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“Development of Participatory Mechanisms at Local Level”

Implementation Guideline for Municipalities

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1. Introduction

This Guideline has been prepared under the *Local Administration Reform Project Phase III (LAR-III)* carried out by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), financed by the European Union, and the co-beneficiaries of which are the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization. The overall objective of the Project is to continue implementation support for the local administration reform process that was carried out between 2003-2013, thus ensuring effective, inclusive, accountable and participatory local governance in Türkiye in line with international standards.

Under the Project Component 2 “Capacity Building for New Metropolitan Municipality Model and Inclusive Local Governance Processes”, a current situation analysis was carried out for participatory local mechanisms with regard to developing and implementing a participatory local governance model.

This guideline has been prepared to make participatory mechanisms at local level more efficient as a result of these analytic studies. Furthermore, it intends to help improving participation at local level for readers.

2. About the Guideline

2.1. Content of the Guideline

This guideline generally intends to contribute to ensuring participation in decision making processes at local level and thus, allowing municipalities to realize more efficient policies and services. Specifically, it intends to serve as a “guiding” source which can be used by practitioner willing to initiate an effort in participation or improve an already initiated participatory effort.

In this framework, studies made so far and similar implementation guidelines on participation in Türkiye were reviewed and needs identified by pilot applications¹ under the project were evaluated while preparing the present guide. Therefore, this guideline has been prepared in a way to blend conceptual information about participation with practical information/experience.

The guideline also presents certain authentic approaches which are different from similar studies developed so far. As an example, the guideline emphasizes different stages of decision making processes while addressing the issue of “participation” and demonstrates how participation can be included in this stages and what kind of possible roles different stakeholders can undertake.

Furthermore, experience obtained from pilot practices performed under the project, lessons learned, multiple tips/practical information, current trends in and alternative approaches to participation in Europe were included in this study with an effort to make this study a more diversified one. Annexes at the end of the guideline were designed to support readers willing to improve their knowledge and experience and have an in-depth review of the topic.

2.2. Target Audience of the Guideline

The target audience of this guideline is:

- **Mayors** who care for citizen participation in decision making processes at local level and are willing to lead it,
- **Municipality directors and employees** who care for citizen participation in decision making processes at local level and are willing to realize it in service delivery,
- **Municipal councillors** who care for citizen participation in decision making processes at local level, consider it a responsibility for the people they represent and are willing to realize it in decision making stages of the municipality.

Furthermore, this guideline is open to use of **academicians, researchers, professionals** who are engaged in, do research about and are interested in different viewpoints about citizen participation in decision making processes at local level as well as national and international organizations which develop and implement projects in this regard.

¹ Under Project Component 2 “Capacity Building for New Metropolitan Municipality Model and Inclusive Local Governance Processes”, pilot practices were implemented in 6 Pilot cities (Balıkesir, Hatay, Malatya, Manisa, Tekirdağ and Trabzon) for developing participatory mechanisms at local level and participatory activities were performed for raising awareness and knowledge of local stakeholders in cooperation with Metropolitan Municipalities, District Municipalities, Provincial and District Citizens’ Assemblies in these pilot cities.

2.3. Use of the Guideline

The preparations of this guideline aimed for developing its content in a way to meet varying expectations of different readers and make it easy to reach and understand. In this framework, the following table was prepared for users willing to get use of this guideline with various expectations:

	Topics of Interest	Chapters
Conceptual Topics About Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is participation? Why is it important? How can it possibly benefit us?</i> 	Chapters 3.1, 3.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are levels of participation? Why is it important to learn about them?</i> 	Chapter 3.3.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What does “Participatory mechanism” mean? What are the main components of this mechanism?</i> 	Chapter 3.3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Which main policy papers and legal regulations exist on “participation” at local level in Türkiye?</i> 	Chapter 3.4
Realization of Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do we need to consider before embarking on a participation process?</i> 	Chapter 4.1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Which preliminary preparations are necessary before initiating a participatory process?</i> 	Chapter 4.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can we evaluate the participation capacity of our institution?</i> 	Chapters 4.2.4, 5.1.2, 5.2.2, 5.3.2, 5.4.2, 5.5.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can we plan a participation process?</i> 	Chapter 4.3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can we determine our stakeholders to take part in the participation process?</i> 	Chapter 4.3.4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can we determine the methodology and tools to be used in participation?</i> 	Chapter 4.3.5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What kind of a communication strategy can we adopt in participation?</i> 	Chapter 4.3.6
Participation in Different Decision Making Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can participation be realized in the Analysis and Planning stages? What possible roles can we play?</i> 	Chapter 5.1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can participation be realized in the Budgeting stage? What possible roles can we play?</i> 	Chapter 5.2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can participation be realized in the Approval stage? What possible roles can we play?</i> 	Chapter 5.3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can participation be realized in the Implementation stage? What possible roles can we play?</i> 	Chapter 5.4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can participation be realized in the Monitoring and Evaluation stages? What possible roles can we play?</i> 	Chapter 5.5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What kind of problems or challenges can occur during the process? What are the ways to overcome?</i> 	Chapters 5.1.5, 5.2.5, 5.3.5, 5.4.5, 5.5.5
<i>Learning from Different Experiences</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What kind of good practices are available in Türkiye and/or other countries?</i> 	Chapters 5.1.6, 5.2.6, 5.3.6, 5.4.6, 5.5.6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What lessons can we learn from the good practices in Türkiye and/or other countries?</i> 	Chapters 5.1.6, 5.2.6, 5.3.6, 5.4.6, 5.5.6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Current Situation of/Trends in participation in Europe</i> 	Chapter Annex-3

3. Conceptual Framework about Participation

3.1. What is participation?

Although there are many definitions for the term “participation”, in the broadest sense, it can be described as a process which stipulates receiving contribution from those who are to be affected by a decision to the said decision. As can be understood from this definition, participation is mainly involved with decision making processes, therefore, it can be used in different forms depending on the different levels of and different actors in decision making processes.

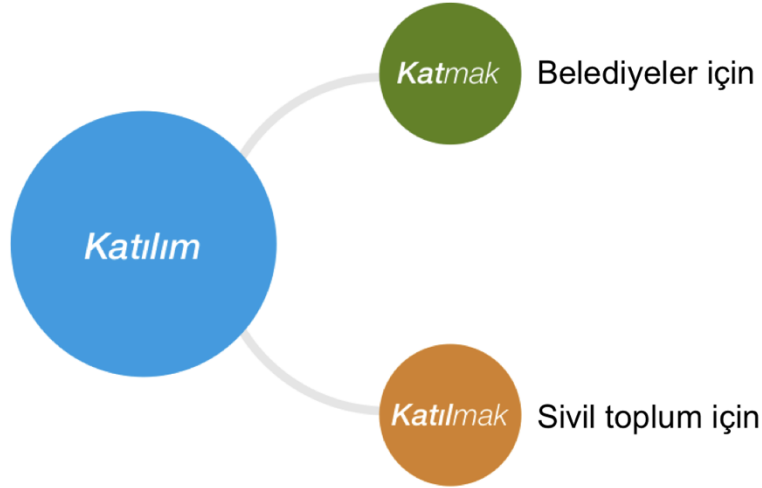
The most accentuated organizations while addressing participation in decision making processes are local administrations. The most important reason for this is that local administrations are the administrative units which are placed at the closest point to citizens to serve them (and therefore make decisions) within our public administration system. At this point, they are responsible for identifying on site and meeting the common needs of citizens at local level. Local administrations are also the units with the best advantage in communicating with citizens they serve. For this reason, they are considered the most suitable public administration units scale-wise to realize active participation in decision making mechanisms.

Considering studies on participation at local level in Türkiye, it can be seen that mainly citizens’ assemblies and organized groups such as NGOs come to mind as the parties affected by decisions (the civil side of participation) and disorganized groups such as citizen initiatives and platforms and citizens themselves do not sufficiently take part in participation processes. Therefore, the term “civil society participation”² is used in this guideline to cover all organized/disorganized groups to assure broader representation in decision making processes.

Another important point about the participation concept is that participation is a two-way action. For meaningful participation, local administrations at a decision making position (especially municipalities) should develop an attitude and understanding to **contribute**, and the party which is affected by these decisions, the civil society should be in an effort to **participate**. It can be really hard to obtain expected results from participation if one of the two ways of this action is missing or lacking. For this reason, it is important to pay attention to these two ways in all studies to be made on participation.

Graph 1. Two ways of participation

² Here, civil participation means not only persons with an identity card of the Republic of Türkiye, but also all townsmen who are not Turkish citizens but live in the respective locality such as migrants.



Katılım	Participation
Katmak	Engage
Belediyeler için	For municipalities
Katılmak	Participate
Sivil toplum için	For civil society

3.2. Why Participation?

Participation is one of the most fundamental principles of good governance. Likewise, it is known that while determining administrations' policies, better, concrete and sustainable outcomes are obtained when those who are to be directly affected are included in the process. Below are some considerations frequently mentioned about the benefits of participation at local level by its outcomes:

- *Better decision making/policy making and more effective implementation*
- *Improved transparency and accountability*
- *Improved service delivery*
- *Better meeting the needs of different groups*
- *Stronger democracy*

However, in addition to these outcomes, it can be possibly argued that participation has also certain benefits to its parties (local administrations and citizens). The following table outlines these benefits:

Table 1. Benefits of participation³

Vatandaşlar İçin	Yönetimler İçin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daha iyi bilgilendirme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vatandaşları daha iyi bilgilendirme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Görüş ve sorunlarını, uygun ve doğrudan yollardan karar alıcılara iletebilme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vatandaşlar ile daha yakın ilişkiler geliştirme ve onların görüş ve sorunlarından daha çok haberdar olma
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sosyal becerilerini ve diğerlerine karşı hoşgörülerini geliştirebilme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Çekişmeli ancak gerekli eylemler için daha geniş halk desteği kazanma
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yeni proje ve politikaların uygulanmasına anlamlı bir şekilde katılabilme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daha iyi politika ve projeler geliştirme, para tasarrufu yapma ve riskleri azaltma
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karar alıcıları duyarlı ve hesap verebilir hale getirebilme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Güvene dayalı toplumsal uyumu artırma.
For citizens	For administrations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be informed better 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform citizens better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can submit their opinions and problems to decision makers through suitable and direct ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop closer relations with citizens and be better informed about their opinions and problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can develop their social skills and tolerance towards others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain wider public support for disputed but necessary actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can meaningfully participate in the implementation of new projects and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop better policies and projects, save money and reduce risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can make decision makers responsive and accountable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase trust based social harmony

What happens without participation?

Studies on participation often focus on the benefits of participation, but another critical topic here is the question “What happens without participation?”. When citizen participation is not ensured in decisions taken at the local, local needs and problems cannot be fully and accurately identified, therefore, correct policies to meet these needs and problems cannot be developed. Similarly, when citizen participation is incomplete, sufficient public support cannot be assured for the policies developed by local administrations, therefore, it will be very hard for citizens to embrace these policies and ensure their continuity and sustainability.

3.3. What is a Participatory Mechanism? What Main Components does it have?

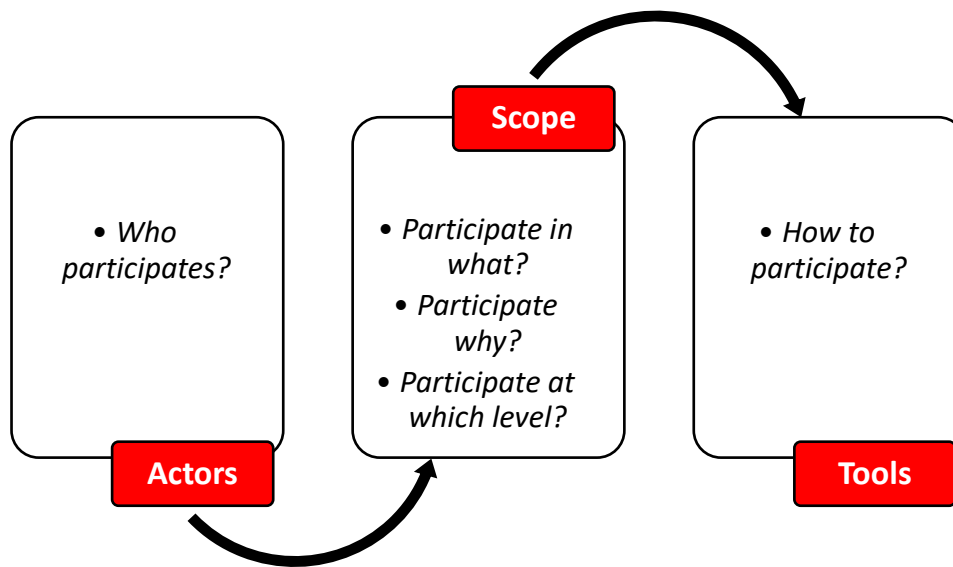
The term participation mechanisms is a frequently mentioned concept in studies on participation. It is hard to make a clear definition of the “participation mechanism” which is sometimes used intertwined

³ Source: Vatandaş Katılımını Arttırma Rehberi, LAR II Project - 2012

with participation tools, participation processes or participation stages, but it would be useful to revisit the definition of the term participation to see what this concept covers: A process which stipulates receiving (how?) contribution (what kind of contribution? at what level?) from those (who?) who are to be affected by a decision to the said decision.

As can be understood from the foregoing “participation” definition, it is necessary to designate 3 main factors while mentioning a participation mechanism: Actor, scope and tool. Therefore, the participation mechanism itself means this tripartite structure and the relationship among them.

Graph 2. Main Components of Participation Mechanism



3.3.1. Actors of Participation

One of the most important questions about participation in decision making processes is “Who will take part in the process?”. To answer this question, it is necessary to define the stakeholder concept in the first place. In its most common form, a stakeholder is any kind of individual, group or organization that can affect or be affected by any policy, process, project or programme.

Stakeholders are grouped into two: (1) Affecting stakeholders (those who have the power, knowledge and interest to affect a decision), and (2) Affected stakeholders (traditionally those who are subject to the outputs or outcomes of a decision making process while not being a part of the said process). Both of these groups have significant importance in the interactive decision making process.

In participation processes, the selection of stakeholders can vary depending on the topic, purpose and level of participation, level of effectiveness of the stakeholder and local socio-cultural conditions. The following list includes some of the stakeholder groups involved in local decision making processes:

- Townsman
- Citizens’ assembly
- Neighbourhood mukhtars
- Neighbourhood organizations (neighbourhood committees etc.)

- Local politicians (Municipal councillors, political party representatives etc.)
- Municipality (Mayor, senior management, department heads and employees)
- Provincial representatives of the central government or representatives of public institutions
- Representatives of civil society, NGOs, volunteers, disorganized groups, platforms without a legal personality, initiatives etc.)
- Representatives of stakeholder groups that require special attention (women, youth, elderly, disabled)
- Representatives of the business world (small and medium scale local entrepreneurs, large investors, unions)
- Chambers of profession
- Development agencies
- University representatives
- Experts or advisors

3.3.2. Scope of Participation

Another important aspect of any participation mechanism is the scope. While mentioning the scope of participation, the following 3 critical questions should be answered:

- *Participate in what? (Topic)*
- *Participate why? (Purpose and Targets)*
- *Participate at which level? (Level)*

Although the answers to these questions are largely interrelated, each of them needs to be addressed separately.

The topic to be handled in a participation process, in other words the “topic of participation” is a matter of selection in itself and should be clearly identified before the process begins. Directly associated with determining the topic of participation, the purpose and targets of participation should be identified too. The most important question here is “What is desired to be achieved with participation?”. Details about determining the topic, purpose and targets of participation are provided in Chapter 4.3.

Another important issue in the framework of the “scope of participation” is the level of participation. Civil society participation in decision making processes varies by the intensity of participation. Generally, the varying levels of participation from bottom to top are structured with the method called the “ladder of participation”⁴. Every step on the ladder represents a higher level of participation.

In the literature, the ladder of participation can be described in various forms including the level number, designation etc. In this guide, four levels are presented on the ladder of participation: information, consultation, involvement, partnership.

Graph 3. Ladder of Participation

⁴ The ladder of participation was first developed by S. Arnstein under “Journal of American Institute of Planners”, 35, 1969, 4, p. 216 – 224.



Increasing Participation Level	Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cooperation and partnership in decision making processes ✓ Shared roles and responsibilities ✓ Jointly agreed decisions
	Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mutual opinion exchange ✓ Two-way and generally in person communication ✓ Final decisions to be taken by the administration
	Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Two-way communication ✓ Public opinion ✓ Partial changes, the final decision is of the "administrators"
	Limited Participation Information Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Not very participatory ✓ One-way communication ✓ Informing the public ✓ Public's right to information

The highest level on the ladder of participation is the "transferred authorities". One of the well-known methods is the referendum/public voting. At this level, the decision making authority is transferred to the people. As this level of participation is not very common in Türkiye, this guideline will not address the level of "transferred authorities".

1. Information

Information is located on the lowest step of the ladder of participation and creates a foundation for all other steps, because information is necessary at every stage of participation. At this level of participation, citizens are informed about the decisions. At this level, citizens do not need to be involved in the decision making process or are not expected to interact. Therefore, there is very limited participation.

At the information level which largely employs one-way communication, there are two common approaches: (a) Citizens making a request or an initiative to be informed (e.g. sending a letter to ask questions, calling the information line, checking the official bulletin board); (b) Decision makers exhibiting a pro-active approach in providing information, that is to say, providing information to citizens before

they ask for it (announcements on official web pages of municipalities, information on advertisement boards, handing brochures to citizens etc.).

2. Consultation

The consultation level includes processes where decision makers inform citizens about a certain topic and ask for citizens' opinions, comments and feedback. At this level of two-way communication, decision makers identify the topics to be consulted about and start initiatives in this framework, while citizens are considered providers of opinions/ideas. Public opinion polls, consulting to their opinion about a plan are subjects of this level of participation.

3. Involvement

At the involvement level, citizens are considered as parties that can be a partner in discussions in decision making processes and included in this framework. The process can be initiated by either party. At this level of participation which involves two-way and mainly in person communication, mutual opinions are shared and comprehensive consultations are performed. Although it involves a higher level of participation than the previous ones, those who make the final decision in the process are not citizens but administrations. Citizen meetings, public sessions with a specific topic and consultation boards are subjects of this level of participation.

4. Partnership

Partnership means the highest level of participation on the ladder of participation presented hereby. Citizens and administrations come together and build partnerships to cooperate in decision making processes. In these partnerships, roles and responsibilities are shared at certain ratios. During the process, it is ensured that all ideas, opinions or objections are collected and discussed in detail.

Partnership can be performed separately in every stage of decision making processes. At this level of participation, commitment of administrations to the process is much higher than the previous levels. In other words, although final decisions are made by administrations, the process is mostly completed with agreed upon decisions. Therefore, all stakeholders involved in the process act as equal partners and see themselves responsible for the problems and decisions.

