-making literature sources from several fields of science should be referred to.

Despite general acknowledgement of public participation in decision-making processes, it is not completely clear what this concept means and how it may be disintegrated from the related constructs. Referring to the European Commission (1997), Ashford, Rest (1999), Walker (2000), the concepts *participation*, *involvement* are more or less used as synonyms meaning a process when individuals or groups interact in a chosen way, exchange information, have influence on taking particular decisions. However, the definitions of *society*, *community*, *interested individuals or groups* are not used adequately synonymically. Undoubtedly, society, community and interested individuals partly coincide. Despite that, participation of interested individuals is not the same as public participation (English et al., 1993, cit. in Ashford, Rest, 1999). In the context of this study it is “a common agreement that society is not any human being, it is a cluster of individuals and groups (different societies) which can be defined as organised or unorganised, professional or amateur, spontaneous or institutional, concerned with or indifferent to present problems” (Pelle, 1995 cit. in Ashford, Rest, 1999). In this case - city community members, who are linked at least by the fact that they live on a particular territory and have common concerns characteristic for a community of any city. In other words, a discourse is about local democracy put into practise at the lowest level (community, school committee, housing association, etc.) when individuals understand affairs concerning them: street lightening, clean water, housing and employment opportunities.

For a long time community involvement in many governance activities including urban planning and governance has been implied as desirable but difficult to be put into practice (Montiel, Barten, 1999). Therefore, in order to solve practical problems, firstly comprehensive theoretical analysis is necessary to identify what motivates city dwellers to participate solving city community affairs or, on the contrary, hinders them from doing it. As it has been mentioned, *the theory of public participation* is linked to theoretical works in other fields; this work does not go beyond the limits of one field, which is close to the theories of *political democracy* as the basis for further analysis of public participation in order to identify the main principles of public participation. This study dissociates from analysis of comprehensive concepts of *society* or *participation*, other theories such as *social capital*, *rational choice* or *communication planning* ex-

plaining the aforementioned phenomenon.

**The aim of this paper** is to carry out the analysis of public participation in city governance decision-making processes in the context of one theory explaining this phenomenon, *theories of democracy*.

This analysis makes reference to such authors as Dachler, Wilpert (1978), Holford, Edirisingha (2000), Sisk (2001), Larry (2002), Held (2002), Blaug (2002), Farrelly (2004), Landman (2005), Gaventa (1999, 2006), etc. and Gallie (1956), Lipset (1959), Dahl (1961, 1965), Schumpeter (1966), Pateman 1970, Hunter (1953), etc. cited among the aforementioned authors.

**Research methods:** literature analysis, systematisation, comparison.

Scientists of many fields and practitioners aim to explain and understand new framework of the democratic world at the same time contributing to successful consolidation and sustained coherence. According to Landman (2005), thus *working definitions of democracy, analysis of factors*, which explain emergence and execution of democracy and *politicians* who would support and sustain efforts are necessary.

### Towards democracy

According to Wilcox (1994), participation, just like democracy, means many things to different people. Both conceptions are related in the context of this study, but let us begin with the analysis of democracy namely in the context of participation. Although democracy is one of the concepts that cause many discussions (more details in the next section), but Blaug (2002) also stresses that it is one of the issues “favoured to the utmost”. Satisfied neither with its prevalence in comparison to all other political forms nor with the present situation, governments, international organisations, NGOs, civic associations and democracy theorists need more (Blaug, 2002). Blaug (2002) as well as Held (2002) or Dunn (1992) cit. in Blaug (2002) agree that it is the only way although the concept itself is debatable. Held (2002) mentioned above advocates democracy relying on the fact that “it best of all alternatives strives for one or more main values or benefits: political equality, freedom, moral self-development, common interest, fair moral compromise, committed decisions which take into consideration interests of all, public benefit, need satisfaction, effective decisions” (Held, 2002). The main question in the context of this paper is, according to Blaug (2002), “that what we have got at the state level should be transferred to civil society” disregarding whether it is a developing state, local governance or public association.

The aim of this study is not to make thorough analysis of democracy but to identify links between democracy and participation. The history of the 20th century, which had influence on global adherence to democracy, is a sound basis to analyse contemporary public participation. Bearing in mind the last phase, according to Landman (2005), several important periods are worth mentioning: the first surge of democracy since the middle of the 19th until the beginning of the 20th century, three consecutive surges after World War II in the western and southern parts of Europe, South America, East Europe and some

parts of Africa and Asia with the result that the big part of all independent countries are democratic at least formally. Although the focus of this paper is on local democracy where participation is put into practice, clarification of a general context of democracy and discussions of global democratic changes form the basis for analysis of local democracy.

