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## Article

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e-Finanse: Financial Internet Quarterly

## Provided in Cooperation with:

University of Information Technology and Management, Rzeszów

*Suggested Citation:* Filipiak, Beata Zofia; Dylewski, Marek (2018) : A real or a marginal trend in participatory budgets in local governments, e-Finanse: Financial Internet Quarterly, ISSN 1734-039X, Sciendo, Warsaw, Vol. 14, Iss. 4, pp. 12-21, <https://doi.org/10.2478/fiqf-2018-0024>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/266793>

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## A REAL OR A MARGINAL TREND IN PARTICIPATORY BUDGETS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

BEATA ZOFIA FILIPIAK<sup>1</sup>, MAREK DYLEWSKI<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The purpose of the article is analysis of participatory budgets as a tool for shaping decisions of local communities on the use of public funds. The authors ask the question of whether the current practice of using the participatory budget is actually a growing trend in local government finances or, after the initial euphoria resulting from participation, society ceased to notice the real possibilities of influencing the directions of public expenditures as an opportunity to legislate public policies implemented. It is expected that the conducted research will allow us to evaluate the participatory budget and indicate whether this tool practically acts as a stimulus for changes in the scope of tasks under public policies. The authors analyzed and evaluated the announced competitions for projects as part of the procedure for elaborating participatory budgeting for selected LGUs. Then, they carried out an in-depth analysis of the data used to assess real social participation in the process of establishing social policies.

**JEL classification:** H70, H71, H72

**Keywords:** public finances, public policies, budget, participation

Received: 15.03.2018

Accepted: 20.10.2018

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## INTRODUCTION

Social and economic changes of recent decades related mainly to such phenomena as globalization, the information revolution or market expansion, have placed the state and the self-government in need of changing the existing principles, rules and concepts of public policies. Subsequent reforms or modifications have been made of the existing paradigms in the management of public affairs, or the establishment of public policies aimed at improving the civil service system, the level of satisfaction and public confidence in public authorities or increasing the efficiency of the allocation of public funds. Of particular importance in recent years is the concept of “*governance*”, which is an expression of a kind of shifting of accents from Weberian administration or governing by legitimate representatives of society (which is characteristic of the concept of “*new public management*”) to “*governance*” (co-management) reflects the unmistakable direction of development of public entities. Co-management based on social participation is characterized by the fact that this system may change depending on the relations between these various entities in terms of the directions of partnership.

The aim of the study is to analyze participatory budgets as a tool for shaping decisions of local communities on the use of public funds. The authors ask the question of whether the current practice of using the participatory budget is actually a growing trend in local government finances or, after the initial euphoria resulting from participation, society has ceased to notice real possibilities of influencing the directions of public expenditure as an opportunity to legislate implemented public policies.

## THE PARTICIPATORY BUDGET AS A RESULT OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE APPROACH TO MAKING PUBLIC POLICIES

The new public management has had an overwhelming influence on the shape of administration in many countries, not only due to the coherence of this concept with the prevailing trend in the last decades of the twentieth century to glorify the market and market solutions in almost every area of state policy. (Sześciło, 2014) Regardless of the concept or the dominant state doctrine, it is almost indisputable that in the management

of public affairs the administrative apparatus plays an important role, by means of which the state implements its policy. Both the approach represented by Fayol based on the performance of administrative functions (Fayol, 1926), as well as the Weberian bureaucratic model of the organization, based on legal and legitimate authority (Weber, 2002) in the face of economic and social changes of recent decades ceased to not only work, but required modification.

The literature on the subject pointed out that the approach to managing public affairs based on the Fayol and Weber concept is necessary to ensure transparent and democratic governance (Gay 2005). It was also pointed out that the manner of organizing the office as well as the qualifications and competences of impartial officials allowed us to achieve the highest degree of efficiency (Blau, 2005; Siwińska – Gorzelak, 2012). The indicated concept of Public Administration (PA) also required modification because it was shown that the officials seek to maximize their own individual interests, together with the politicians of interest groups (Stoker, 1997).

On the wave of criticism in the 1980s, concepts of the so-called New Public Management (New Public Management, NPM) and New Public Administration (NPA) were created. The NPM concept assumes that the goal of public organizations is to provide services of the highest standard in the most effective manner. The main determinants of changes in the existing paradigm (Hood, 1991) were:

- 1) professional management, strengthening of the management powers in the public sector,
- 2) specification of standards and performance measurement indicators,
- 3) control of results,
- 4) division of institutions - independence, financial autonomy,
- 5) promoting competitiveness,
- 6) use of concepts and management techniques from the private sector,
- 7) rationalization of expenses.