Detail information about how to determine the level of participation in any participation process is provided in Chapter 4.3.3.

3.3.3. Methodology and Tools and Participation

Another important component of a participation mechanism is the methodology and tools of participation. In fact, this component is directly related to how to realize participation. Many methods and tools are used for this purpose. The selection of these methods and tools can vary by the purpose and level of participation and local conditions. The following table is a list of methods and tools that can be used at different levels of participation (detailed information about every method and tool is provided in Chapter Annex-1):

Levels of Participation	Some Possible Methods and Tools
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official bulletin board • Information line

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release, press meetings • Brochures, posters • Municipality magazine • Exhibitions and presentations • Mail group (e.g. e-mail and/or SMS announcements) • Citizen Information Centre • Conversations/articles in the media • Interactive demonstrations • Social media
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires • Conversations/group conversations/focus group discussions • Conversations on the phone • Advisory board • Online communication/online forum • Opinion taking • Request-complaint desks • Social media
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires • Conversations/group conversations/focus group discussions • Conversations on the phone • Advisory board • Urban citizen panel • Online portal • Open mail box • Round desk meetings • People's meetings • Meetings open to public • Organizations/festivals • Urban walks • Online communication/online forum • Conversations • Social media
Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Citizen working groups • Municipal commissions • Planning weekend

3.4. Legal Framework of Participation at Local Level in Türkiye

There are various policy papers, laws and regulations to improve/encourage participation at local level in Türkiye. Especially the 11th Development Plan, Law No. 5393 on Municipality, Law No. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities, Law No. 4982 on Right to Information, Law No. 5018 on Public Fiscal Administration and Control, Regulation on the Principles and Procedures of Strategic Planning in Public

Administrations, and the Regulation No. 26313 on Citizens’ Assembly stipulate various participatory mechanisms: Such as citizens’ assemblies, strategic planning, municipal council works, neighbourhood administrations, voluntary participation in municipal services and right to information etc. The following table presents the policy/legislation framework especially related to the local level and what they are important in the context of “participation”:⁵

Policy Paper		Importance for Participation
11th Development Plan (2019-2023)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensure active participation of citizens and all related parties in policy making processes (782)</i> • <i>Make regulations to make citizens’ assemblies more active (782.1)</i> • <i>Develop new participatory mechanisms to allow citizens to submit their requests, complaints and recommendations to decision makers to establish equality and justice in public services and realize the principles of good governance (788.4)</i> • <i>Strengthen the participation and supervision role of citizens in decision making processes of municipalities (800)</i> • <i>Strengthen the participation of disadvantaged groups in representation and decision making processes in local administrations (800.1)</i> • <i>Ensure the needs of disadvantaged groups are better cared for in local service delivery (800.1)</i>
Legislation		Importance for Participation
Law No. 5393 on Municipality	Article 9: Neighbourhood and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mukhtars identify common needs with the voluntary participation of neighbourhood citizens</i> • <i>The municipality considers the common requests of neighbourhood citizens in its decisions and endeavours to offer services in line with the needs of neighbourhood citizens</i>
	Article 13: Townsmen’s Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everybody residing within the boundaries of the municipality (all townsmen) have the right to participate in the said municipality’s services/decision making processes and be informed about its activities</i>
	Article 15: Powers and Privileges of Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The municipality can make public opinion polls and studies to understand the opinions and ideas of townsmen about municipal services</i>
	Article 20: Council Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Make municipal council meetings public; announce the meeting time and place to the public</i>
	Article 21: Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Announce the municipal council agenda to the public by various means</i>

⁵ Detail information about policy papers and current legislation on participation at local level is provided in Annex-2.

	Article 23: Finalization of Council Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Announce finalized municipal council decisions in summary to the public by suitable tools</i>
	Article 24: Specialised Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Neighbourhood mukhtars and civil society representatives can participate in specialised commission meetings which discuss issues within their areas of roles and activities without a vote</i> • <i>Make specialised commission reports public and announce them to the public by various means</i>
	Article 41: Strategic Plan and Performance Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prepare the municipality's strategic plans by consulting to the opinion of universities, if any, and chambers of profession, and NGO's related to the topic</i>
	Article 76: Citizens' Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish Citizens' Assemblies to develop the urban vision and raise awareness about being a townsman, and realize the principles of participation/decentralized administration</i> • <i>Represent city stakeholders including NGOs and neighbourhood mukhtars in Citizens' Assemblies</i> • <i>The municipality offers help and support for performing the activities of the Citizens' Assembly in an effective and productive way</i> • <i>Include in the agenda and evaluate the opinions formed in the Citizens' Assembly in the first meeting of the municipal council</i>
	Article 77: Voluntary Participation in Municipal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The municipality implements programmes for participation of volunteers to ensure solidarity and participation in the performance of certain services, efficiency in services, improved saving and productivity</i>
Law No. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities	Article 7: Roles and Responsibilities of Metropolitan, District and First Tier Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The metropolitan municipality prepares its strategic plan, annual targets and investment programmes by consulting to the opinions of district and first tier municipalities</i> • <i>Cooperate with NGOs and other related stakeholders in the provision of all kinds of social and cultural services for different social groups</i>
	Article 8: Infrastructure Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish infrastructure coordination centres to perform infrastructure services in coordination within the boundaries of the MM</i> • <i>The representatives of related professional associations can be invited to the meetings of the infrastructure coordination centre and submit their opinions</i>
	Article 9: Transport Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish transport coordination centres to perform all transport services in coordination within the boundaries of the MM</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The representatives of related professional associations can be invited to the meetings of the transport coordination centre and submit their opinions</i>
	Article 13: MM Council Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Announce the municipal council meeting time and place to the public</i>
	Article 15: Specialised Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The representatives of specialised NGOs and other invited stakeholder representatives can participate in the works of the Council Specialised Commission without a vote and in relation to the topics on the agenda</i> • <i>Make commission reports public, announce them to the public by various means</i>
Law No. 4982 on Right to Information	Article 4: Right to Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everybody has the right to information</i>
	Article 5: Obligation to Provide Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Institutions and organizations put all kinds of information or documentation, with certain exceptions, to the use of the applicants</i> • <i>Institutions and organizations are obligated to take necessary measures to complete information applications in an efficient, rapid and accurate way</i>
Law No. 5018 on Public Fiscal Administration and Control	Article 9: Strategic Planning and Performance Based Programme Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public administrations prepare strategic plans with participatory methods</i>
Regulation on the Principles and Procedures of Strategic Planning in Public Administrations⁶	Article 5: General Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensure participation of related NGOs, public administrations and other stakeholders and receive their contributions in the strategic planning process</i>
	Article 14: Presenting Strategic Plans and Announcing to Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Publish strategic plans on the web pages of public administrations</i>
	Article 16: Monitoring and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Share the evaluation and implementation results of the strategic plans of public administrations with the public</i>

⁶ Under the said regulation, the Strategy and Budget Office prepared various guides to steer municipalities in their strategic planning processes and efforts in participation. The most important guides are: “*The Principles of Participation: Good Practices Guide for Designers, Practitioners and Administrators of Participatory Activities*”, “*Stakeholder Questionnaires Guide; A Guide on Analysis and Methods for Strategic Planning*”, “*Citizen Scorecard: A*

	Evaluation of Strategic Plans and Implementation Results	
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In addition to the main framework documents on participation at local level in Türkiye, readers interested in the current situation and trends in participation in Europe can see Chapter Annex-3.

Guide on Citizen Feedback for Improved Public Service Performance, “Governance and Participation: People and Participation”. (<http://www.sp.gov.tr/tr/html/18/Kilavuz+ve+Rehberler>).

4. Participation Step by Step

4.1. In the Beginning of Participation: 15 Key Tips for Success

It would be useful to pay attention to certain general considerations while starting with participation in decision making processes. These considerations are applicable no matter for what purpose, in which topic, with which actors and by which means it will be performed. Therefore, it is favourable to get to know the following tips and tricks while starting a participatory process:

- 1) **Remember the most important prerequisite for participation is “information”.** There is no participation without information/being informed/providing information. It is not possible to participate/expect participation in a topic we do not know about. Therefore, it is necessary to take measures to inform stakeholders or make information easy to reach by stakeholders to the extent possible in participatory processes. It must be ensured that information is accurate and sufficient. Incomplete or wrong information should be noted as one of the most important obstacles to the healthy progress of participatory processes.
- 2) **Selection of the participation topic is important.** It must be ensured that the selected topic covers areas within the roles, powers and responsibilities of municipalities, related to citizens and offering certain public interests. Furthermore, the selected topic is expected to require or be influenced by stakeholder contribution. For example, the process of selecting the colour of public transport vehicles with the participation of citizens, a frequent practice in our country, contributes to the development of participation culture at local level, yet its direct influence on citizen satisfaction with transport services is highly weak. Instead, it would be better to focus on an area which can directly affect citizens such as determining the public transport routes with a participatory approach.
- 3) **Participation should have a defined purpose and an applicable outcome.** Before starting a participatory process, the purpose of participation should be clearly defined and manifested asking questions such as *“Why is participation needed?”*, *“What is expected from participation?”*, *“How will participation outcomes be used?”*. Moreover, the decisions taken as a result of participation should be concrete and realizable with practical activities.
- 4) **Free participation of uncertainty.** The purpose, topic, scope, process, actors, methods and tools of participation should be well defined and clearly manifested before embarking on the process. All kinds of uncertainty would create a question mark in the minds of stakeholders, which can only weaken the belief (and participation) in the process. Stakeholders can also want to define open ended/uncertain topics with their own assumptions and act accordingly. In this case, contrasting expectations are possible. Therefore, the process should begin by answering many questions such as *Who?*, *In what?*, *When?*, *At which level?*, *At which stage?*, *How?* etc.
- 5) **Explain how you will use the results in the beginning of the process.** In order to healthily meet the parties’ mutual expectations and establish an environment of trust in the process in participation processes, it should be defined in the very beginning how the results will be used and shared with the related parties. Moreover, they should have a visible impact with regard to

the end of the process. In short, the process should not have an uncertain end/outcome.

- 6) **Be prepared to invest time and effort in participation.** Planning and realizing participatory processes require a certain amount of time and effort. Therefore, it is necessary to check if conditions/capabilities are sufficient (or there is an intention) to spend time and effort before starting a participatory process. In addition, it may be necessary to develop available knowledge and skills in terms of participation. For this reason, attention should also be paid to improving current awareness and capacities in participation and concrete steps should be taken as required.
- 7) **Be prepared to reserve financial and human resources for participation.** All kinds of participatory processes to be realized by municipalities will more or less require using financial and/or human resources. The need for financial and human resources varies by the topic and level of participation, quality/quantity of the actors in the process and expectations from participation. On every occasion, however, municipalities should allocate a certain degree of financial and human resources depending on their own capacities to participatory processes.
- 8) **Try to involve stakeholders in participation processes at the earliest stage possible.** Starting stakeholder participation at a stage where there has been progress, topics of participation have grown to a certain degree and stakeholder participation has become very limited will decrease the benefits expected from participation. Therefore, it would be better to involve stakeholders in the process at a time when they are still able to inflict their influence (at an early stage) while there isn't any concrete/mature idea/suggestion yet.
- 9) **Care to employ a flexible approach in participation processes.** Participation essentially requires reconciliation. Based on the possibility that stakeholders involved in the process might have differing perspectives/opinions, they should be evaluated with utmost attention. At this point, insistently advocating a certain idea or opinion should be avoided and people should be open to changing their attitude/approach or compromising on certain issues as required.
- 10) **Be willing to involve stakeholders in process management.** While planning participation processes, the expected level of participation should have been defined and well described to the expected participants in advance. Whatever the desired level of participation is, there might be stakeholders willing to participate in process management, offer their contributions or share their ideas. At this point, it would be useful to demonstrate a facilitating approach especially in building mutual trust.
- 11) **Offer regular feedback.** It is important that stakeholders involved in any participation process receive regular feedback about the current progress in the process, obtained results and how these results will be used. Stakeholders would want to see their contributions evaluated/valued in this process. Participation processes which do not provide feedback can lead to a situation that can be summarized as *"We have participated before but our opinions were not taken into consideration, why would we bother to participate again?"* and called *"participation fatigue"*.
- 12) **Don't allow the participation process to stretch out.** While planning participation processes, the

time dimension should be paid special attention and it must be ensured that possible start-end times cover a "reasonable" period of time. It might lead to disappointment if the stakeholders in the process wait too long to see concrete results and break their interest/belief in the process. Therefore, a time schedule should be demonstrated to yield results in the short-medium term if possible in line with the purpose and scope of participation and turning the process into a cycle of discussions without an end result should be avoided.

13) Invest in “mutual trust” in participation processes. One of the most important components of a successful participation process is establishing “mutual trust” among the actors. To establish said mutual trust, attention should be paid to acting with honesty by adopting a clear and transparent approach throughout the process; fake actions and attitudes (“pretending” to be involving, caring, listening) should certainly be avoided.

14) Care for determination and ownership in participation. The success of a participation process is directly related to stakeholders’ belief and commitment (and their maintenance) in the process (throughout the entire process), the purposes and expected outcomes of the process. Not everything can go as desired during the process and certain challenges can be experienced. What is important is to demonstrate necessary determination to overcome these challenges. At this point, determination and ownership to be demonstrated by mayors, senior management, administrators and representatives of stakeholders at management level in the participation process will significantly contribute to establishing mutual trust.

15) Remember there is no single recipe in participation. It is true that participation in decision making processes at local level can vary depending on the respective location’s socio-economic and cultural structure, applicable legal regulations, institutional capacities, power relations, interest of stakeholders, past experience in participation and various environmental conditions (e.g. political agenda). Therefore, an example of participation which was successfully implemented at a certain place might not bring the same success when it is implemented elsewhere. For this reason, local conditions should be taken into account and arrangements should be made accordingly while designing decision making processes.

4.2. Preliminary Preparations

To conduct any participation process in an efficient and productive manner, it is necessary to perform certain preliminary preparations to build teams to engage in coordination inside the institution, preferably make an institutional self-assessment and then, (if required) engage in capacity building and/or awareness activities. Before all of them, however, there comes receiving support from the Mayor and senior management for the process.

4.2.1. Receiving Support from Municipality Senior Management

A participation activity to be conducted by a municipality can only be successful through attention to, support for and ownership in the process by the Mayor and senior management. Yet, it is not always easy to build ownership, because the topic of participation might not be among the urgent agenda of the mayor and senior management or there might be certain concerns that the process can be exploited because of political conflicts at the local. The most important thing to do to overcome these challenges is explaining

“Why participation is important in this respect and what possible contributions it can offer” to the mayor and senior management, persuading them and having their support.

In addition, every participation process is expected to include a promise or a guarantee. Those who will determine and share this promise or guarantee will generally be the mayor and/or senior management representatives. For this reason, it is important to ensure that the process is owned by them.

An Exemplary Case under LAR-III Project:

Various training and awareness activities were performed in the framework of pilot practices of Malkara (Tekirdağ) and Arsuz (Hatay) District Municipalities under the LAR-3 Project. A significant part of these activities conducted with the participation of local stakeholders were also attended by the Mayors of these municipalities. On the contrary to frequent examples in our country, Mayors did not only take part in opening speeches, but also took active parts in discussions and participated in the entire programme. Such active participation of the Mayors in these meetings had positive impacts for showing how these topics were owned by the Municipality (and demonstrating it to local stakeholders).

4.2.2. Team Building

Before any participation process, a team should be built to coordinate activities in the municipality. Without a doubt, the nature of this team depends on own institutional capacity and competency of every municipality. However, it would be useful to select the team members among willing and dynamic personnel experienced in strategic plan preparations and/or participation/civil society.

A senior officer would be useful to lead the team, supervise their operations, report progress to the Mayor, directly support activities as necessary, and ensure horizontal/vertical coordination in the municipality. This senior officer should be at the level of department head in metropolitan municipalities and director in district municipalities as a minimum. Moreover, it would be useful to commission personnel with an official letter to healthily perform their tasks in the team because the continuity of team is very important in participation works.

4.2.3. Resource Allocation

It will be necessary to use more or less a financial resource for any participation process (depending on the topic and level of and expectations from participation). This financial resource might not always be in the form of “spending money”. The process can also progress using available institutional capabilities (using tools and equipment and logistic capabilities etc.). In either case, however, it will be necessary to allocate necessary resources for the participatory process from the municipality budget. If it is not done in a skilful manner, the further processes of participation might arrive at a bottleneck due to “lack of resources”. This can create serious trust issues on the side of the stakeholders in participation. Thus, analysing and identifying the need for resources in advance and allocating necessary resources are very important for efficient progress of the process.

4.2.4. Self-Assessment

It would be useful to make a self-assessment study at the institutional level before the participation process to see the institutional capacity and understand the level of knowledge and awareness about the topic. This self-assessment can also be an opportunity of demonstrating the capacity of internal

stakeholders in different roles/levels inside the institution. Therefore, this study, if to be implemented, should identify a target group to include the municipality’s senior management representatives (Deputy Mayors or General Secretaries or Deputy General Secretaries), medium level managers, unit personnel and Municipal Councillors (especially the Head of the Planning and Budget Commission or Deputy Heads and members).

An intra-institution questionnaire can be employed for this kind of self-assessment. However, focus group meetings can be preferred to provide an in-depth analysis into the topic. The further chapters of the guideline offer recommended questions for a possible focus group meeting to be held with the stakeholders in the institution (See Chapters 5.1.2, 5.2.2, 5.3.2, 5.4.2, 5.5.2).

4.2.5. Making a Work Plan

It would be useful to make a work plan to cover all stages necessary for the participation process. This work plan should include tasks to be performed, distribution of tasks, deadlines, important milestones (briefly, it should be identified and put down on paper what will be done when and by whom). The most important consideration while creating a work plan is to create the most suitable work schedule on the current conditions of the municipality. For example, months before election periods or long holidays which might affect participation might not provide the suitable environment for participation efforts.

Another important point to consider while preparing a work plan is to decide on the approach for process management. For example, if the municipality needs external expert support, it should be decided on at this stage. Finally, the prepared work plan should be submitted to and approved by the senior management.

4.2.6. Organizing Intra-Institution Information Meetings

A participation process can require participation and contribution of multiple units of a municipality depending on the topic. At this point, it would be useful to hold information meetings for the related municipal units by the coordination team. As with the senior management, these information meetings are also important for owning the related topic within the municipality.

4.2.7. Gathering Information

Another important preliminary work while starting a participation process is to examine participation studies conducted at home and abroad with regard to the specific topic of participation and review past experience, if applicable. This method can gather highly valuable information from municipalities which lives through/experienced the process. Making direct contact with experienced municipalities if possible will also be highly educational. The most important thing to consider in information collection and experience sharing is adapting the exemplary practices by considering the local dynamics and specific conditions rather than emphasizing the reviewed cases as they are.