Coming to this time it should be mentioned that “the last quarter of the 20th century witnessed the ultimate development of democracy” (Larry, 2002). Although the definitions, conceptions and forms of democracy are going to be discussed in the next section, in order to substantiate the development of democracy it is necessary to define criteria, parameters to be used, i.e. operationalize at least partly the construct itself. In the context of the paper democracy rating is also important because participation is one of most often used indicators defining the effectiveness of democracy. Speaking about democracy rating “numerous attempts to rate it are linked to attempts to define democracy in detail by minimal procedural forms or to present indicators of institutional or rights dimensions” (Landman, 2004, cit. 2005). The latter author also cites Lipset (1959), who has developed the first rating scale of regimes based on categories; it was applied for quantitative analysis of different states and included the continuum of democracy-dictatorship: stable and unstable democracies, stable and unstable dictatorships; he also mentions Przeworski; Alvarez; Cheibub, Limongi (2000), who have recently developed dichotomous classification how using a set of criteria to identify whether states are democratic or autocratic. Landman (2005) also claims that “despite these preconditions and a rather limited approach this categorical method has developed democracy rating instruments for global wide qualitative comparative analysis and presents an example of researches carried out by Freedom House with two separate rating scales for political and civil rights from 1 (complete exercise of rights) to 7 (absolute ignorance of rights). Studies of the aforementioned type have been carried out since 1972; freedom rated in them is an opportunity to function freely in different spheres by the two aforementioned categories. The study does not rate governance or activities but individual freedoms in real life (see <http://www.freedomhouse.org>). According to Puddington (2006, Freedom House), at the end of 2005 there were 89 “free” states, where political rivalry is wide-scale, civil rights are respected, civic life is extremely independent and mass media is independent. They make up 46% of all 192 world states and include 2.969 billion people (45.97% of the world population). 58 states are “partly free” (30% of all states), political rights and freedoms are partly respected there. These states suffer from corruption, weak legitimate governance, ethnical or religious tensions. And there are 45 “not free” states, where political rights are not followed and basic civil freedoms are systematically violated. In 2005 post-soviet countries (except Middle East) made biggest changes in terms of liberation, but in the context of this study Lithuania, Georgia and Latvia were noted as having made least significant changes because Lithuania and Latvia joined the group characterised as “free” and stable states (Puddington, Freedom House, 2006).

Thereby taken together classification by categories as well as level-based scales, target as well as poll results are used as democracy rating instruments attempting to link up directly with the conceptual definition of democracy which specifies procedures and sometimes liberal democracy. Thus rating instruments use definitions which can be shifted in time, space or evaluation units (Landman, 2005). However, bearing in mind multi-sidedness of the concept of democracy (to be discussed in the next section) it may be stated that democracy rating is multi-sided and integrates very many indicators.

On the one hand, it is positive that democracy has become more widespread than ever before, according to Gaventa (2006). Despite the fact that democracy has developed in terms of institutions and practise, there are many warnings that the quality of democracy is in a critical state and only top-deep (Larry, 2002; Gaventa, 2006). Therefore it can be stated that, according to Gaventa (2006), for some analysts the development of democratic institutional models proves dominance of democracy, others in the north as well as in the south stress an increasing deficit of democracy. In fact all show that we are facing some paradox. As a result, democracy should be considered as a process because, according to Landman (2005), it is still in progress, involving different states, societies and individuals, its real meaning has not been fixed, it is even flexible. The basic principles of popular sovereignty and collective self-governance are to be universally applied.

### **The conceptions of democracy**

In many cases democracy is a classical and, in fact, controversial concept (Gallie, 1956 in Landman, 2005; Berg, 1978 cit. in Meikle-Yaw, 2006; Held, 2002; Gaventa, 2006). Democracy is used in different political and non-political contexts (Farrelly, 2004). Since the times of antiquity until to date there has not been and not going to be in the future any consensus on its definition or complete content (Landman, 2005). To illustrate such statements we are referring to Gaventa (2006) who clearly identifies differences in approaches maintaining that “democracy at the same time is the speech of militaristic power, the power of neo-liberal markets, political parties, social movements and non-governmental organisations“. Blaug (2002) also claims that “on the one hand, democracy is manifested as a decision-making method (Schumpeter, 1966) and as a group of political institutions, which implement to a different extent some main principles of democracy (Dahl, 1989; Beetham, 1999). On the other hand, we find such concepts of antique democracy as civil values, life-style, behaviour models oriented towards common good, in other words, the revival of democracy as a moral ideal (Arendt, 1973; Carter, 1973; Putnam, 1992)“ (Blaug, 2002). The latter author also cites other theorists of democracy who stress different aspects of democracy. For example, Dunn (1979) defines the conceptions of democracy by terms of two rival parties: “realists“ and “participatory“, Macpherson (1977) draws a line between “protective“ and “development“ basis, Elster (1986) – between the metaphors “market“ and “forum“. This tradition to use heuristic differences

for a better definition of democracy is surprisingly widespread. However, one of the most common differences or types, as other authors say, extremely important in the context of this study, is difference between representative (or liberal) and direct (or participatory) democracies (Brenneis, 1990; Mansbridge, 1980 cit. in Blaug, 2002; Held, 2002); differences between “democracy directed from top to bottom and from bottom to top and between competitive and unitarian democracies“ are also known (Mansbridge, 1980 cit. in Blaug, 2002). “Finally, two different methodologies can be identified in democracy studies: empirical and normative (Skinner, 1973 cit. in Blaug, 2002). In certain terms the latter division is conventional because the normative theory is based on practice, meanwhile empirical theories deal with the interpretation and/or typologisation of democracy.