The NPM concept, despite the fact that it was aimed at increasing the efficiency of public policy implementation (including the particular importance attributed to the assessment of the efficiency of spending public funds), including due to the failure to sufficiently take into account the complexity of the mechanisms of governance, roles and interests of all participants of

public policies (Osborn, 2010; Marks-Krzyszowska, 2016) as well as due to the excessive attribution of a positive role in the implementation of public policies of the market mechanism required modification.

The problem faced by people implementing public policy at the beginning of the 21st century concerned the question of the legitimacy of power, in particular the transition from democratic representative power to direct power. The paradigm shift has led to the development of new democratic mechanisms, thanks to which citizens have the opportunity to influence the policies and services provided by the authorities, especially the local ones. This concept is referred to as *governance* (Peter & Pierre, 1998) or New Public Governance (Osborne, 2006; Osborne, 2010), or *collaborative governance* (Ansell & Gash), which can be referred to as participative management. The assumptions of the new paradigm relate to:

- 1) creating a network of cooperation between public administration and citizens based on real partnership. Allowing for “mixing of private and public sector resources” (Peters & Pierre 1998), and the administration loses the role of the superior regulator of social relations, moving to the position of the coordinator of the efforts of many entities or the mediator in the relations between them,

- 2) changes in the perception of the role of the citizen - from the consumer to the stakeholder entering into dialogue with the administration about the directions of its operation, the shape of public policies and the manner of their implementation (Klijn & Koppenjan 2000),

- 3) direct involvement of citizens in the process of performing tasks under public policies. This process is formalized and consists in conducting a debate aimed at achieving a consensus. The subject of codecision is the formulation of public policy, the directions of modification of an already existing policy, as well as the ways of its implementation, or the definition of rules for the implementation of specific public programs or the management of the resources (Sześciło, 2014).

The current concept indicates that the process of co-management in the scope of creating and modifying public policies “is based on formalized rules, is initiated by a public institution, entities from outside the public sector participate in it, participation of private partners cannot be limited only to seeking their opinion on a given matter, but it consists in their inclusion in the decision-making process. Participants in the process try to make decisions

by consensus (even if it is not always possible in practice) (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

Participatory management is therefore a concept modifying the existing public management paradigm, which is based on two trends in the social sciences - organization sociology and network theory (Osborne, 2009). At the same time, it is a reflection of two political and social tendencies - the concept of liberal democracy and the idea of an “open government” emphasizing the need for transparent and partner relations of administration with citizens (Izdebski, 2007). One can also find in it the influence of the concept of deliberative democracy that places emphasis on making public decisions in terms of the substantive (argument-based) debate open to all interested parties (Osmani, 2007; Sześciło, 2014; Rybińska, 2018). And recent research indicates the special importance of transparency, transparency, quality and independence (including security) of the choices made. (Zheng & Schachter, 2017; Cantador, Cortés-Cediel, Fernandez & Harith, 2018). There is a real necessity of reducing the gap between political representatives and citizens, considering the latter capable of participating in political decisions when they receive due attention and all necessary resources. Thus, governments should admit that it is their duty to represent the population’s diffuse interests, preferences, and values. Citizens’ knowledge, experience and a look at public affairs are necessary resources for a better understanding of the problems or issues under discussion and the different interests involved (Ainsworth, Hardy & Harley, 2005; Coleman & Blumler, 2009; Shane, 2012; Van Dijk, 2012; Sampaio, 2016).

Analysis of the paradigm evolution requires reference to the realities in Poland. In Polish LGU attempts are made to involve citizens in the process of direct decision making, for which to spend part of the budget of the city or commune. The implementation of the new method of public funds management - through the participatory budget - has various grounds that are not necessarily related to the theory of good governance (Filipiak, 2017; Sobol, 2017). It is very difficult to talk about creating a network of cooperation between public administration and citizens based on real partnership, because, as the literature suggests, on the one hand, this is hampered by law or a sense of primacy (and not partnership) from LGU (Filipiak, 2017). On the other hand, it is very difficult for public authorities to give responsibility to society.



Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that there is no direct legal basis for using the participative budget in Polish law. The procedure of creating and adopting the LGU budget does not take into account the mechanisms of codecision by the inhabitants. There are no regulations that would oblige the executive body and the local self-government council to co-create the budget project with the participation of residents or consult important financial decisions with them, although no provision prohibits it. If the LGU executive body expresses the will to introduce a participatory budget, it usually implements it in accordance with art. 5a of the Local Government Act (Ustawa, 1990) indicating that consultations with residents may be carried out on issues important to the commune. Referring to other levels, the 3D Poviát Self-Government Act (Ustawa, 1998 a), and for self-governments of voivodships, the basis for conducting public consultations is provided in art. 10 a of the Act on the self-government of the voivodship (Ustawa, 1998 b). The participatory budget has grown to the level of the codecision process, not consultation, because from the point of view of the implementation of one of the basic objectives that the public body is guided by, the political objective, residents must be guaranteed that their will be respected, and the projects selected by them - funded in the next budget year. (Dolewka, 2015; Rybińska, 2018) However, it should be remembered that codecision is significantly limited by the amount of public funds.

Public authorities, including LGUs often treat the participatory budget as a kind of social security valve and an instrument to eliminate the negative moods of voters. A dissatisfied voter is an extremely demanding voter, very critical of public authority, and it is in the interest of local government decision makers to silence these emotions and to control public policies in a way that would further legitimize decision-making by the ruling political option. Available results of scientific research confirm, among other things the increase in the level of satisfaction and happiness of citizens involved in democratic selection processes with the use of direct democracy instruments to which the participatory budget belongs (Frey, 2010; Poniátowicz, 2014).

## RESEARCH MATERIAL AND METHODS

It is assumed that the participatory budget is not an important tool for participation - co-deciding of the

inhabitants in making decisions on the allocation of public funds. For this purpose, the analysis was subjected to:

- 1) establishment of competitions announced as part of the LGU's budget preparation procedure for the selection of projects covered by the participatory budget,
- 2) projects submitted to participatory budgets in the form of civic projects that were subject to public consultation (in quantitative terms).

Conducting the analysis of participatory budgets will allow for inference regarding the solution of the stated research problem: is the current practice of using the participatory budget a really developing trend in local government finances? Or, after the initial euphoria resulting from participation, has society ceased to notice the real possibilities of influencing the directions of public expenditure as an opportunity to legislate on implemented public policies. Thus, this determination will be the basis for inference about the size of citizens' co-governing.

Considering that public authorities are free to shape public policies, as well as to have decision-making independence, their law is of local nature and may vary between individual types of local government units as well as the units themselves. Public bodies, due to the size of the budget they have and the scope of tasks they take for the purposes of social participation, only distinguish a part of the budget. Therefore, it is very difficult to compare the size of the participative budget between local government units. Due to the type of the unit and the size of the budget, the City of Szczecin (performing tasks related to the statutory, both belonging to the commune and to the poviát<sup>1</sup>) was selected as well as the Commune of Police (an urban-rural commune, carrying out tasks related to the communes). Both local government units are in the process of implementing the participatory budget.

The choice of the City of Szczecin and the Commune of Police was dictated by the fact that these local government units compete with each other for both investors (small entrepreneurs, for whom the participatory budget is often associated with better quality of the business environment) and residents creating various programs for the local community. While the City of Szczecin has introduced and has been modifying the participatory budget for many years (when the participatory budget

1 The English nomenclature was normalized in 2010 by Główny Urząd Geodezji i Kartografii - Komisja Standaryzacji Nazw Geograficznych poza Granicami Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. The Office clearly specified that poviát in English is county.

was implemented in cities such as Lodz and Krakow, the participatory budget was realized in City of Szczecin too), in the Commune of Police, the participatory budget was forced as a result of the impact of the civic (participatory) budget in the City of Szczecin. In addition, while conducting studies on the participatory budget, the authors saw a framing effect between these units (Filipiak & Dylewski, 2018). This effect has not been studied in other cities such as Krakow, Lodz or Warsaw. In addition, the Commune of Police (and in particular the City of Police) directly borders with the City of Szczecin, which is an additional argument for analyzing which instruments the local government uses to influence the citizens. Earlier research conducted by the authors indicated that only the City of Szczecin and the Police Commune did not exchange experiences on the implementation of the participatory budget, which occurred in other units in Poland.