An Exemplary Case under LAR-III Project:
The Balıkesir Municipality reviewed current models and examples with regard to participatory budgeting at home and abroad in the framework of the pilot practices initiated under “participatory budgeting” under LAR-3 Project. The main objective was to develop the most suitable budgeting model for the Municipality. As a part of these preliminary studies, the Balıkesir Metropolitan Municipality

contacted the İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality that had its first experience in participatory budgeting in 2021 and invited a member of the team which coordinated their participatory budgeting activities to a workshop attended by the local stakeholders in Balıkesir. This process facilitated learning from experience and contributing to the Municipality developing its own model. This information and experience sharing between municipalities was highly educational for understanding the contributions of participation to developing institutional cooperation.

4.3. Planning the Participation Process

The first step to be taken while starting a participatory process at decision making stages is to plan the process. Planning the participatory process means predefining (1) About what, (2) For what purpose, (3) By whose participation, and (4) How participation will be realized. A participatory process should not be initiated without providing clear answers to these questions because uncertainty has no place in successful participation as emphasized previously. If there is ambiguity around certain topics, a flexible plan can be prepared to allow for certain changes during the process.

4.3.1. Identifying the Participation Topic

The topic/area to be addressed in a participatory process (for which participation is expected) should be clearly defined in advance. First, the selected topic should be sufficient and within the areas of roles, powers and responsibilities of municipalities and compliant with the legal requirements under the legislation. For example, while it is possible to discuss such as a topic as national migration policies around a participatory framework, municipalities' power to influence any decision in this area is very weak. Therefore, it will be more suitable to focus on an area in which municipalities have decisive power with regard to participation.

Another consideration is that the selected topic should be an important one which requires participation. For example, while determining the colour of private public transport vehicles based on the preference of citizens (a frequent practice in our country) can be considered in the context of participation, focusing on these topics can create an impression that the process is “pretending” to be participatory when there are many other topics which are very important citizens/stakeholders and/or which they can affect/get affected by their outcomes. For this reason, the topic of participation can be determined depending on the necessity of stakeholder participation for developing decisions, their influencing power and the degree they will be affected by the outcomes of the said decisions. With regard to the public transport vehicle example, what is more important for citizens than the colour of the vehicles is the routes of these vehicles, because it directly affects their daily lives. Therefore, it is more meaningful to conduct a participatory process in the context of the routes of these vehicles before their colour (See Chapter 5.1.6.1. Çorum Municipality case).

An Exemplary Case Under LAR-III Project:

The Manisa Metropolitan Municipality adopted a participatory approach while selecting the topic of the pilot practice they started to improve participation at local level under LAR-3 Project and decided on the “stray animals issue” as the pilot practice topic based on the recommendations and suggestions from the Manisa Citizens' Assembly and other local stakeholders. The selection of this topic was not an easy decision taken by the Manisa Metropolitan Municipality because this topic which was frequent on the national agenda was considered “a very hard and delicate matter”. The sensitivity and challenge of

the matter was because of the parties with different opinions and expectations. Conducting a participatory process with all these varying opinions and expectations seemed to be a complete challenge in itself. The Manisa Metropolitan Municipality considered all these challenges and preferred to narrow down the scope by selecting a pilot neighbourhood where the topic was most relevant rather than discussing the issue at the provincial level. By doing so, the “stray animals issue” was addressed in a neighbourhood by the participation of the residents of that neighbourhood, the Citizens’ Assembly, NGOs and related public institutions. At the beginning of this participatory process, stakeholders had expressed their expectations and concerns about negative reactions, but none of them happened. At this point, the clear, transparent and participatory approach of the Manisa Metropolitan Municipality was very effective. It was seen that even a “very hard and sensitive” issue for the municipality could be easily handled with a participatory approach.

4.3.2. Setting the Purpose and Targets of Participation

In any participatory process, the purpose/target of participation should be clear and defined in the beginning of the process. No stakeholder participation should initiate without defining a meaningful purpose. The main question is: “*What is desired to be achieved by stakeholder participation?*” or in other words, “*What is expected from participation?*”. Answers include taking the opinions of stakeholders in developing a policy/strategy which concerns citizens at local level (e.g. a strategic plan), identifying problems with a current service and recommending solutions, improving the said service or developing a new one.

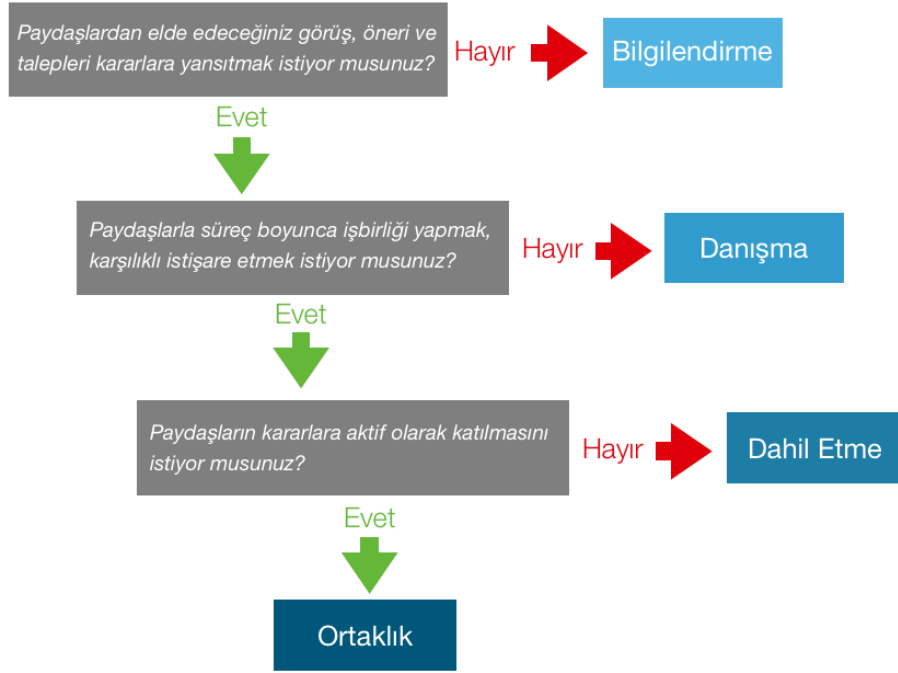
All parties in participatory process can “explicit” expectations as well as “implicit” expectations. For example, a municipality involved in a participatory process can expect to improve its image in the eyes of citizens or increase their votes in local elections. An NGO involved in the same process can expect to improve its visibility/recognition or get use of certain funding sources. All of them are indeed normal. What is critical is that all parties should be honest about the intentions of their participation whatever the expected additional gains from participation are. Dishonest and fake participatory process will have a negative impact on the mutual trust and relations of the parties in the long run.

4.3.3. Deciding on Participation Levels

While designing participatory processes, it is necessary to determine the levels of participation depending on its purpose and targets. As mentioned earlier, the level of participation ranges between “information” which does not include any stakeholder input and “partnership” where stakeholders are worked and decided with.

The decision on the level of participatory processes can be given based on honest answers to the following questions also by considering expectations from participation:

Graph 4. Determining the Level of Participation⁷



Do you want to reflect opinions, recommendations and requests of stakeholders on decisions?	No	Information provision
Yes		
Do you want to cooperate and mutually discuss with stakeholders throughout the process?	No	Counselling
Yes		
Do you want stakeholders to actively participate in decisions?	No	Involvement
Yes		
Partnership		

There is no “absolute” participation level in decision making processes. It can vary by the purpose and targets of participation, stakeholder profile and expectations. Some topics are suitable for the lowest level of participation which is the information level while others may require participation of senior management.

On the other hand, the process does not necessarily progress with the same level of participation at all times. Participation levels can be updated as the participation process continues. For example, certain changes can be made according to the participation purpose and targets or stakeholder expectations. In this case, it might be necessary to adapt the level of participation accordingly.

Another important point to be noted in determining the participation level is that it is actually a matter of attitude for administrations (municipalities) towards citizens. That is to say, the participation level in a sense is directly associated with the quality, level and continuity of the relationship that the municipality is willing to develop with stakeholders. If the municipality has an expectation of a more comprehensive and long term relationship with the stakeholders who are expected to participate, it should prefer a higher

⁷ Adapted from NGO Participation in Decision Mechanisms: An Implementation Guideline for Quality and Meaningful Participation in Local Administrations (2020).

level of participation.

4.3.4. Determining the Stakeholders of Participation

One of the most important things while starting a participatory process at decision making stages is to determine who will take part in the process, because the success of a participatory process is directly related to involving the right participants/stakeholders. It is also important to create participation profile at sufficient level defined for the purpose and targets of participation. Another important point to note is that quality comes before quantity in participation processes. In other words, participation of so many persons/stakeholders/actors does not always imply good participation. What is important is the participation of the right stakeholders as required by the topic.

It is not a simple and easy task (contrary to popular belief) to identify the stakeholders to be involved in participation processes. At this point, the common practice in our country is attempting to include those who we personally know/are acquainted with or who we can think of among the stakeholders who are engaged/operate in the area of participation. In this case, however, there is a high risk of “forgetting/leaving behind” some people. Therefore, it would be suitable to adopt a more systematic approach to identifying the stakeholders and evaluate them based on certain methods and criteria.

The systematic approach in stakeholder identification will also contribute to conducting the process in an objective manner and establishing legitimacy and reliability because it is possible to be asked certain questions in the process such as “*Why are these stakeholders involved? Why are these stakeholders not involved?*”. It is the only way to give objective and credible answers to these questions.

A method called the “stakeholder analysis” is commonly used to identify suitable stakeholders in participation processes. In this method, the stakeholders identified according to the purpose and targets of participation are analysed and evaluated according to different criteria such as their levels of knowledge, interest and influence. The following table lists exemplary implementation steps for stakeholder analysis:

Step 1: Create a long stakeholder list: First; a long stakeholder list is created under certain categories (e.g. Municipality, citizens’ assembly, NGOs, other public institutions, universities, citizens etc.). An exemplary table is provided below:

Category	Stakeholder
Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mayor• Head of ... Department• Director• ...
Citizens’ Assembly	
Other Public Institutions	
NGOs	
Universities	
Citizens	

This list should be as clear and comprehensive as possible and no one should be forgotten.

Step 2: Analyse: After that, the stakeholders in the categorized stakeholder list are prioritized on two criteria:

Interest/Benefit- More interested stakeholders are generally those who are directly affected (low-high interest)

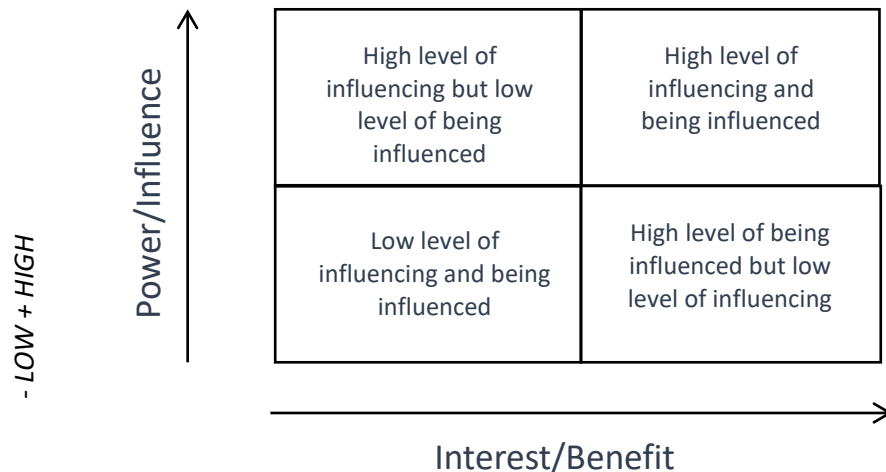
Power/Influence- Stakeholders holding official or unofficial power to affect the decision in the area (low-high power)

Table 1 Stakeholder Analysis

Category	Stakeholder	Interest/Benefit		Power/Influence	
		High	Low	High	Low
Municipality	• ...				
	• ...				
	• ...				
Citizens' Assembly					
Other Public Institutions					
NGOs					
Universities					
Citizens					

The stakeholders included in the table above are given points 1 to 5 depending on their interest/power levels. (For example, 1 – very low, 5 – very high). The stakeholder scores are transferred to a table like the one below and stakeholders are mapped accordingly:

Graph 5. Stakeholder Evaluation



Step 3: Determine final stakeholders: After completing stakeholder mapping, the following matrix can be used to see what this information means in terms of participation and develop an approach for stakeholders (i.e. turn it into action):

Table 2. Stakeholder Interest-Influence Matrix

		Interest/Benefit	
		LOW	HIGH
Power/Influence	HIGH	<p><u>Satisfy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in the area of interest & guide in this respect • Try to raise the interest level • Make them turn into key players 	<p><u>Key player</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key players, focus efforts on this group • Engage in governance/decision making bodies • Be engaged & consult regularly
	LOW	<p><u>Minimum significance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum efforts • Inform by general communication means 	<p><u>Show interest</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform & guide with regard to area of interest • Potential supporter

Step 4: Build relationships with stakeholders: After the following the foregoing steps and identifying critical stakeholders to be fit for the purpose of participation, relationships should be built with these stakeholders to inform them about the topic and understand their viewpoint (if not done previously). Otherwise, it would be extremely hard to involve stakeholders whose interest in and expectations from the topic are not known to the participation process. For this reason, time should be spent on building relationships with stakeholders. Another contribution of this on the side of municipalities is the opportunity of getting to know a stakeholder that was not familiar previously. By doing so, the first steps will be taken in the relationship of “mutual trust” which will be highly necessary throughout the process.

4.3.5. Selecting the Methods and Tools of Participation

This chapter of the Implementation Guideline presents main methods that can be used in participation for practitioners. First, information is provided about parameters suggested to be taken into account while determining the methods. After that, the brief definition and purpose of each method, the level of participation at which the method can be used, the number of participants that can be included and strengths and weaknesses of the method.

The context of participation is generally the local political, legal, social, cultural and institutional framework where participation occurs. The same participation method might not yield the same result in different regions or even in different neighbourhoods of the same city. Being successful in a case does not mean it will be successful in another one. The participation process should be designed specifically for the local and present conditions considering prevailing social dynamics such as the differing political environment, present power relations, the impact of civil society, public-society relations, global agenda,

social cooperation capacity or differentiations. In other words, the following methods should be adapted to the needs of practitioners and local conditions. Some of the methods will become feasible in further stages in Türkiye, therefore, they are also included in this chapter of the Guideline to provide inspiration for future practices.

Which Parameters Should Be Taken Into Account While Determining Methods?

• **Is the method suitable for the number of participants?**

The higher the number of participants, the lower the chance of every participant to speak and influence the process.

• **What kind of participants does the method require, what are their roles?**

Participants should be suitable for the purpose and targets.

- ✓ Participants who are selected by themselves (occasions when anybody who wants to participate can participate) are suitable for methods to be used when it is wanted to involve all segments of the society.
- ✓ Stakeholder representatives participate to represent the opinions of certain interest groups.
- ✓ Demographic representative groups/examples are selected to create the sample of a larger population.
- ✓ If it is desired to include the skills, knowledge and experience of certain individuals in the process, they can be targeted as participants.

• **How much budget should be allocated for the method?**

The budget to be allocated should be reviewed in selecting the method. The targeted outcomes can be reached at a lower cost with certain methods.

• **How much time is needed to effectively use the method?**

Apart from the planning and organization of the method, time scheduling of activities to be realized with this method should be realistic. Efficient operation can require twice the estimated time.

• **Is the method compliant with desired outputs and results?**

While some methods are effective in amplifying common interests, others can allow the participants to play a more active role in the decision making process in line with common interests.


• **At which level of participation can the method be the most productive?**

As described as the ladder of participation, the level of participation ranges from a stage which simply provides one-way information to a level of active participation which includes cooperation and interactive communication. Every method can be used the most efficiently at some of these levels while it is not recommended at others.

Table 3 lists a four step participation level model together with the direction of information, participation approach and possible methods at every level:

Table 3: Participation Methods by Participation Levels

Participation Methods by Participation Levels
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	Information	Consultation	Involvement	Partnership
				
	One-Way Communication	Two-Way Communication	Two-Way Communication	Cooperation and Interactive Communication
Main Conditions for the Participation Level	Provide timely, objective and quality information to help society understand the problems and the agenda.	Receive opinions and feedback from the related participants about a service, project or decisions.	Work with the society to understand and consider the needs and requests of the participants throughout the decision making or planning, service delivery process.	Actively cooperate with the participants in identifying problems and solutions, generate solutions and practices together.
Participation Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Bulletin Board • Information Exhibition • Visitor Areas (Information Desk) / Citizen Information Centres • Brochures, Posters • Municipality Magazine • Articles and Conversations to be Published in the Press • Phone Information/Support Line • Press Release/Press Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive Demonstrations • Organization/Festival • Questionnaires • Focus Group Discussions, Conversations, Group Conversations • Conversations on the Phone • Social Networks and Online Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires • Focus Group Discussions, Group Conversations • Conversations on the Phone • Social Networks and Online Communities • Gamification • Neighbourhood Meetings • City Panel • Online Communication/Online Forum/Online Portal • Open Mail Box • Round Table Meeting • Public Meetings • Discussions Open to Public • Field Trip/City Walk/Visits to Certain Places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Café • Citizen Solidarity Committee/Advisory Board • Workshops • Planning Weekend • Citizen Working Groups • Municipality Commissions • Future Seeking Conference • Deliberative Polling • Community Mapping • Participatory Budgeting • Democs Card Game • Hackathon • Participatory Strategic Planning • Neighbourhood Councils • Citizen Scorecard
	Input		Active Participation	

Detailed information about the foregoing methods and tools is provided in Annex-1.

In addition to the methods and tools listed above, general recommendations for practitioners to be more successful and efficient in their joint activities with citizens or participants are as follows:

- Multiple methods should be employed together to assure reliability of outputs;
- Using new methods might draw attention of citizens, it is useful to be innovative and creative in selecting and implementing methods;

- In addition to methods that can be used for activities with large and crowded groups, it should be noted that it is easier to manage small group activities. Creating small groups within big group activities and providing clear directives for each group improve facilitation.

4.3.6. Developing the Communication Strategies of Participation

Strong communication strategies are needed for efficient participation. Considering the following strategies in the planning, implementation and monitoring processes of participation is important for reaching targeted outputs.

Transparency for trust: The first condition for developing an effective participation process is being open and transparent:

- Be open about the purpose of participation
- Clearly demonstrate mutual expectations (be honest and transparent about shared and different expectations)
- Be open and clear about the power, resource and impact
- Regularly and openly share information about the topic of participation
- Develop a joint approach at the earliest time possible

In person communication to the extent possible: Written communication is a method of communication which accelerates communication but might lead to misunderstanding and bottlenecks. Although it is important for institutionalism to put down critical issues on paper, conducting participatory processes and discussions in person to the extent possible will reinforce the feeling of trust.