It is absolutely clear that “democracy is a multi-dimensional phenomenon (Inglehart, 1999) and a meaningful term“ (Meikle-Yaw, 2006). However, attempting to understand a variety of conceptions, as Blaug (2002) maintains, “no doubts arise that participation is most important. Speaking about participation in particular an obvious agreement on the values of democracy fails“ (Blaug, 2002).

In the context of this study we refer to Landman’s (2005) idea that “democracy is a form of governance based on a particular degree of popular sovereignty and collective decision-making“, what is unquestionable bearing in mind the abovementioned differences between the conception and its interpretation. As no universal definition of democracy exists and this study focuses on the form of governance thus here Scott (2004) can be evidently referred to saying that the most popular definition is “governance for people, by people, according to people“.

### **Participatory democracy versus representative democracy**

Prior to discussions on the theoretical aspect of democratic governance the two abovementioned trends of democracy most important analysing the phenomenon of participation are going to be discussed. A particular understanding of these two types is necessary identifying and perceiving the importance of participation (Brenneis, 1990).

As “in general participation has been acknowledged by theorists as a basic element necessary for the establishment of democracy“ (Parada, 2005), thus this section focuses on *participatory* democracy, which “historically has been functioning as a social value itself therefore it serves as an ideal model or moral standard by which the schemes of social decision-making processes can be evaluated (Dachler, Wilpert, 1978) and *representative* democracy as the unavoidable reality. However, it should be stressed that, according to Urbinati (2000), “participation and representation are not alternative forms of democracy“, instead of that they are related forms and make up a continuous sequence of political actions in modern democracies (Meikle-Yaw, 2006). In this context “long-standing debates continue between democratic elitists (in other sources “competitive elitism“ (Held, 2002) repre-

sented by such writers as Schumpeter, Weber, Berelson, Dahl, Sartori, and others, who represent more participatory democracy forms, such as Mill, Cole or quite contemporary Pateman (Brenneis, 1990; Gaventa, 2006; Held, 2002).

Lauber, Knuth (2000) are concrete: “in case of *representative* democracy citizens participate in governance electing leaders. Those elected make all decisions and are engaged in governance. *Representative* democracy requires actions from individuals“. Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens (1997) note that *representative* democracy integrates four main features: regular independent and fair elections; general suffrage; accountability of state governance bodies to elected representatives; and effective guarantees for the expression and association of freedom as well as protection against uncontrolled actions of the state“ (Meikle-Yaw, 2006). The only thing required from public participation is voting in elections. Democracy is equalled to competition among the leaders for votes so that the leader, who represents lethargic masses and public will, was elected (Brenneis, 1990). Stanbury, Fulton (1988) in Brenneis (1990) discussing *participatory* democracy affirm that “it was created as a response to a missing modern system of representation in developing society, when we are talking about democracy a need of representatives is noted, meanwhile power concentration in the hands of a minority is dangerous. Participation in voting restriction and lack of accountability between elections are the main reasons for public participation“. “*Participatory* democracy needs actions by citizens to cooperate with other citizens building a better society“ (Lauber, Knuth, 2000). The most important definition of *participation* is involved citizens. Bachrach, Botwinick (1992) cit. in Meikle-Yaw (2006) maintain that the power of *participatory* democracy is that people participate in political processes and become more informed what helps them to reach new levels of participation and knowing. *Participatory* democracy means that citizens look for frequent consultations on those issues which affect their life (Meikle-Yaw, 2006). “Such democracy is not a mere set of rules, procedures or institutional frames and can not be “reduced“ to a certain type of competition among parties although it is important. It is rather a process, which helps citizens to strengthen their opportunities to control decisions concerning their lives and such democracy is also being created (Gaventa, 2006). “The theory of *participatory* democracy has been developed on a basis that individuals and institutions can not be isolated from each other“ (Pateman, 1970, cit. in Brenneis, 1990). In this theory, in contrast to the theory of *representative* democracy, public participation is understood as a vitally important guarantee of power stability although direct comprehensive participation is also criticised because of the size of modern parts (e.g. city) of local governance. Thus “the best democracy we may look forward to and, of course, the only practical form of democracy is representative democracy“ (Sisk, 2001). However, the authors of the paper are more inclined to favour a half-way approach which is being put into practice in Lithuania when “*representative* democracy requires and is enforced by *participatory* democracy“ (Stewart, 1996 cit. in Blaug, 2002).