Considering the concentration on the features of objects (decisions) and on processes and meanings that are not verifiable experimentally or quantifiable in terms of quantity, size, intensity or frequency, the qualitative research was based on observation using BACI analysis (Before-After, Control-Impact). For the purpose of the analysis, data published in the Public Information Bulletin were used. In order to aggregate data, the basic methods of descriptive statistics were used (tabular description with the use of a series of distribution) and basic methods of index analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Considering that it is not possible for legal, organizational, social, psychological and mental reasons that the participatory budget should be based on a total bottom-up initiative, all civic initiatives in this area are more or less formal and always initiated within local policies of self-government authorities in the form of resolutions. Due to the nature of the public sector, it is not possible to have a loose and free way of implementing social participation. The main purpose of using the participatory budget is to introduce to the public policy the element of co-deciding on the directions of spending public funds. In addition, the use of social participation as an element of promotion of LGU authorities and articulating the willingness of authorities in power to share it with citizens becomes an important aspect. An apparent motive subordinate to the electoral cycle cannot

be ruled out. Table 1 presents the assumptions of the participatory budget in two LGUs: Szczecin, as a city with county rights, and the Commune of Police in 2016-2018.

General characteristics of participatory budgets<sup>2</sup> assumptions indicate the following elements:

1) The assumed amount allocated as a participatory budget is a small and insignificant part of the total expenditure budget of both LGUs. Despite significant differences in the size of the budget of both LGUs, the level of expenditure per capita shows no significant differences. In the City of Szczecin, the budget allocated for the participatory budget is several times higher than in the Commune of Police. However, it is clearly visible that in the smaller LGU, which is the Commune of Police, the level of participation within the participatory budget is relatively higher than in the City of Szczecin. Both the quota share in total expenditure and per capita clearly shows that it is almost twice as much as in the City of Szczecin. Despite the implementation of the participatory budget, it should be stated that in the case of more than 99% of the total expenditure of the budgets of both LGUs, the decision-making process takes place in the classic way, i.e. through elected representatives in the executive and executive body.

2) The participatory budget in both LGUs is a decision-making process involving the participation of residents not of a continuous character, and an individual one implemented only once a year, which is subordinated to the budget calendar. In this case, it can be stated that participation in co-governing by the residents may be typically accidental and depending on the terms adopted and the instruments used by the LGUs, there may be deliberate exclusion of citizens from the decision-making process. In this case, an important date may be adopted for the selection of tasks to be carried out within the participatory budget.

3) The analysis of the territorial range indicates that first applies the division of the planned sum into the specific territorial areas of LGUs (e.g. for village councils or districts), which means that there is basically an artificial division into even smaller communities within a given LGU. Only in Szczecin, after the experience from previous years, corrections were made and the possibility of choosing all-city tasks that every resident could vote for was isolated. Szczecin, as an LGU, slightly diversified this approach by giving residents the opportunity to choose

<sup>2</sup> In both LGUs it is called the Citizens' Budget implemented within the so-called social consultations.

**Table 1: Assumptions of the participatory budget against the background of basic information about the examined local government units**

The framework of participation in the Participatory Budget (PB)		Szczecin			Police		
Number of residents (2017)		404 400			41 543		
Budget LGU (2017 expenses in PLN)		2 462 868 725			212 601 832		
Expenses per capita (2017 in PLN)		6 090			5 118		

  

		PB Amount	Share in the city budget	Amount per capita	PB Amount	Share in the city budget	Amount per capita
The amount intended for PB and the share in the total budget (PLN)	2016	6.000.000	0,28%	14,83	1.000.000	0,57%	23,8
	2017	7.000.000	0,28%	17,30	1.000.000	0,48%	23,8
	2018	8.000.000	0,28%	19,76	1.000.000	0,47%	23,8
Territorial range of PB	2016	General urban tasks – 0 District tasks (4 districts) – 4 x 1.500.000			City of Police - 750.000 Villages (12) - 250.000		
	2017	General urban tasks – 0 District tasks (4 districts) – 4 x 1.750.000			City of Police - 750.000 Villages (12) - 250.000		
	2018	General urban tasks – 2.400.000 District tasks (4 districts) – 4 x 1.400.000 1.120.000 – Big district tasks 140.000 – Small district tasks			City of Police - 750.000 Villages (12) - 250.000		
Expenses limit for a single PB project	2016	1.350.000			None		
	2017	2.100.000 - General urban tasks 980.000 – Big district tasks 122.500 – Small district tasks			None		
	2018	2.400.000 - General urban tasks 1.120.000 – Big district tasks 140.000 – Small district tasks			None		
PB tasks type	2016	Investment (property)			Current and investment (property)		
	2017	Investment (property)			Current and investment (property)		
	2018	Investment (property)			Current and investment (property)		

Source: Own study based on the BIP of the City of Szczecin and the Police Commune

tasks of a general nature. However, in the Commune of Police, the decision-making process is not limited to the place of direct residence, but it is possible for any resident to vote for any project.