Language: The language employed in participation processes can either facilitate or obstruct participation. The stakeholder parties of participation can use multiple languages and terminologies which largely differ from each other as they come from different fields of study and different backgrounds. Being flexible and tolerant in this respect is important for right communication. Also, avoiding technical terms and abbreviations will strengthen communication.

Active listening: Another important step of establishing good communication is active listening. The Main Components of Active Listening are as follows:

- Do not be busy with other things while the commentator is speaking
- Look at the commentator, do not avoid eye contact
- Take small notes
- Ask questions from time to time (clearly as possible)
- Express if you have understood right from time to time
- Show you have established empathy
- Occasionally use non-verbal communication means (nodding your head etc.)
- Reflect, i.e. repeat certain words of the commentator, verify at some points
- Avoid prejudgment
- Summarize what has been told in your own words and demonstrate you have understood

Equal communication: The most needed communication strategy in participation processes is the ability to keep communication from a hierarchic form of relationship and turn it into communication between equal stakeholders. Examples include using meeting rooms rather than offices in meetings with the Citizens' Assembly, sharing information before and during the activity, allowing the Citizens' Assembly to express their experience and specialties.

Consider differences: At times, the stakeholder representatives taking part in participatory processes can have various bodily/mental disabilities which challenge participation. Taking necessary communication measures by getting to know these disabilities in advance in the participation process (for example, hiring a sign language translator in meetings, preparing key documents in Braille etc.) will make participation more efficient.

Continuity: Another factor required for efficient and productive communication is continuity. Following the processes by the same person to the name of the institution will both reinforce trust and prevent loss of information. Therefore, it is recommended for the parties in participation processes to designate a contact person for themselves.

Share results: A common communication mistake in participation is involving stakeholders in discussions but not sharing outputs with them. On the contrary, it is an important requirement to ensure process outputs also involve stakeholders who are consulted for their opinions in the process. The results of a participatory process should certainly be shared with stakeholders through written/verbal means.

Table 4. Points to consider while organizing participatory meetings⁸

<p>Pre-meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide information as much as possible before the meeting• Make sure the parties are informed about the meeting agenda in advance• Determine suitable and sufficient time for the purpose of the meeting• Identify the secretariat to conduct the meeting process and persons to undertake communication• Organize meetings in meeting rooms not offices, if possible <p>Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a vast opportunity for questions and answers• Be prepared for and respect possible sensitivities• Avoid using technical terms, abbreviations and professional language which cannot be well understood by NGOs• Actively listen• Openly discuss, avoid imposing your pre-defined ideas• Exhibit a solution oriented approach in possible differences of opinion• Avoid creating an impression of overly self-confident <p>Post-meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If it was promised to provide feedback to the parties about a subject after the meeting, do that without delay• Prepare meeting minutes summarizing topics discussed and decisions taken in the meeting and share with the related parties• Send a thank you message to the related parties for their contributions after the meeting• Provide feedback. NGOs would like to see their contributions are taken seriously.• If there is a topic about which you want feedback from NGOs, pay attention to grant sufficient time. Providing minimum 4 weeks to maximum 12 weeks for feedback will contribute to

⁸ Kaynak: Vatandaş Katılımını Arttırma Rehberi, LAR II Projesi - 2012

transforming the consultation process into a dialogue process.

An Exemplary Case Under LAR-III Project:

The Yunusmere (Manisa) Municipality aimed for involvement of young people in the district in decision making processes in its pilot practices under the LAR-3 Project. In a series of workshops, Municipality officers and children and young people from all ages/segments came together and discussed involvement of young people in management/decisions at local level. Young people expressed that they were concerned before the meetings that they would not be taken seriously and their ideas and recommendations would not be taken into account by the Municipality officers. However, they were able to openly and clearly express themselves thanks to the Municipality officers' open and transparent approach, and careful attitude in active learning and equal communication, and had the chance to discuss their ideas with the Municipality officers. This process was educational on both sides, young people gained more knowledge about the Municipality's decision making processes and the Municipality had the chance to learn young people's expectations, dreams and ideas about the city. Using in person and the right communication strategies was highly effective in these outcomes.

5. Participation at Different Stages of Decision Making Processes

This chapter demonstrates how participation can be included in different stages of decision making processes. In this framework, the focus is on 5 different stages of any decision making process:

- 1) Analysis and planning stage
- 2) Budgeting stage
- 3) Approval stage
- 4) Implementation stage
- 5) Monitoring and evaluation stage

Every stage details why participation is important, how institutional self-assessment can be made, what possible entry points for participation and different roles for different stakeholders can be, what possible problems and solutions can be during implementation and good practices from Türkiye and Europe.

5.1. Analysis and Planning Stage

5.1.1. Why Participation at This Stage?

Analysis and planning is a critical stage where it is determined which topics will be handled and analysed how, all problems about the topic are addressed and solutions are planned in this framework. Failing to pay necessary attention to this stage can cause a risk of failing to completely/accurately identify problems, needs and priorities and offer complete solutions, thus obtaining wrong or unwanted outcomes. The most important component of this stage for our municipalities is the strategic plan preparation process.

The strategic planning process is a process where decisions are made to affect the future of the entire city (and thus its citizens) in the short-medium-long term, therefore, a majority of the topics addressed here are within the area of interest of citizens. For this reason, it is especially important for municipality administrators to support citizen participation in this process, different viewpoints, requests and needs are absolutely necessary to draft possible solutions.

Advantages of involving the civil society in this stage:

- As citizens are involved in the process since the beginning, they will have better desire to contribute to the solution
- Everything has been displayed and nothing has been decided on, there is still time to adapt the process to the specific needs of different stakeholders
- Various aspects of the topic or problem are manifested
- Different perspectives, requests, needs etc. are identified
- New, innovative solutions can be suggested
- Stakeholders have direct impact on the solution of the problem

Challenges of involving the civil society in this stage:

- The participation process takes time. Both the topic or the problem and the entire process should be explained to all stakeholders. However, the strategic plan process covers 6 months in total beginning right after the local elections.
- It can turn into an endless process where more and more problems are identified. The organizers of the process should be able to clearly define the limits of the problem (no attempt will be made for the solution of problems outside these limits).

- There might be different and contradicting opinions or recommended solutions. In this case, reconciliation is necessary among different opinions with regard to the solution.

5.1.2. Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment

Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment at the Analysis and Planning Stage

Main Question: *As municipalities, do you ensure stakeholder participation at the needs identification/planning stage of your services (participation of citizens/Citizens' Assemblies/NGOs/neighbourhood mukhtars, individual citizens and other stakeholders)? If yes, how? At which level?*

Guiding sub-questions:

- *How/at which level do you ensure participation of Citizens' Assemblies/NGOs, for example, at the preparation stage of your strategic plans?*
- *Which methods and tools do you use for participation?*
- *What kind of tools and/or incentive mechanisms do you use especially to allow citizens to participate in your meetings?*
- *How do you evaluate contributions/recommendations/requests from the Citizens' Assembly/NGOs/citizens?*
- *Do you provide any feedback about received opinions/contributions?*
- *Do you inform and consult to the opinion of mukhtars and other related stakeholders in advance during activities?*
- *Do you engage in special activities to encourage participation of disadvantaged groups (women, people with disabilities, unemployed, elderly, low income, immigrant etc.) while planning your activities? If yes, how?*

5.1.3. Possible Entry Points for Participation at the Analysis and Planning Stage

The most important component of the analysis and planning stage in municipalities is the strategic plans. The strategic plans that should be prepared by municipalities with a population over 50,000 are papers which basically include municipalities' medium and long term targets and the strategies they develop to reach these targets. Strategic plans are also important management tools used by municipalities to prepare and implement annual budgets. Therefore, they are generally considered both corporate and technical documents.

On the other hand, municipality strategic plans are essentially highly critical documents which decide on the future of the city and the life quality of its residents. Therefore, the issues put down on paper directly concern the entire city and everybody in it. For this reason, it is really important to prepare strategic plans with a participatory approach considering citizens' local needs, requests and priorities. In addition to preparing a good plan which takes the local priorities into account, it is also important for yielding successful results in practice which are owned at the local.

There are many ways to include participatory approaches in strategic plans. The preparations for and contents of strategic plans can be reviewed to better understand them:

- Preliminary preparations
- Current situation analysis
- Vision development
- Strategy development

- Monitoring-evaluation

The following chapters detail possible entry points to include participatory approaches.

Preliminary Preparations:

Strategic plan preparations start upon the call of the mayor for all units right after the local elections. Experience shows that the level of knowledge and awareness of mayors about participation can be determining in maintaining all municipal operations with a participatory approach. Therefore, it would be useful for the mayor to demonstrate attention paid to participation, clearly manifesting their message and expectations in this respect in the call for a strategic plan sent to all units for the following stages of the process. The determination and ownership of the mayor on the topic will be a very critical first step to ensure all municipality units adopt and embrace participatory approaches. Sharing this message with the public through the municipality's web page or by other means can even play a role that encourages participation for stakeholders willing to participate in strategic plan efforts.

Another important consideration in preliminary preparation is related to the units or teams which coordinate activities for the strategic plan. As a common practice in municipalities (generally under the leadership of the Mayor), a Strategic Plan Preparation Team is established (some municipalities assign this responsibility directly to a unit rather than establishing a team). It will be useful when this team/unit plans the participation process of other stakeholders in advance and in an efficient manner and make preparations accordingly for the participatory running of plan preparations. Preparations should include topics such as how the participation process will operate, what is expected from stakeholders, how the topics will be addressed etc.. The public should be informed about these topics for the public and related stakeholders at local level to make preparations in advance and meaningfully participate in the process. It can be useful to apply to training support for participation and/or outside expertise about process management, as necessary.

Current Situation Analysis:

The current situation analysis is a very important stage where qualitative and quantitative data is gathered, analysed and evaluated to form a basis for the purpose, targets and recommended activities of strategic plans. A frequent problem in this respect in the strategic plans currently being implemented by municipalities is that current situation analyses are not/cannot be performed sufficiently comprehensive. One of the most important reasons is that sufficient amount of data cannot be collected and evaluated in a limited period of time.

Stakeholder participation can be useful at this point especially in obtaining various data in a very short time. Therefore, it is necessary to see stakeholder participation and contribution not only as an issue of participation merely in the form of fulfilling legal requirements, but as a very important data and information source and evaluate stakeholders accordingly.

In this framework, it is important to involve all critical stakeholders at local level in the process of current situation analysis. The method about which stakeholders can be included is described in Chapter 4.3.4. The important point here is to ensure participation representation on a wide spectrum to consider the varying demands, needs and priorities of all different social groups at local level (age, gender, disadvantaged status etc.).

Socio-economic Mapping

Another thing to keep in mind about strategic plans is that these plans have also a spatial dimension or reflection. In this framework, it will be useful to consider the geographical distribution of all kinds of data collected during the current situation analysis (to be collected at the neighbourhood level if possible) and evaluate on a spatial basis. At this point, socio-economic mapping etc. are useful tools to be used for analysis and planning at the neighbourhood level.

Neighbourhood Mukhtars

In a participatory strategic planning process, it will be a right approach to begin with neighbourhoods in identifying citizens' demands, requests and priorities. A type of stakeholders that should be remembered in neighbourhood level analysis and planning is the neighbourhood mukhtars. By ensuring efficient participation of neighbourhood mukhtars, it is possible to understand what kind of services and investments are required in which neighbourhood and what priorities citizens have.

Citizen Requests and Complaints

Citizen requests and complaints constitute a valuable data source for demonstrating what kind of problems there are in which services of municipalities, citizen satisfaction level, and which services need development/improvement. Especially collecting and analysing this data under different categories such as age, gender, educational status etc. can make it possible to especially see the requests and complaints of disadvantaged groups and develop related recommendations in strategic plans. It can even be possible to start a mapping activity by keeping/gathering citizen request and complaint data on neighbourhood basis and make strategic plans much more effective.

Vision Development:

In the strategic plans prepared by municipalities, "vision" defines the desired ideal future of the respective municipality and the respective city. Therefore, the vision to be prepared is expected to describe a common future which is acknowledged/adopted by everybody living in that city. The only way to provide this is to ensure participation at the widest scale of representation possible also in the process of vision development and compile the expectations of stakeholders/citizens and the future vision they foresee together.

On some occasions, the vision of the mayor and senior management and the vision of citizens may not coincide. For example, the vision of "localization of sustainable development goals" of the municipality administration may not be a topic of priority for stakeholders/citizens. At this point, the municipality should well describe why it targets the said future vision and act in consideration of the anticipations of stakeholders with regard to the vision to the extent possible.

Determining Strategies:

Strategy development in strategic plans is generally determining how to reach from the situation/position identified by the current situation analysis to the (desired) future manifested with the vision statement. In this regard, it is one of the most important parts of strategic plans.

The strategy development process is realized in the form of purposes, targets and activities determined to reach them. In this process, it is very important to reflect on the plan the purpose, targets and activities shared with a participatory point of view with the largest participation. Especially setting targets for disadvantaged groups is crucial for the principle of inclusivity.

Certain direct targets can be set in the strategic plan in the context of good governance and participation. For example, certain clear targets and activities can be identified with regard to developing a participation culture at the local, ensuring stakeholder participation at the implementation stage, making an impact on decisions taken, making monitoring and evaluation activities participatory etc..

Some Critical Strategic in Strategic Planning:

Paying attention to the following points for efficient stakeholder participation at the strategic planning stage is important for a successful process:

- While determining stakeholders, including the largest stakeholder group possible (with different specialties, backgrounds, world views etc.) for the sake of participation allows for manifesting various viewpoints, perspectives, specialties, experience and solution approaches.
- Efficiently including NGOs with specialty in hard to reach disadvantaged groups (children, youth, women, disabled, migrants etc.) in the process is an important opportunity of benefiting from different field experiences/expert opinions and creating possibilities of cooperation in the implementation process.
- As the strategic plan is prepared in a rather short time, it may be reach to all identified stakeholders. Therefore, the “sampling” method can allow for representing the ideas of stakeholder groups as fairly as possible. For example, a peak organization for the disabled (like a federation) can be preferred rather than involving all local NGOs related to people with disabilities.
- It is very important to inform stakeholders about the topic (purpose of participation, expectations from stakeholders, promises of the municipality) before involving them in strategic plan activities.
- While consulting about the plan topics, it is necessary to be open to varying ideas of all involved parties.
- Stakeholders should be informed about how all general ideas and recommendations will be evaluated in the strategic plan and every stakeholder who contributed should be provided feedback about the outcome/plan at the end of the process.

5.1.4. Possible Roles of the Municipality

This chapter described what possible roles different stakeholders can undertake in the said process:

Analysis and Planning Stage	
Actors ↓	Possible Roles ↓
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize participation in the call/circular for preparations for the strategic plan sent to the units • Lead presenting open to participation, clear and accessible procedures • Demonstrate support and ownership to allow for active participation of the Citizens’ Assembly and the civil society
Service Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the coordinator team of the strategic plan preparations, efficiently plan the participation process of stakeholders in advance and make preparations accordingly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training about participation for the units, if necessary • Provide outside expert support for participation process management, if necessary • Make a good stakeholder analysis and ensure participation representation on a wide spectrum at the local • Provide timely and comprehensive information about the stipulated participation processes (for stakeholders) • Make good timing and supply resources, if necessary, to ensure participation of different segments of the civil society • Ensure active participation of mukhtars in the process to make a current situation analysis at the neighbourhood level (coordinated by the Neighbourhood Affairs Units) • Analyse citizen requests and complaints retrospectively, and on the neighbourhood basis if possible • Always provide feedback to stakeholders who participated and contributed at the end of the participation processes
Municipal Council and Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the municipality administration meets the groups they represent in the preparations of the strategic plan • Facilitate the municipality administration’s contacting various groups and learning their approaches and expectations • Offer organizing a special sitting in the council about participation at the local level; discuss and decide on current problems and recommended solutions in the context of participation • Make a study to identify the needs and requests of the neighbourhoods in areas represented by the councillors (e.g. meeting with citizens in neighbourhood meetings); discuss and decide on obtained results in the council/commission meetings • Include the recommendations of Citizens’ Assemblies for the draft strategic plan, support allowing the Citizens’ Assembly to share their opinions, discuss and decide on these recommendations

5.1.5. Frequent Problems in Practice and Recommended Solutions

This chapter lists frequent problems in the process and offers recommended solutions under the light of information obtained from comprehensive analyses and pilot practices with regard to the current situation of participation at local level performed under the *Local Administration Reform Project Phase III (LAR-III)*:

Analysis-Planning Stage	
Frequent Problems	Recommended Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While this stage covers the highest level of participation, participation does not exceed the “consultation” level, feedback is mostly not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback mechanisms can be operated to ensure participation is not stuck at the “information” and “consultation” level.

<p>provided, which negatively impacts participation at further stages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant stakeholders are generally organized, disorganized groups and citizens do not have sufficient information about the process and their participation is very low. • The interactions between the Metropolitan-District Municipalities seem to be weak; there is poor institutional participation. • Participation is mainly realized upon “invitation”; initiatives for participation remain very weak when there is no invitation. • Participation in strategic plan activities is mostly realized for the purpose of receiving requests/creating activities; participatory approaches remain very low in taking decisions on the future of the city (determining its vision). • It is common to perceive participation (only for this stage) to be a one-time practice. • Needs identification on the neighbourhood basis is weak, at this point, mukhtars’ participation in analysis and planning processes is low. • The schedule is tight and time is limited for strategic plans to be prepared in 6 months from the local elections. • For this stage, the legislation generally defines organized groups such as NGOs, chambers of profession etc. as stakeholders, the legislation does not sufficiently include clear statements on the participation of disorganized groups. • Public personnel have certain prejudice towards NGOs. • Some of the actors outside the municipality have “participation fatigue” (negative past experience in participation). • It is a negative factor when the general assembly times of the Citizens’ Assembly and strategic plan calendars of municipalities coincide • There is common understanding that mukhtars do not show equal interest in every neighbourhood in service planning, and it is considered to be a challenge with regard to participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative tools and methods can be used to increase participation of disorganized groups/citizens in addition to NGOs, chamber of profession etc. as stakeholders. • Municipalities can encourage ensuring district Citizens’ Assemblies are informed about strategic plan preparations and involved in the process. • Citizens’ Assemblies and their thematic working groups/councils can be involved more efficiently at this stage, because Citizens’ Assemblies have strong requests and demands in this regard. • It is especially important to reflect on the plans the field experience of NGOs engaged in the respective field about participation of disadvantaged groups. • Neighbourhood mukhtars can be used more efficiently in determining the needs at the neighbourhood level, because mukhtars have strong requests and demands in this regard. • Inviting disorganized groups to meetings with random sampling. • Tools with geographical information system infrastructure such as socio-economic mapping can be used more efficiently for analysis and planning on spatial basis.
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a challenge in neighbourhood-mukhtar-citizen participation in very large neighbourhoods in terms of spatial settlement and population. | |
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5.1.6. Good Practices

This chapter presents 2 cases from Türkiye and Europe for the foregoing information about how to include participation at the analysis and planning stage of decision making processes. Each case's purpose, process summary, obtained results and necessary sources for detailed information are presented separately.