## Democracy and governance

We begin this section citing Parada (2005), whose idea confirms the necessity to analyse governance aspect in this context: “a question arises how much of participation should be so that governance was democratic? This question finally brings us back to democracy as a form of governance“. In many modern democracies governance is evidently inadequate to challenges in the economy or politics“ (Larry, 2002). The concept of governance itself is used in very different contexts. Classification proposed by Hirst (2000) can help us to understand those differences (Holford, Edirisingha, 2000):

1. *Economic development and political system* (support by international institutions and western governances of “right governance“ component in effective economic modernization. “Right governance“ means establishment of political frames, conditions for effective economic activities...)
2. *International institutions* (when it was understood in a wide context that certain problems can not be under control or managed by one state (environment protection, global trade, international financial markets...), then the establishment of the European Union can be considered as building up a new form of governance.
3. *Management of corporations* (companies where management and ownership are separated) (Sternberg, 1998). They are corporation functioning methods, capital and managers are directed towards the shareholders‘ goal achievement.
4. *Reforms in the management of public institutions* (linked to reforms in new public management since the 1980s). Application of business-oriented management techniques and related to them structural changes were presented as essential striving for the quality and effectiveness of public services. That generated a new model of public services separated from public administration.
5. *Civil society and non-governmental sector*. Involvement of citizens and representatives of non-governmental organisations in the matters concerning individuals and communities (this meaning of governance is related to coordinated activities of nets, partnerships or advisory forums). This form of social governance has been gaining popularity in cities, regions or economy sectors and includes different participants: trade unions, trade associations, non-governmental organisations, representatives of local governance, social entrepreneurs, community groups (Holford, Edirisingha, 2000).

Others define governance as “changes in governance conceptions taking into consideration a new process of governance or simply changing conditions of governance or as a new method which makes influence on society (Rhodes, 1996, cit. in Gaventa, Valderrama, 1999). Although in recent years the concept of governance has become very popular some doubts remain what this term means. According to Holford, Edirisingha (2000), the abovementioned concept “simply imparts ideological

preferences to “minor power“. Meanwhile Ansell (2000, cit. in Holford, Edirisingha, 2000) characterises new forms of governance as “the policy of nets“. He maintains that it is a characteristic form of modern policy where “states have gained ground in society and are implementing its tasks via nets and social associations“ (Holford, Edirisingha, 2000). “Rhodes (1996) cit. in Davis (2002) considers governance to be a more specific term attributable to self-regulating inter-organisational nets. In this way the main challenge for governments is diplomacy, i.e. negotiations and agreements on goals and tasks. The discourse is about net management“ (Davis, 2002). “In the United Nations paradigm *governance* is defined as exercise of political, economic and administrative authority running state affairs. They are complicated mechanisms, processes and relations and those institutions, through which citizens and groups demonstrate their interests and exercise their rights and duties, change differences in them. Private sector and civil public organisations play a very important role helping citizens to voice their interests and exercise their rights. The role of authority is not only political governance but also effective interaction with the private sector and civil public organisations striving for public goals and tasks“ (Rondinelli, 2006). The essence of governance is to foster interaction among all participants in support of people-oriented development“ (Cheema, 2006). The governance concept used in any context should be participatory taking into consideration the abovementioned fact that participation is also multi-facet (understood as participation in politics, projects, organisations/work, also as social participation). Thus governance should facilitate participation and collaboration. It is defined in the United Nations Development Programme by the term “right governance“, which is understood as the reform supported by the World Bank and includes such characteristics as wide-spread participation of all citizens, legitimate decision-making, transparency in the activities of state institutions, satisfaction of citizens needs and aspirations, civic equality, effective distribution of resources, public responsibility and strive of a strategic vision for development planning (Rondinelli, 2006). “Basically *participation* is necessary for *right governance* as it improves information flows, accountability and foreseen processes and gives voice to those who are directly affected by *public policy* (Sisk, 2001). Getting back to the context of this section “democracy and *right governance* are inter-related: as they are being developed together then resources are used to improve public goods“ (Larry, 2002). *Right governance* still dwells on the question how society can act in order to ensure equal opportunities or equality (social and economic justice) of all citizens. In the context of this study the authors are concerned with the implementation of democratic values at the local level, in city governance decision-making processes. Thereby we are coming to theories that deal with different authority-society interactions in the context of city governance.

## Theoretical basis of local governance

A new worldwide perception has predominated that local governance is something more than city administra-

tion collecting taxes and providing such main services as basic education, clean water supply, water treatment, transport or housing. Instead, local democracy is understood as the basis for higher quality and more solid democracy (Sisk, 2001). Nowadays city “institutions fail satisfying needs generated by city communities thus if local governance could be defined as decision-making directed towards local citizens’ life quality protection then the local authority is the only interested party involved (Wolman, Goldsmith, 1992 cit. in Montiel, Barten, 1999). In this context a discourse focuses on “the level of democracy, at which a citizen has an effective opportunity to participate actively and directly in decision-making processes concerning the whole community” (Sisk, 2001). Thereby a discourse is about civic participation in city decision-making processes whether it might be developmental projects or simply a meeting on street lightening or opening a new school. According to Day (1997) cit. in Uddin (2004), “formal integration of public participation into city development projects has been recorded since the beginning of the 1960s”. According to de Tocqueville (1966), even historically citizens’ access to political and social systems and participation in them is implemented via local authorities, local organisations and voluntary associations (Gittell, 1998).