4) Significant differences were noted in determining the maximum limits per unit task and the type of task that can be reported. The City of Szczecin set both maximum limits and narrowed the scope of tasks to investment only. There are no upper limits set in the Commune of Police (the limit is the upper amount of the planned funds for the participatory budget) and it is possible to carry out

both operational (current) and investment tasks. In the Commune of Police, as a result of social consultations, activities promoting the current quality of life of residents as well as those related to infrastructure are promoted. Thus, the authorities of the Commune of Police show their way of presenting information to the public that every idea improving the quality of life in the commune counts for them.

Table 2 presents the characteristics of the decision-making process within the participatory budget.

The following observations result from the analysis of



**Table 2: Decision making process in the selection of projects to be implemented under PB**

Szczecin	Police
<b>Definition of the legal framework and the subjective and objective scope of PB</b>	
Resolution of the decision-making body President's Ordinances	Resolution of the decision-making body Mayor's Ordinances
<b>Defining general and unitary limits for PB</b>	
Executive body - president	Executive body - mayor
<b>Reporting tasks to PB</b>	
Every resident of the city Unlimited number of applications Submissions based on the form	Min. 15 residents can submit one project Unlimited number of tasks Submissions based on the form
<b>Verification of submitted tasks</b>	
Formal verification - a designated office unit Substantive verification – appropriate office units List of tasks to vote – Opinion Team: representatives of residents (8), office employees (1), councilors (4), representative of NGOs (4).	Team Called for PB consultations: office employees, co-councilors, representative of NGOs (1), whose tasks are: Formal verification Substantive verification in terms of the possibility of task completion Opinion of the verification team
<b>Vote</b>	
Electronic and paper form	Electronic and paper form
<b>Selection of tasks to be carried out under PB</b>	
List of tasks recommended for implementation with the highest number of points up to the limit of funds	List of tasks recommended for implementation with the highest number of points up to the limit of funds
<b>Incorporation of selected PB tasks into the budget</b>	
Recognition of tasks in the draft budget The final decision of the decision-making body	Recognition of tasks in the draft budget The final decision of the decision-making body
<b>Implementation of tasks</b>	
Standard procedures for budget implementation	Standard procedures for budget implementation
<b>Evaluation of tasks</b>	
Evaluation of the PB consulting process	Report on the implementation of PB

*Source: Own study based on BIP of Szczecin and Police*

the way the problem is presented in each of the analyzed local government units and the two occurring decision-making processes within the participatory budget in the examined local government units:

1) The legislative framework of the participatory budget is defined by the constituting and executive bodies in the cases of both LGUs. This results in the fundamental influence of local government units on the way they affect the decision-making process, the scope and nature of the projects submitted. This is also due to the specificity of local government units and the formal nature of the functioning of the public sector in general.

2) The President (Szczecin) or the Mayor (Police) determine the amounts to be allocated as part of the participatory budget, which is understandable due to

the fact that the project initiative and budget changes belong to the executive body. It should be added that consultations take place each time, but they are formalized and the actual participation of residents is low.

3) Completely different rules apply when submitting projects to a participatory budget. In the City of Szczecin, every resident can submit any number of projects. On the other hand, in the Commune of Police, this already requires the support of at least 15 inhabitants, which forces a more organized way of acting for residents than in the case of Szczecin. An advantage of the Police Commune model is the demonstration of a minimum level of demonstrating the collective character of meeting social needs in the case of a notified project.

4) Verification of submitted tasks / projects is formal



and substantive in both LGUs. Differences occur in the construction of review teams. In Szczecin, the share of administrative factors and representatives of the authorities of local government units is much smaller, and the larger one is social. In the Commune of Police, it is quite the opposite - the share of the social factor is a trace level, and the decisive share of administrative and representatives of authority factors is very significant.

5) The voting method in both LGUs is similar. Paper and electronic forms are acceptable. The analysis of the conducted voting shows that the electronic form was dominant. The point here is that without access to electronic tools it would be doubtful if the idea of a participatory budget would be successful especially in those LGUs that have a distributed nature and high surface area. It can be said with a high probability that the effect of basing the participatory budget only on the paper form would be a low level of interest in this form of participation in the decision-making process and allocation of public funds.

6) The standard procedures of a given LGU apply to the tasks selected for implementation, which are based on applicable law.