5.1.6.1. Çorum Municipality, Designing Bus Routes with Citizens

Purpose:

It was identified that transport was the topic which received the most complaints among the services of the Çorum Municipality, for this reason, improvement of public transport routes was identified as a priority area. For the solution to problems of routes failing to meet the needs, faulty selection of stops, insufficient number of rounds, and low service quality, it was intended to consult to the opinion of citizens who used the service and make them a part of the solution with their active participation.

Process:

Two methods were used in general in identifying the citizens' requests; questionnaire and citizen meeting. In the citizen meeting, information was provided about the current situation of the project and the said routes, citizens verbally expressed their recommendations, and they marked their requests and recommendations in writing on the route maps.

The meeting was also attended by the administrators and directors from the Directorate of Transport Services of the municipality. Visuals of routes of seven lines were hung on walls. These visuals included satellite images and the route map which showed the routes of the lines in the area, population density, important areas (schools, hospitals, parks, markets etc.). Citizens wrote on the route visuals to mark the routes they used the most and made changes as they wanted. They included various requests such as adding or moving stops, revision of the route, creating new lines etc.

Outcomes:

The process created important awareness for both citizens and municipality personnel. It was found out that service productivity and quality would be poor if the service provider operated without knowing the conditions and requests of the service receivers, and it was experienced that simple improvements could reach high levels of satisfaction with services.

As can be seen in the participation process executed by the Çorum Municipality, the fact that exemplary practices were realized for certain services before the project was completed is important as it demonstrates citizens that their participation in the decision making processes created an influence and their participation could improve their life quality. For example, certain stops which were at dark locations were illuminated, some stops were moved, the route of a line which was far from the school area was revised, and metal seats in the stops were replaced by wooden ones. Concrete outcomes are also important for improving participation in further processes and owning the results.

The method allowed citizens to have a different grasp of the issue, think about and synthesize it differently by commissioning personnel to visualize components of the routes and important areas such as

population density and offer help when maps are not well understood. In addition, some people have their ideas triggered better with visual components and some people are able to express themselves better in writing, while others may find it difficult to express themselves before public. Therefore, supporting visuals and written requests which allowed for individual participation yielded more efficient involvement of different individuals.

In the meeting, the importance of bringing citizens and decision makers together was understood, and the significance of participation mechanisms was demonstrated to understand that the municipality service was not related to the mayor in person, but to all municipality employees.

5.1.6.2. Gdansk Municipality (Poland), Citizen Panels

Purpose

Gdańsk is one of the European coasts which are the most subject to rising water levels. Citizen Panels were assembled with the initiative of the Gdansk Mayor to have an opinion about how to intervene with complex issues of the city. The first Citizen Panel intended to develop recommendations about how to better prepare the Gdansk city for heavy rainfall and prevent floods. This problem was addressed because of the unprecedented flood that happened in 2016 which caused serious financial damage and killed two citizens. Upon the positive outcomes of the first Citizen Panel, the municipality conducted two more processes – one of them focused on the people’s preferences about how to improve air quality in the city and the third council discussed issues about improving civil participation and gender equality.

Process

In every process, about sixty residents in Gdansk were selected with the random selection software. Age, gender and other factors were considered and efforts were made to make the group represent the city’s population to the highest extent possible. Despite the intensity and length of the process, most participants continued activities in the Citizen Panel throughout the process.

While determining the participants, a process was prepared to hear field experts and opinion providers. Participants listened experts, discussed in small groups and asked experts their questions. A significant amount of time was provided for deliberations and discussions and they worked together to create special recommendations (19 recommendations were developed in the first Panel). At the end, the recommendations were voted and 16 of them were selected.

The Mayor promised to implement all recommendations which received support of more than 80% of the participating people.

Outcomes

The measures in Gdansk resulted positively. In 2017, there was another flood in Gdansk, but this time, thanks to the efforts of the Citizen Panel, the municipality was able to intervene sooner. Since then, other Polish cities including Warsaw and Lublin started to take action to initiate their own Citizen Panels.

Significance for Türkiye

- Random selection of participants for more equal participation can be used in Türkiye more commonly.
- Methods can be used where ordinary citizens are able to listen a group of various experts, ask questions and discuss what they hear.
- Receiving support from academicians with strong understanding of methodology and powerful political support are also critical for a successful process.

Links and sources for further information:

https://citizensassemblies.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Citizens Assemblies_EN_web.pdf

<https://guests.blogactiv.eu/2017/11/20/solutions-how-the-roles-are-making-democracy-work-again-in-gdansk/>

https://apolitical.co/en/solution_article/citizens-tackle-public-problems

https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/delivering_recommendations_attachment_to_gdansk_case.pdf

5.2. Budgeting Stage

5.2.1. Why Participation at This Stage?

This is a stage where the necessary budget is created to realize recommended solutions developed around the problems, needs and priorities determined during analysis and planning. Budgeting, one of the stages where awareness is the lowest in terms of involving participation processes, is considered by municipalities as an area which is largely closed to participation. However, there are many examples of participation at this stage at the internal level. This approach called the “Participatory budgeting” has certain examples in our country, albeit in limited numbers. Participatory budgeting essentially describes a process where spending priorities for identifying new investments and developing current services by municipalities in line with the participation and preferences of citizens.

Advantages of involving the civil society at this stage:

- Allows for using municipality resources in an efficient and productive way
- Allows for improving social justice at the local by considering social priorities
- Allows for realizing the needs and priorities of different segments, especially disadvantaged groups
- Allows municipalities to fulfil their responsibility of accountability to citizens
- Contributes to citizens’ awareness about owning the city, thus developing active citizenship

Challenges of involving the civil society at this stage:

- While determining the distribution of expenditures, it may be hard to find a balance between the priorities of the city, citizens and the municipality
- If there is not a budget that is suitable to “participate” in, in other words, the budget is already very limited, it may not be possible to reflect the priorities found by citizen participation onto the budget

5.2.2. Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment

Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment at the Budgeting Stage

Main Question: *As municipalities, do you ensure stakeholder participation at your annual budgeting activities (participation of citizens/Citizens' Assemblies/NGOs/neighbourhood mukhtars, and other stakeholders)? If yes, how/at which level?*

Guiding sub-questions:

- Which methods and tools do you use for participation?
- How do you evaluate contributions/recommendations/requests from the Citizens' Assembly/NGOs?
- Do you provide any feedback about received opinions/contributions?
- Are there any organizations such as NGOs, chambers of profession (e.g. chamber of public accountants) that regularly monitor the implementation of the budget throughout the year?

5.2.3. Possible Entry Points for Participation at the Budgeting Stage

In municipalities, the budgeting stage is a critical stage where necessary resources/budgets are reserved to perform the activities which are realized annually and planned for the respective year. Participation at the budgeting stage which is repeated on an annual basis in the form of performance programmes is not a well-known and implemented practice yet in our country.

This concept called participatory budgeting describes a process where generally the annual spending priorities of municipalities are identified and budgeted in line with the participation and preferences of citizens. Participatory budgeting which was first used in Porto Alegre city of Brazil in 1989 is being implemented by local administrations around the world in various forms today. There are a few similar practices in our country too, but as mentioned earlier, the awareness in this respect is not at the desired level yet. Main reasons include that the issue is not well-known yet, and available practices have a narrow scope and are not perpetual.

There are different forms of practice in the world with regard to participatory budgeting. As one of the most common practices, a certain ratio of the annual investment budget of the municipality (generally 5%-15%) is reserved for projects/activities prioritized by citizens. As known, a very significant portion of municipality resources/budgets is reserved for personnel expenses, administrative expenses, routine service expenses (park-garden, road construction-maintenance etc.), debt payments and/or ongoing investments which are called "fixed costs or compulsory expenditures". For this reason, the share of the budget that can be prepared "participatory" in the total budget is very small. However, this situation does not diminish the importance and impact of participatory budgeting, on the contrary, all experience shows that participatory budgeting, a concrete participation model in the prioritization of expenditures, plays a very important role in creating/developing a participatory culture even when it is implemented in a very simple/symbolic way.

One of the most common approaches to participatory budgeting is the prioritization activities with the participation of citizens at the neighbourhood level. The main purpose of this approach is to allow citizens to identify priority topics for their own neighbourhoods and/or the city they live in as a result of various participatory processes. These priorities manifested at the neighbourhood level are then implemented to the extent promised by the municipality.

An Exemplary Case Under LAR-III Project:

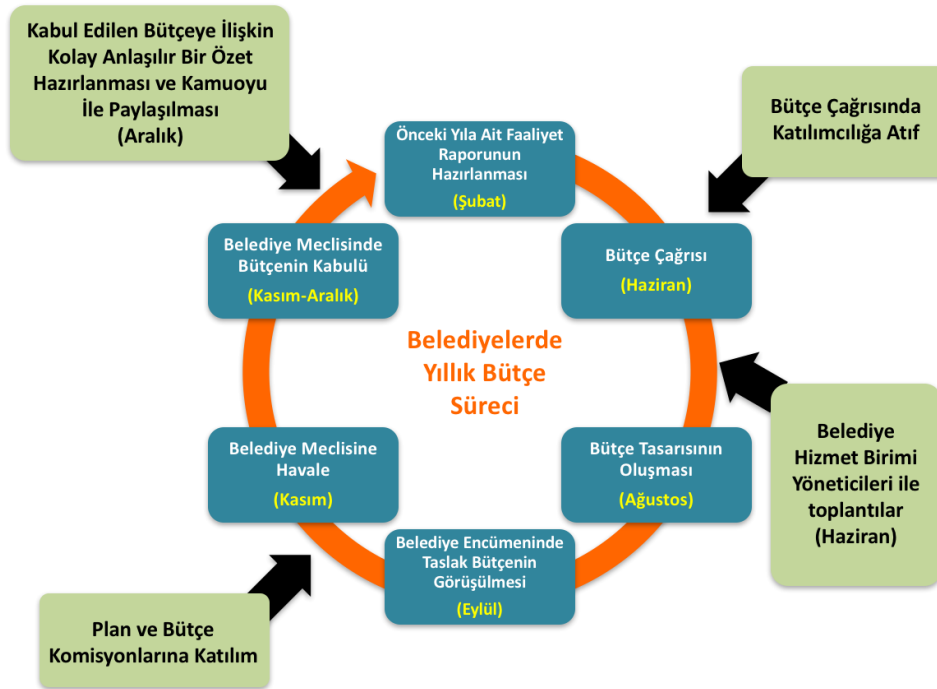
The Trabzon Metropolitan Municipality identified Akçaabat district and affiliated neighbourhoods as a

pilot practice area for the participatory budgeting activities it performed under the LAR-3 Project. In the budgeting works performed in coordination between the Trabzon Citizens' Assembly, Akçaabat Citizens' Assembly and Akçaabat Municipality, an attempt was made to identify the problems and needs of every neighbourhood in the district (73 neighbourhoods in total). The main challenge was to **identify common priorities** among the identified problems and needs of 73 neighbourhoods and include them in the annual budget plan of the Metropolitan Municipality. Considering over 700 neighbourhoods in total in Trabzon, it becomes a bigger challenge. For this reason, there is a need for prioritization based on certain criteria (population, surface area etc.) to be determined in the participatory budgeting activities to be performed at the neighbourhood level.

In some participatory budgeting practices, citizen participation is ensured in determining the priorities directly at the city level rather than the neighbourhood level, but it does not change the main logic that citizens have a say (even if just a bit) on the municipality budget. Participatory budgeting also has positive aspects at other stages of decision making processes such as monitoring and evaluation, which will be addressed in the following chapters.

There are other opportunities to include the participatory approach in the budgeting stage than the approach where a part of the municipality budget is determined through citizen participation. For that, it is necessary to look into municipalities' annual budgeting processes:

Graph 6. ????



Kabul Edilen Bütçeye İlişkin Kolay Anlaşılır Bir Özet Hazırlanması ve Kamuoyu İle Paylaşılması (Aralık)	Prepare an easy to understand summary of the adopted budget and share it with the public (December)
Bütçe Çağrısında Katılımcılığa Atıf	Refer to participation in the call for the budget
Belediye Hizmet Birimi Yöneticileri ile toplantılar (Haziran)	Meetings with heads of municipality service units (June)
Plan ve Bütçe Komisyonlarına Katılım	Participation in planning and budget commissions

Önceki Yıla Ait Faaliyet Raporunun Hazırlanması (Şubat)	Prepare the activity report for the previous year (February)
Bütçe Çağrısı (Haziran)	Call for the budget (June)
Bütçe Tasarısının Oluşması (Ağustos)	Create a draft budget (August)
Belediye Encümeninde Taslak Bütçenin Görüşülmesi (Eylül)	Discuss the draft budget in the municipal executive board (September)
Belediye Meclisine Havale (Kasım)	Submit to the municipal council (November)
Belediye Meclisinde Bütçenin Kabulü (Kasım-Aralık)	Adoption of the budget at the municipal council (November-December)
Belediyelerde Yıllık Bütçe Süreci	Annual Budgeting Process in Municipalities

As can be seen in the graph above, the first period where participatory approaches can be included in municipalities' annual budgeting process might be the "budget call" signed by the Mayor and sent to the units in May-June. As previously discussed, the approaches of Mayors with regard to participation can be determinative for all municipality operations. Therefore, it will be useful if the Mayor pays attention to participation in the budget call sent to the units and clearly expresses the message and expectations in this regard.

Based on the budget call with a focus on participation, expenditure units (directorates) can make consultations around the unit budget with the related NGOs in their own sector and/or the Citizens' Assembly. Similarly, in units such as Directorates of Mukhtars Affairs, they can meet neighbourhood mukhtars in the process, receive feedback about the neighbourhood's priorities and submit them to the related service units. In this process, the Citizens' Assembly and NGOs can contact the related units in areas they are interested in without waiting to be invited and express their own recommendations.

There also participation opportunities available while discussing the draft budget by service units in the Municipal Council Planning and Budget Commission Meetings. The Commission can invite the Citizens' Assembly or NGOs it considers relevant to the meeting and consult to their opinions and recommendations.

It is important to invite stakeholders at the widest scale possible to the Council meeting which will discuss the budget recommendation which is deliberated by the Plan and Budget Commission and sent to the approval of the Council. Moreover, this critical meeting should be broadcasted live on local media/the official web page of the municipality, if possible, and information should be provided to local people. Finally, it will be useful to prepare a simple and easy to understand summary of the budget that has been adopted by the council in way to be understood by individuals who are not financially literate.

5.2.4. Possible Roles of the Municipality

This chapter explains what possible roles different stakeholders can undertake at this stage:

Budgeting Stage	
Actors ↓	Possible Roles ↓

<p>Mayor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize participation in the call/circular for the annual performance programme and budget preparations sent to the units • Lead starting an exemplary practice with regard to participatory budgeting • Show support and ownership which will allow for active participation of the Citizens' Assembly and civil society in budgeting processes • Determine guarantees to be made by the municipality with regard to participatory budgeting
<p>Service Units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give training on participatory budgeting to the senior management and units, if necessary • Provide outside expert support about the management of participatory budgeting, if necessary • Review national and international examples in participatory budgeting and compile a report (create a road map) • Create a team to coordinate participatory budgeting activities and ensure the team plans the stakeholder participation process in advance and in an efficient manner and make preparations accordingly • Clarify issues such as the purpose, scope and method of participatory budgeting within the municipality • Provide timely and comprehensive information about the stipulated participatory budgeting approach (to stakeholders and public) • Make a good stakeholder analysis, ensure participation representation on a broad spectrum at the local • Ensure every service unit receives participation and contribution of the related stakeholders in the respective sector while preparing their own unit budget • Make good timing and provide resources, if necessary, to ensure participation of different segments of the civil society • Ensure active participation of mukhtars in the process for participatory budgeting at the neighbourhood level (coordinated by the Mukhtars Affairs Units) • Always provide information to the public about the results of participatory budgeting processes, provide feedback to stakeholders who offered their participation and contributions • Create an easy to understand budget summary for the municipality budget prepared and approved through participators processes and share it with the public
<p>Municipal Council and Councillors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure councillors engage in efforts to identify the needs and requests of neighbourhoods in the areas they represent for the respective budget year (e.g. coming together with citizens in neighbourhood meetings); address their outcomes in council/commission meetings and send to related units • Support allowing the Citizens' Assembly to share their opinions during budget discussions in the council meeting and/or Planning and Budget Commissions,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer organizing a special sitting in the council about participatory budgeting at local level; begin initiatives to start a pilot practice • Review national and international examples of participatory budgeting and compile them in a report • Address the Citizens’ Assemblies’ recommendations for the draft budget in the municipal council; support allowing the Citizens’ Assembly to share their opinions in the Planning and Budget Commission • Invite stakeholders at the largest scale possible to the council meeting to discuss the annual budget, broadcast the meeting live on local media/the official web page of the municipality, and provide information to local people • Prepare a simple and easy to understand summary of the budget adopted by the council in a way to be understood by financially illiterate individuals
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5.2.5. Frequent Problems in Practice and Recommended Solutions

This chapter lists frequent problems at this stage and offers recommended solutions under the light of information obtained from comprehensive analyses and pilot practices with regard to the current situation of participation at local level performed under the *Local Administration Reform Project Phase III (LAR-III)*:

Budgeting Stage	
Frequent Problems	Recommended Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although there are a few examples of participatory budgeting, the concept of participation in annual budgeting activities is generally not known. • In budgeting activities, information about how much budget is reserved for which neighbourhoods by the municipality is either non-existent or not shared. • There is not a part in the legislation to refer to about participation in budgeting. • With regard to participatory budgeting, municipality representatives have a common understanding that <i>“We already ensured participation at the planning stage, why is it necessary here?”</i>. • The approach of planning at the neighbourhood level is not common. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many successful practices from foreign municipalities which can be adopted to the local in Türkiye, local administrations can be informed in this regard and encouraged to make pilot practices. • There are municipalities in Türkiye which engage in and continue with successful efforts with regard to participatory budgeting; lessons from these experiences can be promoted. • Considering participatory examples in the literature, it can be seen that participatory budgeting is used as a very important tool in developing participation at local level; therefore, it can serve as a good starting point for participation. • Considering current practices with regard to participatory budgeting, it can be seen that it is possible to efficiently use structures such as the Citizens’ Assembly and neighbourhood mukhtars, there is an important opportunity in this regard.