“The essence of city governance is hidden in an organised expression of different local interests and active participation running local affairs partly excelling and partly augmenting the traditional forms of representatives’ (local) authorities bearing in mind the opportunities of local revival” (Maloutas, Malouta, 2004). The concept of local governance which includes local authorities and public participation is a more radical and active conception than the conception of simple civic participation. It is linked to city problems solution means via leadership, such as collaboration and participation relying on interrelations among administrative institutions (national organisation), enterprises (the sphere of capital) and civic groups (members of civic communities) (Park, 2003). Local governance includes transfer of interests and power to local communities and simultaneously power sharing means not only access to resources, firstly funds, but also to information (Montiel, Barten, 1999).

Several important paradigms exist attempting to explain the ways city governance structures develop solving the problems of collective actions (Chenoweth, 2004). Researches on the issue are limited by the analysis of different researches of cities. Therefore “in the city policy with a global potential such theories that perfectly “travel” are necessary: pluralism, elite or regime theories; they have immensely affected city policy studies (Holford, Edirisingha, 2000; Chenoweth, 2004; Nelson, 2004; de Socio, 2005) and can serve as a starting position discussing authority relations, city governance or development. Moreover, it should be mentioned that part of the authors under discussion name the abovementioned theories as “city policy” theories (city policy is the research of authority solving the problems of collective actions at the local level) (Chenoweth, 2004; de Socio, 2005), others – as “city governance” theories (Nelson, 2004) depending on the context (direction), although they all with one accord use them in discourses on governance para-

digms (Davis, 2002); it is understandable bearing in mind “the empirical realia of globalisation, development and international security which inter-relate in social researches [...]” (Chenoweth, 2004). Despite their drawbacks the abovementioned theories are a useful instrument to be used evaluating situations and developing proper scenarios in response to these situations.

**Elite theory.** The elite theory is based on the hierarchical conception of society and maintains that very powerful groups of people exercise disproportional influence on policy formation (Harding 1995 cit. in de Socio, 2005). This “very powerful group of people” is *the ruling elite* and makes influence on the municipality policy on the “backstage” (de Socio, 2005). The power of the local authority is concentrated in the hands of the privileged minority. “The roots of the elite authority can be its personal wealth-being, political position, employment position or social class. The researches carried out by Robert and Helen Lynd (1937) were the first to prove that the economic elite may rule society” (Nelson, 2004). Hunter (1953) cit. in de Socio (2005) was the first to apply the *elite theory* in the city policy.

**Pluralistic theory.** The pluralistic theory was firstly developed as a reaction to the elite theory (Judge 1995) and its criticism (Harding 1995), as de Socio (2005) maintains. In this theory power decentralisation is considered to be a desirable component of representative democracies (Dahl, 1965 cit. in de Socio, 2005). People or groups of people are inclined to make political commitments in problem areas within their interest and/or competence. For example, people with special needs might probably deal with the problems concerning them rather than the problems concerning stray cats (unless they are the disabled who love cats). Separation of decision-making processes and unpredictable results of negotiation processes between rival groups helps to bind people and groups to democratic processes (de Socio, 2005). Robert Dahl in his work “Who Governs?” (1961) is of an opinion that actions are constructive in the pluralistic decision-making theory, [...] which is based on the influence of group power on authority (Nelson, 2004). In his original case analysis of New Heaven (State of Connecticut) Dahl (1961) demonstrates the benefit of the city policy pluralistic theory illustrating how political influence or power is divided among groups with rival interests (de Socio, 2005). Then the result is the process of municipal governance and city development, which seems to be chaotic but in fact shows “the wonder of democracy” in terms that political control is effectively revealed by a necessity to react to a big group of electors. Thus, society acting via interest groups firstly influences decision-making processes.

**Urban regime theory.** It is one of the most popular city policy paradigms to be used for city studies (Chenoweth, 2004). “The rise of the theory (Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989) has a special influence on debates on governance. The regime theory is a modern, neo-pluralistic conception of local nets with the focus on state-market relations in the USA city policy” (Davis, 2002). This theory maintains that the power of governance depends on inter-

organisational collaboration on agreed goals in such cities as Dallas (Elkin, 1987) or Atlanta (Stone, 1989); the structure of the city policy reflects to the city business elite (Davis, 2002). “The urban regime theory of the greatest influence that synthesises the pluralism and the elite theories was first introduced in research on Atlanta was presented by Stone (1989). Stone has defined that regimes are “non-formal agreements through which public individuals/institutions and private interests function together in order to make and implement governance decisions“ (Nelson, 2004). “The perspective of regimes contributed to the city policy because it stressed a bilateral dependence of business and authority developing power relations (Chenoweth, 2004). Moreover, it also stresses collaboration of the local business elites with the opposing powers (and vice versa) designing long-term city development strategies despite the changes of political parties in municipality governance (de Socio, 2005). Contrary to the elite theory the regime theory assumes that local public servants naturally represent different society members and interests and genuinely makes decisions reacting to economic and social crises on behalf of their electors.