7) In different ways, LGUs have approached the process of evaluating the participatory budget. In the City of Szczecin, it includes the evaluation of the entire participatory budget process, while in the Commune of Police, the evaluation is limited to a standard report on the implementation of the budget by adding a report on the implementation of the participatory budget.

Detailed data on the participatory budget in

individual LGUs is presented in Table 3. The selected variables present both interest in the reporting of projects for financing from public funds and interest in voting, i.e. in a kind of mini election.

The conclusions that flow from the data presented in Table 1 do not indicate a growing interest in the participatory budget, and quite the opposite:

1) Both in the City of Szczecin and in the Commune of Police, the falling trend in the number of projects submitted to the participatory budget is noticeable. The reasons that can be seen are the drop in interest, but also the possible saturation with relatively small projects in individual districts or villages. In addition, previous years' experience verifies the approach to a critical look at proposed projects, and the level of formalization may also be a reason for the drop in interest in social participation and leaving it in a classic form, i.e. representatives in the executive and constituting organs of LGU.

2) The number of votes cast clearly confirms the decrease in the interest of residents in this form of participation in allocating public funds. The exception here is the City of Szczecin, where between 2016 and 2017 there was a significant increase in the number of votes cast. But confirmation of such a state of affairs is a clear drop in the number of voters. In the Commune of Police, this is a relatively drastic drop from just over 20% to less than 5%. The City of Szczecin is slightly better in this case. The number of voters drops from 8.7% to 6.5%.

3) Analysis of the number of votes cast for particular projects indicates that attractive and desirable projects are very popular among voters. On the other hand, you

**Table 3: Quantitative characterization of participatory budgets in the City of Szczecin and the Commune of Police in 2016-2018<sup>3</sup>**

	Police			Szczecin		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Number of projects	16	17	36	113	122	168
Number of votes cast	4 028	5 212	8 196	75 047	94 964	64 558
Average for the project	252	307	228	664	778	384
Max	547	957	1 211	4 260	5 160	2 420
Min	63	66	2	55	56	17
Number of the voting residents (valid votes)	2 037	2 699	8 390	26 378	34 067	34 990
Voters / residents in total	4,9%	6,5%	20,2%	6,5%	8,4%	8,7%
Number of residents	41 543	41 543	41 543	404 400	404 400	404 400

Source: Own analysis

<sup>3</sup> The selection of projects for 2018 has completed the phase of budget planning for 2018, in which selected projects will be implemented.

can see a harsh assessment of projects that are not accepted by members of the local community. For sure it is an effective verifier in the field of elimination of socially unacceptable projects. The positive dimension of the participatory budget is clearly visible here. There is a lack of such a verifier in the area of classic decision making in local government units. This is also the reason for such frequent errors in the public selection processes and the allocation of public funds.

## CONCLUSIONS

The conducted analysis confirms that the co-management based on the participatory budget is characterized by variability depending on the relations between the local self-government units and society. The question posed of whether the current practice of using the participatory budget a really developing trend in local government finances has been verified negatively. On the other hand, the question is whether after the initial euphoria resulting from participation, society has ceased to perceive real possibilities of influencing the directions of public expenditures as an opportunity to impact public policies implemented has been verified positively based on the carried out BACI analysis.

The analysis of the basic characteristics of the new paradigm in public management suggests that it is difficult to point to the fact that LGUs create permanent networks of cooperation with citizens and non-

governmental organizations based on real partnership. The administration does not lose the role of the superior regulator of social relations by moving to be the coordinator of the efforts of many entities or the mediator in relations between them, as the size of the participatory budget is negligible and depends on behavioral and legal factors (defining the scope of obligatory tasks). Thus, the thesis put forward by Peters & Pierre (1998) did not obtain complete confirmation.

Undoubtedly, the administration (public authorities) perceive the new role of a citizen, who enters into a dialogue about the directions of its activities (which proves the number of various projects), which confirms the thesis of Klijn & Koppenjan (2000).

It is difficult to confirm the direct involvement of citizens in the process of performing tasks under public policies. Social participation is insignificant (which is confirmed by BACI analysis), society shows a decrease in the interest of residents in this form of participation in allocating public funds. Partially (due to the marginal size of the participatory budget in relation to the total budget) it is possible to confirm the formulated paradigm by Sześciło (2014) that the object of codecision is to formulate directions for modification of already existing public policy, as the analysis of the number of votes cast for individual projects indicates that attractive and desirable projects by the local community are very popular among voters. On the other hand, you can see a harsh assessment of projects that are not accepted by members of the local community.

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