5.2.6. Good Practices

This chapter presents 2 cases from Türkiye and Europe for the foregoing information about how to include participation at the budgeting stage of decision making processes. Each case's purpose, process summary, obtained results and necessary sources for detailed information are presented separately.

5.2.6.1. *Şişli Municipality, Participatory Budgeting*

Purpose

Şişli Municipality Participatory Budgeting Practice was initiated to allow citizens living in the district to have a say and decision about where and how the Municipality's annual disposable budget will be spent.

Process Summary

Şişli Municipality Participatory Budgeting Practice was initiated by creating a Participatory Budgeting Working Group within Şişli Municipality in 2021 in line with the decision of the senior management. After that, Şişli Citizens' Assembly Executive Board, municipality directors and councillors, mukhtars and members were informed about participatory budgeting. The process continued with identifying the participatory budget themes and meetings at the neighbourhood level.

The most important purpose of neighbourhood meetings was both to inform neighbourhood residents about the process and to create the Neighbourhood Budget Committee. In the Neighbourhood Budget Committee, mukhtars, family physician, parent-teacher association director, faith representatives and NGO representatives in the neighbourhood are natural stakeholders of the committee. Other than natural stakeholders, all residents over 18 years of age in every neighbourhood can be a candidate to be selected to the Neighbourhood Budget Committee. Every Neighbourhood Budget Committee selects two spokespersons, one man and one woman, for the Şişli Participatory Budget Council.

After selecting the Neighbourhood Budget Committee, two spokespersons, one woman and one man, are selected from every Neighbourhood Budget Committee (25 neighbourhoods) to create the Şişli Participatory Budget Council. In this council, other than the selected spokespersons, directors and employees commissioned in the management of Şişli Municipality take part as facilitators. Şişli Municipality Social Equality Unit attends activities as a natural member of this council. Decisions of the Şişli Participatory Budget Council are determined by the votes of spokespersons selected from every neighbourhood.

In support of this entire process, an easy to understand manual was prepared, a web page and mobile application called "My Budget" were created, announcements were made on social media, an advertisement film was shot and brochures were prepared to be distributed to neighbourhoods.

Outcomes

As a result of the activities started in 2021, a Neighbourhood Budget Commission was established in every neighbourhood of Şişli, then the Şişli Participatory Budget Council comprised of the spokespersons selected by the committees developed recommendations to be presented to Şişli Municipality. In this framework, the first participatory budget of Şişli was approved by the majority of votes at the Şişli Municipal Council in October.

Accordingly, of the 2022 budget of Şişli Municipality in an amount of 800 million TL, 14% which equals to 113 million TL was designated as the participatory budget according to the needs and priorities reported

by the neighbourhoods. This figure represents 50% of the Municipality's investment and activity budget.

Right in the beginning of 2022, My Budget Working Group and the Şişli Budget Council jointly created the operating instructions which regulated the operating principles and procedures of the Participatory Budget Coordination Unit established within the Directorate of Strategy Development at Şişli Municipality and put into force upon being signed by the senior management. These instructions constituted a very important step in the sense of continuity and institutionalization of these activities.

Links and sources for further information

<https://benimbutcem.sisli.bel.tr/tr/Anasayfa>

5.2.6.2. Maribor Municipality (Slovenia), Participatory Budgeting

Purpose

Maribor (Slovenia's second biggest city) started to work on Participatory Budgeting in 2013. The city's adoption of Participatory Budgeting coincide with economically and politically turbulent times. In the times following the Yugoslavia's breakup and the crisis of 2008, Maribor had to face closure of its main factories, increasing unemployment, corruption and distrust in the government.

The interest in and steering towards Participator Budgeting came from segments of the society, inspired by the ongoing reforms in Iceland at the time. Participator Budgeting is considered a way to re-establish a connection between citizens and the local administration, encourage active citizenship, better use public funding and fight with corruption and mismanagement.

Process

Every year, how much investment fund will be allocated for the Participatory Budgeting process is determined by the Municipal Council. In the period of 2020-2021 the Maribor Municipality allocated 500,000 Euros to Participatory Budgeting. This among will be shared among the urban regions and local communities.

In every region, citizens can recommend project to improve the local area. These ideas are reviewed and further developed by the municipality and costs are estimated. At this stage, any project which is out of the power and responsibility of the municipality or not feasible is excluded from assessment. Projects for which costs are estimated and pass preliminary assessment are voted by citizens. The list to be voted by citizens also determines which of the items on the list will be funded in the first place from the determined budget. The Municipality promises to provide funding to those agreed upon by citizens among the eligible projects.

Participants are regularly informed about the implementation of the agreed projects. Budget preparations usually begin in July every year. Recommendations are collected from citizens in October and voting completes in December. The participatory budget is repeated annually.

The Maribor Municipality uses an online platform ('Consul') for participatory budgeting. It facilitates collecting recommendations from citizens, sharing received project recommendations with the public (and explaining why certain ideas were rejected), offering processes for online voting and sharing voting results. The Maribor Municipality also uses digital tools for other forms of participation than Participatory

Budgeting. For example, the municipality now allows citizens to report minor problems at the local and share their ideas. It complements a larger and long term Participatory Budgeting process.

Outcomes

44 projects which were identified by the process conducted in 2020 were implemented for the 2021 budget. Evaluations of the said process reported that the process had a positive impact on the participants, they were satisfied with local democracy and felt more empowered and content in their settlements. The participants also developed more ties at the local and better understood how the Municipality operated. With regard to outcomes on the Municipality side, citizens further owned new local developments and it was better understood what they needed at the local.

Positive developments were also reached in the local perception of corruption but they are hard to be solely associated with the process.

Significance for Türkiye

- Participatory Budgeting is an approach that is used almost all around the world. It can be adapted to local circumstances. It can start small and develop its scope and content in time.
- An annual process which provides continuity offers more benefits than one-time processes.
- Working at the neighbourhood level generally makes participation more concrete than the city level.
- The direct connection between the decisions of citizens and local expenditures gives a strong message and encourages those who are hesitant about the process to participate in the following years.
- Such a process as Participatory Budgeting can also offer opportunities with regard other items on the agenda. For example, the process in Maribor identified that the issue of providing playgrounds for children and young people needed to be addressed at the city level.
- The municipality can maximize the probability of participation of various groups by combining digital and in person participation. Digital tools are important for workers with limited time.
- The participatory budget was born out of a crisis. On many occasions, reforms happened when the town was going through rough times. The tradition of local protest and active citizenship allowed for inflicting pressure from bottom to top to contribute to innovations in the local administration.
- Maribor was committed to the process in the long run. In general, the number of projects and participants may remain low in the first few years. It is easy to lose interest and leave the process, but it is important to give time for communities to get to know the process.
- Participatory Budgeting is not only a form of participation administered by the Maribor Municipality. An event that can be created by combining Participatory Budgeting with one of the participation activities and e-government solutions can be bigger than the sum of its parts.

Links and sources for further information

<https://www.maribor.si/>

[http://www.smartcitymaribor.si/en/Projects/Smart Economy and Cooperation/Participatory Budget of Municipality of Maribor/](http://www.smartcitymaribor.si/en/Projects/Smart_Economy_and_Cooperation/Participatory_Budget_of_Municipality_of_Maribor/)

5.3. Approval Stage

5.3.1. Why Participation at This Stage?

This is a stage where mainly the items put on the agenda at the technical level by municipality bureaucrats are discussed, evaluated and approved, as applicable, by elected local politicians. Municipal executive council/committee meetings involving municipal councillors from different political parties and council sessions are among the important components of this stage. In this regard, the voting stage is mainly shaped by the representatives of local politics and relations between them. Inclusion of participation at this stage can be possible by final “voting” considering topics which were identified with a participatory approach at previous stages.

Positive aspects of participation of the civil society at this stage:

- Stakeholders’ opinions and needs are taken into account by decision makers.
- When decision makers inform stakeholders and take into account all propositions about the solution they select, rumours about the approved decision are eliminated.

Challenges of participation of the civil society at this stage:

- The procedures/general operation at this stage are largely defined in advance by the legislation, therefore, opportunities of participation are limited.
- The dominant actors at this stage are mainly local politicians, therefore, citizens have limited capacity to directly influence at this stage.

5.3.2. Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment

Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment at the Approval Stage

Main Question: *How/at which level do you ensure stakeholder participation in our Municipal Council activities (participation of citizens/Citizens’ Assemblies/NGOs/neighbourhood mukhtars and other stakeholders)?*

Guiding sub-questions:

- *Do you invite the Citizens’ Assembly/NGO representatives/related neighbourhood mukhtars to the Municipal Council meetings which concern the city in general and/or with a monthly ordinary agenda, and consult to their opinion?*

- *Do they accept your invitation? If not, do you look for reasons? (Disinterest, lack of information, poor self-confidence etc.?)*
- *Do you regularly announce the date, location, agenda and decisions of the Municipal Council meetings on your web page and in local media for the public? – Do they take these announcements into account and participate? Have you tried testing it?*
- *Do you include in your agenda and discuss recommendations/requests from the Citizens' Assembly/NGOs/citizens, and provide feedback about decisions?*
- *Do you invite representatives from the Citizens' Assembly/NGOs/neighbourhood mukhtars to the Municipal Council activities (especially in planning, land development, transport and budget) depending on the agenda, and exchange opinions? Do you observe interest in participation especially of citizens? (Are they only interested in certain topics, or do they show interest at all? If not, do you look for reasons?)*
- *If there is a lack of interest, do you look for ways to improve it? Are there any examples you have tried and obtained positive results?*

5.3.3. Possible Entry Points for Participation at the Approval Stage

The power to approve the decisions taken by municipality rests with the municipal council. Therefore, the most important actors at the approval state of decision making processes are the municipal council and councillors (with representatives selected from the various segments of the society). There are certain institutional tools including council meetings, commission meetings, interviews, proposals and voting used at this stage.

There are various opportunities of including participatory approaches in council activities, in other words, at the approval stage. For example, most basically, a special session can be organized by the municipal council about participation at local level and discuss and decide on current problems and recommended solutions.

Moreover, at the strategic plan preparation stage, municipal councillors can bring together the groups they represent and the municipality administration or the unit/body which prepares the strategic plan and thus, facilitate the municipality administration's contact with different segments and learning their approaches and expectations.

At the annual budget preparation stage, the municipal councillors can take a council decision with regard to a pilot practice on "participatory budgeting". Taking such a decision is important for being binding on both the mayor and the municipality in implementation of the decision.

In connection with the foregoing, councillors can come together with citizens through neighbourhood meetings to identify the needs and requests of the neighbourhoods in areas they represent and play a role in addressing, discussing and deciding on the results of these meetings at council/commission meetings. At this point, external stakeholders such as the Citizens' Assembly and NGOs can engage in advocacy and lobbying activities to include their own recommendations in the council agenda through councillors.

With regard to council specialised commissions, the applicable legislation allows representatives from various organizations to attend and share their opinions in specialised commission meetings without a vote, but unfortunately, there are only a few examples where this regulation is implemented in reality. At

this point, the municipal council can take a council decision for more efficient implementation of this regulation.

Another opportunity of including participation in council activities is the citizens’ assemblies. As known, decisions taken by the citizens’ assembly are included in the agenda and discussed in the first meeting of the municipal council. Therefore, it is possible to be involved in the agenda of the municipal council through citizens’ assemblies.

Here, the municipal council can also discuss critical concerns about the city together with the citizens’ assembly without waiting for the decisions to come from the citizens’ assembly, or submit these concerns to them and ask to be discussed and submitted to the council in a report. Decisions approved as a result of these discussions will be legitimate and owned more.

5.3.4. Possible Roles of the Municipality

This chapter explains what possible roles different stakeholders can undertake at this stage:

Approval Stage	
Actors ↓	Possible Roles ↓
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead allowing the citizens’ assemblies/related stakeholders to have their opinions represented in the municipal council and/or specialised commissions • Start, support and own initiatives for more participatory council activities involving the citizens’ assembly, neighbourhood mukhtars and the civil society
Service Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about participatory approaches in commission meetings • Review national and international examples in participation at local level, compile them in a report and submit to the council • Share decisions taken during the council activities with the public (Press, Media and Public Relations Units) • Share council decisions taken at the neighbourhood level with neighbourhood mukhtars (coordinated by the Mukhtars Affairs Units)
Municipal Council and Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address decisions taken by citizens’ assemblies in the municipal council, discuss comprehensively and support allowing the citizens’ assembly to share their opinions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit critical concerns for the city to the citizens’ assembly without waiting for the decisions to come from the citizens’ assembly, discuss together and submit in a report to the council • Support attendance of neighbourhood mukhtars in areas represented by councillors in related meetings • Support allowing the citizens’ assembly to share their opinions in the council sessions and/or Planning and Budget Commissions • Broadcast live monthly ordinary council sessions in the local media/on the municipality’s official web page and inform the local public • Prepare a simple and easy to understand summary of the decisions of the council and share with the public
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5.3.5. Frequent Problems in Practice and Recommended Solutions

This chapter lists frequent problems at this stage and offers recommended solutions under the light of information obtained from comprehensive analyses and pilot practices with regard to the current situation of participation at local level performed under the *Local Administration Reform Project Phase III (LAR-III)*:

Approval Stage	
Frequent Problems	Recommended Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder participation is very limited in council/commission meetings; stakeholders who somehow attend these meetings do not have the change to share their opinions. • There are only a few examples where recommendations sent by the citizens’ assembly to the council are evaluated. • There is common understanding that attendance in council meetings is upon invitation. • Mukhtars who can provide citizen representation at the neighbourhood level have limited participation in council/commission meetings. • There is very limited communication/interaction between municipal councillors and mukhtars/citizens (other than election periods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regard to the legislation, stakeholders’ capacity to share their opinions in council meetings is largely at the discretion of the mayor; therefore, it can be recommended for the legislation to include more facilitating components. • Especially in citizens’ assemblies and neighbourhood mukhtars, increasing the current request of participation in council activities can be supported. • The number of examples where council meetings are broadcasted live for the public can be increased; it will also be a positive development for improving transparency at local level. • In the legislation, certain regulations on stakeholder participation in council activities (inviting and consulting to their opinion as necessary) can be emphasized more often and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation is almost non-existent in council meetings other than a few examples where council meetings are broadcasted live. • With regard to the legislation, stakeholders have very limited capability to share their opinions in council meetings; it is mainly at the discretion of the mayor; therefore, it is stated that the legislation should include more facilitating components. 	<p>participation can be further strengthened in this regard.</p>
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5.3.6. Good Practices

This chapter presents 2 cases from Türkiye and Europe for the foregoing information about how to include participation at the approval stage of decision making processes. Although a concrete practical example from Türkiye which can be considered successful is not presented under this topic, positive developments in the sense of transparency are shared.

5.3.6.1. *Municipal Council activities under “Transparent Municipalism” in Türkiye*

Under the Law No. 5393 on Municipality, the Municipal Council meetings are open to the local people and the time and location of meetings are shared with the public by various means. Furthermore, the law stipulates sharing the municipality agenda and decisions taken with the local people.

In addition, it is possible that institutions such as NGOs, chambers of profession, universities, unions, mukhtars and citizens’ assemblies can participate and share their opinions without a vote in specialised commissions which are very important components of Municipal Council works. However, as a result of the analytical studies performed under the LAR-3 Project, it can be seen that the said stakeholders’ participation in commission meetings is very limited. This is because of the fact that commission members are not willing and encouraging enough for the participation of other stakeholders than councillors in commission meetings and stakeholders do not make sufficient requests and attempts to participate externally in these meetings. However, it is very important for the municipal council and institutions such as citizens’ assemblies, NGOs, chambers of profession, universities, unions and mukhtars to have close links for strengthening participation mechanisms at local level.

It can be observed that the local people have been increasingly informed about the municipal council works in the framework of “transparent municipalism” recently. There are increasingly more examples where monthly municipal council meetings are broadcasted live on local media or directly on the municipality’s official web page. Moreover, agendas are published before the meeting and it is possible to download and review the decisions taken (in summary or in full) through many municipality’s web pages. Some municipalities also published the municipal council decisions and related commission reports retrospectively in archive files on their web pages.

These increasing examples are highly appreciated in the sense of informing the local people about the council works, but they are not enough for the participation of stakeholders/the civil society in the

decisions taken by the municipal councils. For example, there is no mechanism where the local people or representatives from the civil society can share their opinion about the items on the council agenda (without the consent of the council/commission). In this regard, receiving regular feedback through the e-consultation platform with regard to the draft documents to be submitted to the council, which is a practice in the Rijeka Municipality to be discussed below, can be considered an inspiration.

5.3.6.2. Rijeka Municipality (Croatia), Rijeka Smart City Practice

Purpose

Rijeka city had been a long standing leader in transparent and open decision making in Croatia. The Municipality adopted digital tools before everybody else in making the council open to citizens. Starting from offering basic information on the web page in the beginning of the 2000s, it offered more advanced solutions in recent years and developed participation tools in time. Recently (2016-2018), Rijeka intended to allow for including citizens in decision making process about the public infrastructure and attempted to develop the “Citizen Cooperation Platform” in addition to the already present e-consultation platform.

This practice of the city has a few purposes; make information more accessible (corresponding aspects of transparency and accountability), improve the quality of provided information, build citizen trust in the administration, and obtain useful ideas for developing public services. The practice is being performed under the title “Rijeka Smart City” and includes different components.

The purpose is to open the process to all citizens. Digital tools offer real benefits, but without a doubt, there are certain groups who are challenged in using them. There are various alternative ways to access the participatory mechanism in the city to allow for the inclusion of digitally excluded groups. Training and support are also important for better use.

Process

The Rijeka Municipality’s digital participation platform includes functions such as allowing citizens to share their opinion and complaints about problems and score others’ recommendations.

The digital participation platform also has the following options:

- ‘Small scale municipality interventions’: Citizens can request small scale municipality works in their own neighbourhoods.
- ‘Local partnership’: The solutions of civil society groups, associations and individual volunteers for local public spaces can be discussed. It is useful for more complicated issues where local information is extremely important for finding a solution.
- ‘Open recommendations’: Open throughout the year.
- Rijeka’s Open Data Portal collects open data owned by municipality companies and other organizations. Providing data in a computer readable form and in an open way facilitates citizens and organizations access to necessary information however and whenever they want. Information is available any time; this means requests which take less time under the laws on right to information.

- Rijeka also has regular consultations in person or through the online e-consultation platform about the draft documents to be submitted to the council. A report is issued on the opinions of citizens and the final council decision after every consultation.
- Citizens can attend council sessions with prior notice. As there is limited space, it is allocated upon request. Council sittings are open to public and there are a few exceptions where the public is not allowed in the sitting.
- Rijeka City also broadcasts the Municipal Council meetings on the web page of the city and make the video recording permanently accessible afterwards.