## Conclusions

Democracy in general is a form of governance based on collective decisions. Because governance is a decision-making process then a link among decision-making, governance and democracy is evident.

Democracy is used in many contexts, both political and non-political. The phenomenon of public participation is also multi-sided and has been analysed and researched by several fields of science therefore analysis of the theories of democracy is necessary as the basis for further and deeper studies on public participation.

Although democracy has spread wider than ever before, different ratings and researches diagnose its critical situation what influences public participation itself and the relevance of studies on this phenomenon. And on the contrary public participation (e.g. low political activity) evidences dissatisfaction with democracy as a form of governance.

In the context of a variety of democracy conceptions no doubts arise that participation is most important. However, when cities grow (basis to implement local governance) it is increasingly more difficult to ensure different forms of public participation therefore the most relevant form of governance is when *representative* democracy requires and is supported by *participatory* democracy.

The conception of governance is also multi-sided but as the present study focuses on interrelations among democracy, governance and participation, the conception of governance used in any context should be participatory taking into consideration the abovementioned fact that participation is also multi-sided (participation in politics, projects, organisations/work as well as social participation). Thus governance should facilitate participation and collaboration and talking about local governance in particular there where participation is put into practice.

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## Visuomenės dalyvavimas miesto valdymo sprendimų priėmimo: teorinė priega

Santrauka

Nepaisant bendro visuomenės dalyvavimo priimančių sprendimus pripažinimo, nėra visiškai aišku, ką reiškia ši sąvoka ir kaip ją galima atskirti nuo susijusių konstruktyvų. Visuomenės dalyvavimas turi skirtingas dimensijas, todėl, norint „nuodugnai suprasti dalyvavimą, jį reikia analizuoti kaip daugiamačią fenomeną, iš skirtingų perspektyvų“ (Parada, 2005). Dėl to galima stebėti koncepcijų daugėjimą ir teorinių požiūrių skirtingumą. Dalyvavimo praktika, į politiką orientuotos diskusijos ir moksliniai tyrinėjimai peržengia bet kurios socialinių mokslų disciplinos ribas, o tai paaiškina, kodėl norint atlikti išsamią visuomenės dalyvavimo miesto valdymo sprendimų priėmimo analizę, reikia pasitelkti ne vienos mokslo krypties literatūrą.

*Kadangi visuomenės dalyvavimo teorija* yra susijusi su teoriniais kitų sričių darbais, šiame tyrime apsiribojama vienos krypties, kuri artėja prie *politinės demokratijos* teorijų, kaip pagrindu tolesnei visuomenės dalyvavimo analizei, siekiant nustatyti pagrindinius visuomenės dalyvavimo principus. Taigi siekiama atlikti visuomenės dalyvavimo priimančių miestų valdymo sprendimų analizę vienos iš šių fenomenų aiškinančių – *demokratijos teorijų* – kontekste naudojant literatūros analizės, sisteminimo, lyginimo metodus. Tam pasitelkiami tokie autoriai kaip Dachler, Wilpert (1978), Holford, Edirisingha (2000), Sisk (2001), Larry (2002), Held (2002), Blaug (2002), Farrelly (2004), Landman (2005), Gaventa (1999, 2006) ir kt. bei minėtų autorių cituojami Gallie (1956), Lipset (1959), Dahl (1961, 1965), Schumpeter (1966), Pateman 1970, Hunter (1953) ir kt.

Analizė pradeda nuo bendro demokratijos konteksto aiškinimo, kaip vienintelio kelio dabartinėmis sąlygomis, nes ji geriausiai iš visų alternatyvų leidžia siekti vienos ar daugiau iš šių pamatinių vertybių arba gėrybių: politinės lygybės, laisvės, moralinės sąvokos, bendro intereso, sąžiningo moralinio kompromiso, įpareigojančių sprendimų, kuriais atsižvelgiama į visų interesus, visuomenės naudos, poreikių patenkinimo, veiksmingų sprendimų“ (Held, 2002). Nors šiame tyrime nepretenduojama atlikti išsamią demokratijos ar jos teorijų analizę, tačiau siekiama išskirti tai, kas sieja demokratiją ir dalyvavimą, nes dalyvavimas yra vienas dažniausių indikatorių demokratijos veiksmingumui nusakyti. Blaug (2002) teigia, kad „viena vertus, demokratija pasireiškia kaip sprendimų priėmimo metodas (Schumpeter, 1966) ir kaip politinių institucijų grupė, kuri įgyvendina skirtingu mastu tam tikrus pagrindinius demokratijos principus (Dahl, 1989; Beetham, 1999). Kita vertus, matome antikikinės demokratijos sąvokos kaip pilietinės vertybės, kaip gyvenimo būdo, kaip tarpusavio elgesio būdo, orientuoto į tai, kas gerai visiems, kitaip tariant, demokratijos kaip moralinio idealo, atgimimą (Arendt, 1973; Carter, 1973; Putnam, 1992)“ (Blaug, 2002). Tačiau vienas iš labiausių paplitusių skirtumų, arba kitų autorių įvardijamų kaip tipų, kuris ypač svarbus šio tyrimo kontekste, – tai skirtumas tarp atstovaujamosios (arba liberaliosios) ir tiesioginės demokratijos (arba dalyvaujamosios) (Brenneis, 1990; Mansbridge, 1980 cit. pas Blaug, 2002; Held, 2002). Bandant suprasti demokratijos koncepcijų įvairovę, kaip teigia Blaug (2002), „neabejojama, kad dalyvavimas yra svarbiausias. Būtent kalbant apie dalyvavimą sužlunga akivaizdus sutarimas dėl demokratijos vertybių“ (Blaug, 2002).

Toliau analizė tęsiama remiantis Landman (2005) idėja, „kad demokratija yra valdymo forma, paremta tam tikro laipsnio populiarus suverenumo ir kolektyvinio sprendimų priėmimo“. Kadangi „bendrai dalyvavimas užsitaravo teoretikų pripažinimą kaip esminis elementas, kuris reikalingas kuriant demokratiją“ (Parada, 2005), tai apie *dalyvavimo demokratiją kalbama kaip apie* „istoriškai funkcionavusią kaip socialinę vertybę savaime, todėl (ji) yra idealus modelis arba moralinis standartas, pagal kurį gali būti įvertintos socialinės sprendimų priėmimo schemas (Dachler, Wilpert, 1978), bei apie *atstovaujamąją* demokratiją, kaip neišvengiamą realybę. Tačiau čia pat norime pabrėžti, kad, anot Urbinati (2000), „dalyvavimas ir atstovavimas nėra alternatyvios demokratijos formos“, tai yra susijusios formos, sudarančios nepertraukiamą politinių veiksmų seką šiuolaikinėse demokratijose (Meikle-Yaw, 2006). Svarbiausias *dalyvavimo* demokratijos apibūdinimas yra įtraukti piliečiai. „Teorija apie *dalyvavimo* demokratiją yra sukurta tokiu pagrindu, kad individai ir institucijos negali būti izoliuoti vienas nuo kito“ (Pateman, 1970; Brenneis, 1990). Šioje teorijoje, priešingai nei *atstovaujamosios* demokratijos teorijoje, visuomenės dalyvavimas suprantamas kaip gyvybiškai svarbus valdžios stabilumo garantas, nors tiesioginis visiškasis dalyvavimas taip pat yra kritikuojamas dėl šiuolaik-

kinių vietos valdymo dalių (pvz., miestų) dydžio. Taigi „geriausia demokratija, kokios galime tikėtis, ir žinoma, vienintelė praktinė demokratijos forma, yra atstovaujamoji“ (Sisk, 2001). Tačiau straipsnio autoriai labiau linkę pritarti kompromisiniam požiūriui, kuris realizuojamas ir Lietuvoje, kai „atstovaujamoji demokratija reikalauja ir yra stipriama dalyvavimo demokratijos“ (Stewart, 1996; Blaug, 2002). Šalia demokratijos koncepcijų/formų analizės taip pat inkorporuojamas ir valdymo konceptas.