Outcomes

Rijeka City is considered a leader in participation in Croatia. It was selected the European Capital of Culture in 2020 thanks to its tradition of participation and interactions of citizens.

Significance for Türkiye

- The Rijeka example demonstrated that digital tools could ensure transparent and active participation in decision making processes at multiple levels. In addition to attending council meetings, it is also possible to watch them live or online after the event. All information that is kept open is available and searchable on the online open data portal (those without the internet access can come in person to the Information Centre for support).
- It also emphasizes the importance of including citizens and civil society groups while designing participatory mechanisms.
- A well designed participation process is important; however it will have limited positive impacts if other parts of the city's services and structures remain bureaucratic and closed. Therefore, it is necessary to support participatory mechanisms with larger cultural change and re-design of the work process.

Links and sources for further information

<https://www.rijeka.hr/en/themes-for-citizens/active-citizenship/>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277904956_Budget_transparency_of_Croatian_counties_cities_and_municipalities_in_20132014

<https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/Rijeka-Pilot.html>

5.4. Application Stage

5.4.1. Why Participation at This Stage?

The application stage can broadly be divided into 2 main groups: (1) Implementation of new investments/projects, (2) Implementation of the routine services of the municipality. For this reason, inclusion of participation at this stage can vary depending on the nature of the topic. For example, it may be hard to include participatory processes while realizing a big infrastructure investment or performing a routine garbage collection service, while it is easier to include participation in a street rehabilitation project or a routine park development. At the application stage, stakeholders who took part in previous stages will be more willing and prepared to participate in application.

Positive aspects of civil society participation at this stage:

- Stakeholders welcome the application and are ready to contribute.
- Voluntary work of stakeholders should be considered additional resource.
- There is very strong support for the application.

Challenges of civil society participation at this stage:

- Stakeholders will be disappointed if the application is delayed or cancelled.

5.4.2. Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment

Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment at the Application Stage

Main Question 1: *As municipalities, do you ensure stakeholder participation in the implementation of your activities (participation of citizens/Citizens' Assemblies/NGOs/neighbourhood mukhtars and other stakeholders)? If yes, how? At which level?*

Guiding notes/sub-questions:

- *Does the municipality senior management make related citizen/mukhtars/neighbourhood meetings about the implementation of the related activity?*
- *Do you make regular meetings throughout the year with the Citizens' Assembly/NGOs about the general activities of the municipality?*
- *How much participation and interest do these meetings attract?*
- *Compared to your past applications, is interest in participation increasing? Decreasing?*
- *If you observe an increase or decrease, do you look for the reasons?*

Main Question 2: *As municipalities, how much do you realize the principle of transparency in your practices/projects?*

Guiding notes/sub-questions:

- *For example, does your web page publish regular and up to date information about budget final accounts and income-expense accounts? How frequently?*
- *Does your web page publish regular and up to date information about tender announcements? Does it publish regular and up to date tender results in detail?*
- *Does your web page publish regular and up to date information about recommended and actual changes in the land development plan?*

5.4.3. Possible Entry Points for Participation at the Application Stage

At the application stage, there are 2 main groups: (1) New investments/projects and (2) Routine municipality services. Although the issue of including participation at this stage varies by the nature of the topic (of the project/investment/service), the important thing is to take steps to make participatory approaches a daily behaviour of the municipality as visibly as possible.

Openness and transparency:

One of the most important aspects is openness and transparency in service provision. Openness and transparency as referred to here is an honest form of openness and transparency in every issue concerning citizens beyond fulfilling legal requirements. For example, the municipality's official web page can include

regular and up to date information about recommended and actual changes in the land development plan or budget (income-expense) information in a way to be easily understood by citizens. Another way to assure transparency is make information accessible. For example, citizens should be able to easily access information about many aspects of the municipality and its services through official web pages.

Information:

In connection with access to information, another way to include participation at the application stage is providing accurate, continuous and sufficient information about activities/services. Information can be in any form and at any level. For example, if a street is to be blocked for construction work, the citizens on the street/the neighbourhood mukhtars should be given prior notification and informed about the work. Similarly, if a new investment project concerning the entire city is to be realized by the municipality, it should inform the citizens' assembly about project details, obtain their feedback if possible, and revise the project according to their opinions.

Regular/Continuous Dialogue-Consultation-Communication:

An important participatory approach that can be realized at the application stage is establishing regular/continuous dialogue and communication with the citizens' assembly/NGOs/citizens. To do this, alternatives include regular meetings with the municipality and the citizens' assembly, mayor/senior management visits to neighbourhoods and meetings with mukhtars.

These meetings do not require a certain agenda, even the municipality listening the citizens' assembly/NGOs/citizens about the services it currently provides is important in its own right for building trust in the management. A critical point here is to run these kinds of dialogue/consultation/communication mechanisms in person. Contacts in person are much more effective in communication.

Joint Service Generation/Voluntary Participation:

Another approach to including participation at the application stage is joint service generation or voluntary participation in municipality services. In this approach which is especially very common in countries with developed local participatory mechanisms, services can also be performed by volunteering individuals/groups/organizations other than the municipality or citizens contribute and participate in those services at their own discretion.

Certain steps were taken in this direction in Türkiye too. With regard to voluntary participation in local services, the "Regulation on Voluntary Participation in Services of Special Provincial Administrations and Municipalities" No. 25961 of 09.10.2005 issued by the Ministry of Interior includes important regulations in this area. According to the regulation, voluntary participation in local services can include health, education, sports, environment, parks, traffic, fire department, library, culture, tourism and social services and activities for elder people, women, young people, children, people with disabilities, people in poverty and destitute people.

In this framework, in many areas, for example park-garden arrangements, environmental order/prevention of pollution, emergency services such as search and rescue in a neighbourhood, the citizens' assemblies, NGOs, mukhtars and volunteering citizens can voluntarily offer support to provision of these services by the municipality. This approach has many other benefits than participation, including citizens owning the place they live/problems they have, acting jointly with a sense of responsibility, and contributing to the development of the concept of civil society. Therefore, it is important to encourage

and promote joint service generation or voluntary participation in municipality services at local level to the extent possible.

5.4.4. Possible Roles of the Municipality

This chapter explains possible roles of different stakeholders at this stage:

Application Stage	
Actors ↓	Possible Roles ↓
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate support and ownership to allow for active participation of the citizens’ assembly and the civil society in decision making processes • Make periodic neighbourhood visits, meet citizens and mukhtars, make mutual/in person consultations about services • Make periodic meetings with the citizens’ assembly, consult to their opinions and recommendations, provide feedback • Lead initiatives for joint service provision with volunteers in municipality services
Service Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure openness and transparency in every area concerning citizens beyond fulfilling the requirements of the legislation • Make any information concerning citizens easily accessible on the official web page of the municipality (e.g. changes in the land development plan, budget (income-expense) information, results of citizen satisfaction questionnaires, current statistics of the city etc.) • Provide accurate, continuous and sufficient information about the activities/services of the municipality (in any form and at any level) • Establish regular/continuous dialogue and communication with citizens’ assemblies/NGOs/citizens • Review national and international examples in joint service provision with volunteers in municipality services, compile them in a report, develop a model, start a pilot practice and promote within the municipality • Provide outside expert support, as necessary, to develop a model in joint service provision with volunteers in municipality services • Give training on participatory/voluntary service provision to the senior management and units, as necessary • Cooperate with the citizens’ assembly in joint service provision with volunteers in municipality services • Ensure every possible service unit implements a pilot practice in joint service provision with volunteers while offering their own services
Municipal Council and Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet, inform and receive feedback from citizens/neighbours about the activities of the municipality in the form of neighbourhood meetings in neighbourhoods they represent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the outcomes of citizen/mukhtars meetings in council/commission meetings, submit them to related units • Invite stakeholders at the largest scale possible to ordinary council sittings, broadcast live on local media/the official web page of the municipality and inform the local people
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5.4.5. Frequent Problems in Practice and Recommended Solutions

This chapter lists frequent problems at this stage and offers recommended solutions under the light of information obtained from comprehensive analyses and pilot practices with regard to the current situation of participation at local level performed under the *Local Administration Reform Project Phase III (LAR-III)*:

Application Stage	
Frequent Problems	Recommended Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two main heading at the application stage: 1) Citizens are able to observe implementation of new projects (under this heading, there are a few participatory works depending on the nature of the project –e.g. street rehabilitation projects, urban regeneration etc.); 2) Participation is almost non-existent with regard to citizen participation or taking their opinions into account in the performance of routine services. The attitude of the mayor and/or directors is especially determinative at the application stage. • There are a few sustainable participatory activities based on cooperation with NGOs due to mutual trust issues. • Public officers are prejudiced towards NGOs. • Neighbourhood mukhtars are not efficient enough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood mukhtars can be more efficient, it is useful to build a governance structure where citizen representation is stronger. • The opportunity of obtaining fast and positive results with small-simple participatory interventions at the application stage can be considered. • At this stage, advanced technology infrastructure offers important capabilities for participation (smart city applications, online application such as “fix my street” etc.). These opportunities can be used. • At the application stage, neighbourhood mukhtars can be used more efficiently in citizen participation. Especially activities such as neighbourhood meetings are useful for developing participation at local level. • Neighbourhood associations are more willing and active with regard to participation at the application stage compared to other thematic associations, using and promoting this opportunity can be supported. • It is possible to learn lessons from and/or develop models based on exemplary practices such as neighbourhood councils within the body of Citizens’ Assemblies, it will be useful to promote these lessons and models.

5.4.6. Good Practices

This chapter presents 2 cases from Türkiye and Europe for the foregoing information about how to include participation at the application stage of decision making processes. Each case's purpose, process summary, obtained results and necessary sources for detailed information are presented separately.

5.4.6.1. *Nilüfer Municipality, Neighbourhood Committees*

Purpose

Neighbourhood committees were established to ensure people participate in local administrations and decision making processes, organize the experience and potential of the neighbourhood and thus improve their life quality, raise awareness about neighbourly relations at the neighbourhood level, allow for economic, social, cultural, scientific and democratic development of the neighbourhood, and develop a culture of solidarity and reconciliation. Moreover, they were built as a structure on voluntary basis where the city's social, economic and ecological sustainability and problems were discussed, solutions were developed, the common sense and reconciliation were essential and which intended for participation of citizens of every neighbourhood in the district in the management of the city and taking active roles in a liveable city's management.

Process Summary

For the Neighbourhood Committees initiated by the Nilüfer Municipality in 2009, the secretariat and budget are undertaken by the Nilüfer Citizens' Assembly and committees are elected in 64 neighbourhoods in the district. Neighbourhood Committees operate according to the Circular on the Operation of Nilüfer Citizens' Assembly Neighbourhood Committees. Neighbourhood Committees comprise of elected and natural members. The natural members of the committees are mukhtars and members, representatives from parent teacher associations, student representatives, family health centre representatives and representatives from NGOs in the neighbourhood (associations, unions, clubs, cooperatives etc.). Elected members are elected among citizens, one person from every ballot box depending on the number of voters in the respective electoral district. Every citizen has the right to be a candidate in their own ballot box in the neighbourhood they reside in. Additionally, there are quotas for sensitivity groups such as women, young persons and persons with disabilities in elections.

In committee meetings where priority problems of the neighbourhood are addressed, an attempt is made to operate a participatory process, and information and experience sharing is intended by conveying problems to the Joint Communication Platforms. Moreover, Neighbourhood Committees have a representation right in the Citizens' Assembly General Meeting.

Outcomes

Decisions taken at hundreds of regular committee meetings are submitted to the Nilüfer Municipality and related institutions. After the benefits of Neighbourhood Committees were seen in time, the number of committees were increased from 30 and now, there is a Neighbourhood Committee in each of 64 neighbourhoods in Nilüfer. It can be observed that groups which are generally excluded from decision making processes such as women in the rural have increased their participation in the Committees.

Neighbourhood Committees are efficient local administration mechanisms at the neighbourhood level in Türkiye. They are important good practices for both meetings the needs and improving the life quality of the residents of the neighbourhood and developing direct democracy and participation processes. It is

observed that structures similar to Neighbourhood Committees are also developing under the title of Neighbourhood Council (in different forms).

5.4.6.2. *Bologna (Italy), Civic Imagination Office*

Purpose

Bologna is a dynamic city that goes through certain challenges in participation. Many residents of the city are either students or foreigners (non-citizens) who have limited capacity in elections or do not know how to participate.

It is understood that local regulations in Bologna make it hard for local citizens to influence any change in their neighbourhoods. For example, a citizen who wanted a bench on the street to be painted got to understand that the resolution of the issue required involvement of five different units. This caused hard to understand situations for citizens. In conclusion, there is poor local participation.

For this reason, certain changes were made in the internal regulations of the Municipality by the Municipal Council in 2014 to facilitate citizens' participation and influencing changes in their neighbourhoods. By doing so, it was intended to extend participation to cover new groups, improve trust in the administration and better use public funding.

Changes included the following:

- Make a new arrangement in cooperation with the public which allows the city to conclude an agreement with citizens and private enterprises for rehabilitation of public spaces, green areas and abandoned buildings
- Make a new regional organization where every region will have their own council and president (in a way to be more responsive to local needs)
- Build 6 laboratories, one in every region, which function as a hub for cooperation between the municipality and its residents
- Establish a new department under the title of "Civic Imagination Office" which coordinates the functioning of laboratories and serves as a contact point for volunteers who are willing to make a change in the city

Process

By making regulations on cooperation between citizens and the municipality, the Bologna Municipality opened the door for civil society groups, individual citizens or nongovernmental groups to be involved in Cooperation Agreements signed with the municipality for the development of public spaces. This facilitates influencing changes at the local level and encourages a participatory culture of responsibility. It is not only related to making a request from the municipality now, but also to triggering local resources for achievement. Even though the municipality is a part of the partnership under the Cooperation Agreement, it does not act on its own.

It is important to restructure the municipality in addition to the Civic Imagination Office functioning as a hub for citizen participation. The city also has a digital portal for participation (Comunità).

The Municipality has been organizing a "Society Cooperation Day" since 2015 to celebrate citizen participation and encourage more people to participate. Activities in Bologna are conducted by the Urban Innovation Foundation that was born out of the cooperation between the Municipality and Bologna

University. Cooperation with the University allowed the city to access a new and innovative way of thinking.

Outcomes

- Hundreds of cooperation agreements were concluded as a result of the activities in Bologna; for example, students built green areas, decorated their spaces and refurbished hundreds of benches in tens of schools.
- Thousands of people attended the laboratories and tens of thousands of them offered their ideas to the municipality.
- Activating the time and energy of citizens to make improvements in their neighbourhoods also saved resources that the municipality would have used otherwise. Some citizens contributed with significant resources to support the process, for example, a citizen attending the activity translator information to four languages and distributed information in their own region to allow for as many people as possible to participate.

Significance for Türkiye

- It is important to look at the current situation at the municipality. There may be ineffective organization structures without interaction and obstacles such as heavy bureaucracy to participation. Making the local administration structure more citizen-oriented can be a significant first step. The Civic Imagination Office and the laboratories in Bologna serve as starting points which can guide citizens.
- It is important to create a local region as it is closer to citizens and their needs in Bologna. It affects how activities are organized and what kind of participation is possible at the local. People can be expected to be in a relationship with a structure that is closer to their home rather than expecting them to be in a close relationship with the personnel in the head office of the municipality. It is generally a more effective method to go to them rather than expecting them to come to the municipality.
- The personnel employed in the Civic Imagination Office and the laboratories in Bologna were important. They are the 'face' of the municipality in the neighbourhood and develop strong local relations.
- The annual Society Cooperation Day is an example to an event organized by the municipality to celebrate success. It is important to demonstrate that participation is happening, which makes a difference.
- Many cooperation agreements were related to rather small and uncomplicated matters. It may be important to identify 'short term achievements' which have instant benefits that can motivate continuous participation to encourage larger participation.

Links and sources for further information

<https://participedia.net/case/5950>

<https://citiesofservice.jhu.edu/resource/co-creating-urban-commons-bologna-italy/>

<https://hub.beesmart.city/city-portraits/bologna-evolution-collaborative-smart-city>

<https://civitas.eu/news/scaling-co-creation-cluster-workshop-urban-mobility-neighbourhoods>

5.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

5.5.1. Why Participation at this Stage?

The monitoring and evaluation stage is an important stage of decision making processes, because this stage monitors and evaluates the outcomes of decisions taken and practices realized following these decisions. The monitoring and evaluation stage can be used to revise decisions if intended outcomes are not achieved. Inclusion of participation at this stage can especially create a public control mechanism with regard to the outcomes of application.

At this stage, it is necessary to distinguish between monitoring and evaluation processes, it should be designed at the beginning of the process for continuous feedback in every step. Efficient and transparent monitoring can assure the accurate and independent functioning of the process (e.g. this prevents misuse of the process by any interest group).

Advantages of civil society participation at this stage:

- Citizens who are directly affected by the process are the most suitable subjects for monitoring and evaluation; they can make a judgment about whether the decision has solved the problem.
- As the subject of monitoring and evaluation, stakeholders show more interest in the process or outcomes.

5.5.2. Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment

Helpful Questions for Self-Assessment at the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

Main Question 1: *Is there a participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanism you use in the activities you perform as a municipality? If yes, what is it and how do you evaluate its efficiency?*

Guiding notes/sub-questions:

- *For example, how/at which level do you ensure participation of Citizens' Assemblies/NGOs in annual monitoring and evaluation of your strategic plans?*
- *Do you provide information to Citizens' Assemblies/NGOs about the activity report you prepare annually?*
- *Is there a mechanism to monitor how much of the municipality budget is/will be spent on what/where every year? For example, do you announce it to the public, citizens' assembly and NGOs through various practices? Do you organize meetings to this end? Or, do you prepare a budget summary in a way to be easily understood by citizens?*
- *Do you organize participant meeting where you evaluate your activities as the municipality senior management? (neighbourhood meetings, meetings with the citizens' assembly, evaluation meetings open to the press etc.)*
- *Do you evaluate the possible impacts of decisions/activities on vulnerable groups (mainly people with disabilities and women)?*
- *Are there any examples where the monthly practices of your budget are monitored by NGOs/chambers of profession (e.g. chamber of public accountants)?*

Main Question 2: *How do you measure and evaluate citizen satisfaction in the activities/projects you perform as a municipality?*

Guiding notes/sub-questions:

- *Does your municipality have a complaint desk and complaint line easily accessible by the public? How do you evaluate/prioritize received requests-complaints? How does the feedback mechanism operate?*
- *Do you give priority to request-complaint reports of disadvantaged groups (women, people with disabilities, unemployed, elderly, low income, migrant etc.)?*
- *Do you make a Citizen Service Satisfaction Questionnaire in regular intervals?*
- *Do you share the Citizen Satisfaction Questionnaire question form and detailed results with the public?*
- *Does the municipality senior management organize regular weekly/monthly citizen/mukhtars/neighbourhood meetings?*
- *Do you provide retrospective information about the deviations between what is going to be done and what was promised to be done in these meetings?*
- *Do you observe increased interest and attention in the next meeting after providing concerned information?*

5.5.3. Possible Entry Points for Participation at the Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

There are various ways to include participatory approaches at the monitoring and evaluation stage. Some of them are listed below:

Municipal Councils:

While municipal councils are the main decision bodies municipalities, they also have an auditing duty. Therefore, councillors can monitor and evaluate the municipality administration's performance in terms of services (for example, annual monitoring of strategic plans/performance programmes, information about budget expenditures etc.), and ensure they are addressed and discussed at council meetings as necessary.