Daugelyje naujų demokratijų valdymas yra tiesiog neadekvatus kylantiems iššūkiams ekonomikoje ar politikoje“ (Larry, 2002). Pats valdymo (angl. governance) konceptas vartojamas įvairiausiuose kontekstuose. Anot Holford, Edirisingha (2000), minėta sąvoka „tiesiog perteikia ideologines preferencijas „mažesnei valdžiai“. Tuo tarpu Ansell (2000, cit. pas Holford, Edirisingha, 2000) charakterizuoja naujas valdymo formas kaip „tinklų politiką“. Jis teigia, kad tai - būdinga moderniosios politikos forma, kurioje „valstybės yra įsivertinusios pačioje visuomenėje ir vykdo jos užduotis per tinklus bei socialines asociacijas“ (Holford, Edirisingha, 2000). „Rhodes (1996); Davis (2002) valdymą laiko taip pat gerokai specifiskesniu terminu, kuris priskiriamas prie savireguliuojančių tarporganizacinių tinklų. „Jungtinių Tautų paradigmoje valdymas apibrėžiamas kaip politinių, ekonominių ir administracinių įgaliojimų vykdymas, siekiant vadovauti šalių reikalams. Tai sudėtingi mechanizmai, procesai ir santykiai bei institucijos, per kuriuos piliečiai ir grupės išreiškia savo interesus, realizuoja savo teises bei įsipareigojimus, keičia savo skirtumus“ (Rondinelli, 2006). Valdymo esmė yra skatinti visų dalyvių sąveiką, siekiant remti į žmones orientuotą plėtrą“ (Cheema, 2006). Bet kuriame kontekste naudojama valdymo koncepcija turi būti dalyvaujanti, atsižvelgiant į faktą, kad dalyvavimas taip pat suprantamas įvairiapusiškai (ir kaip dalyvavimas politikoje, ir kaip dalyvavimas projektuose, ir kaip dalyvavimas organizacijoje/darbe, ir kaip socialinis dalyvavimas). Taigi valdymas turėtų būti toks, kuris tiesiog palengvintų dalyvavimą ir bendradarbiavimą. „Iš esmės dalyvavimas yra būtinas *geram valdymui*, kadangi jis pagerina informacijos srautą, atskaitomybę, numatytą procesą ir suteikia balsą tiems, ką tiesiogiai veikia viešoji politika (Sisk, 2001). Taigi vėl sugrįžtama prie vietos valdymo, kuriame dalyvavimas realizuojamas.

Visame pasaulyje vyrauja naujas supratimas - kad vietos valdymas yra daug daugiau negu miesto administracija, kuri renka mokesčius ir teikia būtinas paslaugas, tokias kaip pagrindinis išsilavinimas, švarus vanduo, kanalizacija, transportas arba aprūpinimas būstu.

Šiame kontekste kalbama apie „demokratijos lygmenį, kuriame pilietis turi efektyviausią galimybę aktyviai ir tiesiogiai dalyvauti sprendimuose, priimamuose visai visuomenei“ (Sisk, 2001). Pasak de Tocqueville (1966), net istoriškai piliečių priėjimas prie politinių ir socialinių sistemų ir dalyvavimas jose vyksta per vietinę vyriausybę, vietines organizacijas ir savanorių susivienijimus (Gittell, 1998). Vietinis valdymas apima įtakos ir galios perdavimą vietinėms bendruomenėms, bet tuo pačiu metu galios pasidalijimas reiškia, ne tik priėjimą prie išteklių, pirmiausia fondų, bet ir prie informacijos (Montiel, Barten, 1999). Keletas svarbių paradigimų egzistuoja siekiant paaiškinti kelius, kuriais miestų valdančios struktūros vystosi spręsdamos kolektyvinės veiklos problemas (Chenoweth, 2004). Šios srities tyrimai apriboti atskirų miestų tyrimo analizėmis. Todėl „miestų politikoje su globaliniu potencialu reikalingos tokios teorijos, kurios puikiai „keliauja“: pliuralizmas, elito teorija ar režimų teorija padarė didžiulę įtaką miestų politikos studijoms (Holford, Edirisingha, 2000; Chenoweth, 2004; Nelson, 2004; de Socio, 2005) ir gali būti kaip startinė pozicija diskutuojant galios santykius, miestų vadybą ar plėtrą. Nepaisant trūkumų, minėtos teorijos yra naudingas įrankis, kuriuo galima pasinaudoti vertinant situacijas ir kuriant tinkamus scenarijus atsakyti į tas situacijas. Taigi apibendrinant galima teigti, kad demokratija, bendrai paėmus, yra valdymo forma, paremta kolektyviniais sprendimais. O kadangi valdymas yra sprendimų priėmimas, tai sprendimų priėmimo, valdymo ir demokratijos ryšys – akivaizdus. Be to, kadangi „demokratija“ yra vartojama įvairiuose kontekstuose, tiek politiniuose, tiek ir nepolitiniuose. Visuomenės dalyvavimo fenomenas taip pat daugialypis, kurio aiškinime ir tyrimuose susikerta keletas mokslo šakų, todėl demokratijos teorijų analizė reikalinga lyg pagrindas tolimesnėms, gilesnėms visuomenės dalyvavimo studijoms. Valdymo koncepcija taip pat daugialypė, tačiau kadangi šiame tyrime svarbiausia ryšiai tarp demokratijos, valdymo ir dalyvavimo, tai bet kuriame kontekste naudojama valdymo koncepcija turi būti dalyvaujanti, atsižvelgiant į jau minėtą faktą, kad dalyvavimas taip pat suprantamas įvairiapusiškai (ir kaip dalyvavimas politikoje, ir kaip dalyvavimas projektuose, ir kaip dalyvavimas organizacijoje/darbe, ir kaip socialinis dalyvavimas). Taigi valdymas turėtų būti toks, kuris tiesiog palengvintų dalyvavimą ir bendradarbiavimą, ypač jei kalbame apie vietos valdymą, kur realizuojamas dalyvavimas.

Raktažodžiai: *miestų valdymas, visuomenės dalyvavimas, demokratija, demokratijos teorijos.*

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