A similar approach can be adopted by councillors towards citizens. For example, as in practices in some European cities (e.g. Barcelona), every councillor can be responsible for certain neighbourhoods and provide information, receive feedback about the activities of the municipality by regularly meeting mukhtars/citizens in respective neighbourhoods.

Evaluation Meetings:

An important participatory approach that can be realized for the monitoring and evaluation stage is participatory meetings where the municipality senior management and citizens' assembly/NGOs/citizens evaluate the activities of the municipality together. For example, neighbourhood meetings, periodic evaluation meetings with the citizens' assembly, evaluation meetings open to the press etc..

These meetings can happen in periods when the municipality publishes its activity report. It is important for the mayor to attend these meetings in person because it can ensure desired participation in the meetings, and it is an important approach in the context of accountability when the mayor provides opinion in person about the deviations between what was promised and what was not completed with regard to sufficient/necessary issues.

Citizens' Assemblies:

Citizens' Assemblies have a very important mission of monitoring municipalities in addition to participation in decision making processes and activities such as social development. In this framework, a monitoring working group can be established within the body of citizens' assemblies and this group can perform monitoring activities in various areas. For example, monitor and evaluate strategic plans on annual basis, identify topics which are included in the plan but not implemented, review the municipality's

activity report, monitor how much of the municipality budget is/will be spent on what/where, evaluate the impacts of activities on vulnerable groups (mainly people with disabilities and women).

This monitoring groups can include civil society representatives such as the Chamber of Public Accountants specialised in budget, mukhtars representatives etc.. As a result of all these monitoring activities, it can be possible to prepare a simple and easy to understand monitoring report and share it with the public.

5.5.4. Possible Roles of the Municipality

This chapter lists possible roles of different stakeholders at this stage:

Monitoring and Evaluation Stage	
Actors ↓	Possible Roles ↓
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show support and ownership to make monitoring activities possible for the citizens’ assembly and the civil society • Make periodic neighbourhood visits, meet citizens and mukhtars, provide information-receive feedback about service performance • Make periodic evaluation meetings with the citizens’ assembly, consult to their ideas and opinions, receive feedback • Organize public information meetings for the annual service performance of the municipality • Inform the Council about the annual service performance of the municipality • Transparently share the results of citizen satisfaction questionnaires with the public
Service Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a monitoring mechanism within the municipality to keep records of and monitor citizen requests and complaints according to various parameters (age, gender, neighbourhood information etc.) • Provide necessary data to citizens’ assemblies/NGOs which perform monitoring activities • Make periodic meetings with citizens’ assemblies/NGOs which perform monitoring activities • Start necessary initiatives for the municipality activities to be monitored and evaluated by independent experts • Cooperate with mukhtars for monitoring and evaluation on the neighbourhood basis (coordinated by Mukhtars Affairs Units) • Ensure every possible service unit makes satisfaction measurements with their own services, shares it with the citizens’ assembly • Prepare a simple and easy to understand summary of the Municipality activity report issued at the end of the year with the public

Municipal Council and Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and evaluate the performance of the municipality administration in terms of services, ensure they are addressed and discussed in council meetings as necessary • Ensure councillors regularly meet mukhtars/citizens in neighbourhoods they represent, provide information about the activities of the municipality, receive feedback • Ensure monitoring reports prepared by the citizens' assembly are discussed in the council session and/or commission meetings, support them in sharing their opinions • Invite stakeholders at the largest scale possible to the council session which discusses the annual activity report, broadcast live in the local press/the municipality's official web page, and inform local people • Prepare a simple and easy to understand summary of the Municipality activity report issued at the end of the year⁹, and share it with the public
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5.5.5. Frequent Problems in Practice and Recommended Solutions

This chapter lists frequent problems in the process and offers recommended solutions under the light of information obtained from comprehensive analyses and pilot practices with regard to the current situation of participation at local level performed under the *Local Administration Reform Project Phase III (LAR-III)*:

Monitoring and Evaluation Stage	
Frequent Problems	Recommended Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, approaches where municipalities are monitored and evaluated by stakeholders are not common. • There are problems with generating/sharing information which is the main key for monitoring and evaluation (e.g. data at the neighbourhood level is generally not produced/used, shared documents are not sufficiently understood etc.). • Municipalities do not fulfil their responsibility of accountability towards citizens at a sufficient level (other than election periods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools/guidelines prepared for monitoring the municipality's strategic plans and budget expenditures can be promoted. • With regard to monitoring the budget by the civil society, specialised organizations such as the Chamber of Public Accountants can play an active role. • Quality Management Systems which also cover citizen satisfaction can be promoted in the municipality; procedures can be prepared where local stakeholders can also be involved in the process other than only intra-institutional monitoring and evaluation procedures.

⁹ There is a document which is issued by the Ministry of Treasury and Finance of the Republic of Türkiye on an annual basis under the title of the "Citizen Budget Guideline". The citizen budget guideline is a simple and easy to understand summary of the annual central budget. It includes basic information about expenditures to be made in the respective year and how they will be funded. It intends to provide such information in an organized manner to the public. (<https://www.hmb.gov.tr/bumko-vatandas-butce-rehberi#>). A similar budget summary can be prepared at the local level using this budget summary prepared at the central level.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most municipalities do not sufficiently adopt a transparent approach beyond what is stipulated in the legislation. • The municipality’s activity reports, financial status reports and other documents which allow for monitoring are not presented in a simple way to be easily understood by people who are technically illiterate. • Impact assessment is not performed in general for the activities of the municipality with respect to vulnerable groups. • Citizen satisfaction questionnaires do not generally cover all service areas and sub-components of the municipality and focus on general satisfaction. • The results of citizen satisfaction questionnaire are not generally shared with local people. • There is not any mechanism designated for participatory monitoring and evaluation. • Actors who can perform monitoring and evaluation do not have sufficient capacities yet, they have poor practice in cooperation (e.g. neighbourhood mukhtars, citizens’ assemblies and NGOs can meet and perform independent monitoring). • Some tools which allow for monitoring are hard to use (hard to read the activity reports, technical challenges in budget monitoring etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available tools for receiving requests-complaints can be diversified (e.g. advanced digital tools). • Information and awareness raising activities can be performed to make legislation components about transparency more visible (e.g. Municipalities can be required to share certain critical reports and documents on their official web page). • Citizens’ assemblies and neighbourhood administrations can be made more efficient in monitoring and evaluation at the provincial, district and neighbourhood level.
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5.5.6. Good Practices

This chapter presents 2 cases from Türkiye and Europe for the foregoing information about how to include participation at the monitoring and evaluation stage of decision making processes. Each case’s purpose, process summary, obtained results and necessary sources for detailed information are presented separately.

5.5.6.1. *Antalya Citizens’ Assembly, Antalya City Monitoring Platform*

Purpose

The Antalya City Monitoring Platform has been established as a local civil society platform on a voluntary basis which monitors the city’s problems with objective and scientific approaches and compiles this monitoring process in a report to be shared with the public and related public institutions.

Process Summary

The Antalya City Monitoring Platform first started its activities in 2014 with the initiative of lawyers registered at the Antalya Bar Association with a sensitivity towards local problems. During the foundation process, information and experience were shared with lawyers who were registered at the Bar Association

and served in the past or were currently serving at local administrations, and discussions were made what could be done for the city.

In the following process, the Antalya City Monitoring Platform gained a bigger structure with the participation of persons and groups from different areas of expertise and with sensitivity towards the city's problems including academicians, city planners, architects, engineers and journalists and began to engage in activities on a voluntary basis.

Outcomes

The Antalya City Monitoring Platform reviews, monitors and periodically reports on how the residents of the city access to their right to the city together with the volunteers within its body. Similarly, it monitors the city's problems, put them on the agenda of the administrators of the city, and engage in activities to allow them to be discussed with stakeholders at local level. In this framework, participatory meetings/workshops were organized under the title of "*Antalya Right to the City Forum*" and "*City Law and Joint Administration of the City*". Moreover, "outcome declarations" were also published which demonstrated the outcomes of these events and also included a road map for the administrators of the city.

The Antalya City Monitoring Platform has become an important civil society actor which is also carefully followed by the administrators of the city at the local as a result of all these efforts.

5.5.6.2. Nantes Municipality (France), Citizen Evaluation

Purpose

The Nantes Municipality has been utilizing participatory mechanisms for years. The study in Nantes essentially focused on sustainable development based on the activities of the cities under Agenda 21, but in time, it grew to cover other topics and areas as well. On the other hand, the municipality's promise of sustainable development is still the cornerstone of participation activities.

Nantes bases its participation approach on the understanding that wide scale changes are necessary to realize sustainable development goals. This requires not only citizens' acceptance, but also improving and activating their willingness. Another purpose of Nantes is to develop cooperation among citizens to acquire necessary legitimacy for a long term action. In this framework, Nantes uses various techniques including deliberative dialogue and participatory evaluation.

Process

In 2010, the municipality adopted the Citizen Dialogue Charter which outlines what the residents of the city can expect from involving in the participation mechanism. The initial scope covers clarifying options provided to citizens in the decision making cycle from identification to evaluation.

Significant activities were performed to build the city organization in order to support and structure participatory practices.

Since 2004, the city of Nantes has made citizen evaluations about public policies and more than 15,000 citizens have been involved in these processes.

One of the highest profile "Big Discussions" was realized in 2016 and on the city's future energy transformation which intended to provide information through a new energy transformation road map adopted by the administration of the Nantes Municipality and activate citizens in this respect.

Many in person events to increase access and awareness were organized throughout the process. The residents of the city were able to share their ideas and recommendations through the council's web page and social media.

Furthermore, the municipality placed attention grabbing pink colour containers at various squares and other public spaces where people could go visit and seek information. Many interest groups were established to allow time for in-depth discussions on the topic by those who have a certain point of view for an organized civil society.

As a part of the process, the municipality established an independent citizen publication committee involved in information sharing about the process to present an independent report at the end of the process and hold the municipality accountable.

This group functions as a kind of participatory evaluation duty for the honest and transparent operation of the process. Moreover, there is a permanent Development Council comprised of representatives from the civil society that provides recommendations for the process.

Outcomes

Nantes is known at the international area for its activities in participation and sustainability. For example, Nantes became the first French city to have reached the Green European Capital in 2013 before it became the European Innovation Capital in 2019. The municipality is committed to fulfilling its assertive climate and sustainable development goals.

The municipality continues to include citizens in the solution of problems; recently it practiced virtual citizen dialogue during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

Significance for Türkiye

- Such a guiding theme as sustainable development can be useful in including participation in the local context. This can also help creating long term political consistency.
- Generally, multiple ways are needed for participation; for example, both in person and digital means should be used to reach as many people as possible.
- In addition to discussing topics with citizens, providing them with a structure by comparing potential solutions and funding them in parallel can prove to be useful.
- Independent structures can be a powerful way to keep the municipality responsible for the process and its outcomes.
- While handling a complicated issue such as climate change, the municipality needs to reach the source and energy of citizens.
- An ongoing crisis (COVID-19) does not mean citizens should be excluded. Considering major impacts on crisis management, it can be suggested that the most important thing on these occasions is participation.

Links and sources for further information

<https://energy-cities.eu/energy-democracy-in-nantes-an-independent-citizens-commission-hands-over-its-report-to-the-metropolitan-council/>

<https://urbact.eu/city-fighting-climate-change-nantes>

<https://iken.global/city/nantes-metropole-france/>

<https://participedia.net/case/7180>

6. Final Words

This guide has been prepared to contribute to making participatory mechanisms at local level more efficient and increasing participation in decision making processes. Attention is paid to harmonizing conceptual information and practical information about participation in the guideline. Moreover, as an authentic approach, different stages of decision making processes are emphasized while addressing the topic of “participation” and focus is put on how participation can be included in these stages and what possible roles can be undertaken by different stakeholders.

Participation in decision making mechanism at local level is a long process. Therefore, it will be useful if readers who are to start and develop a participatory initiative getting use of this guideline plan this initiative not as a one-off process but as a process to be repeated in the medium-long run. Because, it is very hard to obtain permanent and sustainable benefits from a one-off participatory initiative.

On the other hand, it is possible to face resistance from certain parties while performing any kind of participatory initiative. In this case (to dispose of the said possible resistance), continuous capacity development by focusing on institutional structures, raising awareness and developing institutional experience in participation through pilot practices are among the most important strategic approaches. Only doing so can contribute to developing a participatory culture at local level. This guideline is believed to be useful for readers who are willing to further deepen their knowledge and experience in participation and make an in-depth review of the topic.

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Annex-1: Methods and Tools of Participation¹⁰

Method	Official Bulletin Board
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	Exhibit information on a board placed in a public space
Purpose	Provide information to the public
Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally low cost • This information channel is a legal requirement in many jurisdictions • Large documents (e.g. maps or plots) can be published on the official board
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few individuals use boards as an information source • Only print materials can be used • Multiple documents on the board can be distracting • The bureaucratic and official language may not be easy to understand for the general public
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information should be written in a suitable language and overcome bureaucratic challenges • A connection should be established between the information on the official board and other information channels • Practical tips can be useful, for example tips about “references for further information, how to read the bureaucratic language” etc.

Method	Information Exhibition
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	Place a desk or poster stand in an available social event to include people. Encourage participants to make recommendations, comment on policies and ask brief questions.
Purpose	Gather information from citizens. Provide information.

¹⁰ The methods and tools detailed here are compiled from “Governance and Participation: Tools, Methods and Mechanisms for Effective Participation” prepared under the “Project for Developing Participatory Strategic Governance at Local Level” performed between 2011-2013 with EU funds, the co-beneficiary of which is the Ministry of Interior.

Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detail information provision • Creativity used at the most ideal level • Verbal provision of information to the visitors of the exhibition and presentations • Visitors can make verbal and written comments
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People should be triggered to visit exhibitions and presentations • The number of visitors should be kept limited • High initial costs for exhibitions (costs of the material or board to be displayed, technical materials to be used for presentation etc.) • Unsuitable for complicated topics due to time limitations
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should be made visually appealing and interesting • Activities such as voting by stickers or pebbles in jars or colourful images can be used • Access to the exhibition place should be considered • Sufficient illumination is necessary • A joint exhibition can allow partners to share costs and make it a more interesting exhibition • Exhibitions should always be interactive, feedback should be received from visitors • The launch of the exhibition can be associated with another organization such as a briefing or public meeting • 3D models, videos and photos can be used to draw attention

Method	Visitor Areas (Information Desk) / Citizen Information Centres
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	Create areas in the municipality building or in other public spaces to allow citizens to get information and ask questions about local services. They are able to reach all necessary information from a single point. Citizen information centre personnel can give additional information about a topic and practical tips to solve problems to counselees.
Purpose	Provide information about local services Encourage comments and feedback
Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselees can reach all information they need from a single point

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If more topics are included in the agenda, more complicated services can also be provided
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As all information should be updated, it may be costly for the citizen information centre to maintain its existence • It may be hard for certain target audience to reach citizen information centres
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The space should be accessible and interesting • Personnel should be ready to give accurate information and answer questions • Some of the current citizen information centre networks can be used rather than establishing new centres

Method	Brochures, Posters
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	Provide brief information to draw citizens' attention to brochures and posters
Purpose	Provide wide scale information, create awareness in citizens about a certain topic
Number of Participants	Wide access.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handing in brochures at the door can be the foundation of a wide scale information campaign • Creative brochures and posters can create awareness about the topic or the project • Brochures and posters are interesting and can transmit the underlying message through words and visuals
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a title and single-line slogans can be used • The information sources to which the brochures and posters refer citizens should be up-to-date and accessible • Attention should be paid to not overload citizens. For example, mail boxes are sometimes filled with advertisement brochures.
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is also important to use phone lines, magazines, web sites and other information channels to support the project or the topic • Posters and brochures should have records in print and electronic media • Posters and brochures should be placed where people gather

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations in the city can be asked for help to distribute posters or brochures • Posters and brochures should include brief and clear information, the main purpose of these information tools is not to provide comprehensive information, but to draw attention • Contact information (e-mail, phone number etc.) should be added for further information about the topic or the project • Brochures can also be distributed as an attachment to newspapers or magazines to reach readers
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Method	Municipality Magazine
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	It is a magazine compiled and authored by the municipality. Information can be provided on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Generally (as a service offered to the public), they are delivered in every mail box in the city free of charge.
Purpose	Provide information to citizens on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, deliver up to date information about the municipality services
Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The language used in magazines is clear and easy to understand. Terminology of specialty or an administrative/bureaucratic/academic language is not used • Journalists can serve as an editor of the magazine and provide information in a popular fashion • Citizens know that the information is accurate • Citizens know where to find information • Information is easy, accessible and open to everyone • Preliminary information can be provided with comments and research data
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the magazine requires a preparation process, contents can lose relevance and become inapplicable • A costly way to provide information • It is not an independent newspaper. It only provides information received from the municipality in an easy to understand way.
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An uninterrupted information line should be created, thus, citizens can develop habits of receiving information from the magazine

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some pages of the magazine can be reserved for commercial advertisements for additional profitability to make it more financially sustainable • The graphic design of the magazine should be compatible with the graphic layout preferred within the municipality
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Method	Articles and Conversations to be Published in the Press
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	Lay a foundation for discussing the topic with accurate information with informative publications in the press, conversations with field specialists, supporting studies etc. and for further communication and participation efforts.
Purpose	Provide wide scale but superficial information through basic information and awareness raising campaigns and create an agenda. Conversations can provide information in a more clear and easy to read way. Mass media can be understood as partners that can be helpful in the dissemination of information and partnered with.
Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very efficient way to provide information. Attracts many people in general • It is enjoyable for the reader to especially read conversations with well-known citizens • Journalists can make conversations to obtain basic information which is important for the public • It allows authorities to be more sincere (especially conversations on the radio and TV) • It may be interesting for individuals who are not interested in the topic at the first glance but may be interested in the guest
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May remain very superficial • Very limited space for information especially in the national media
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations with celebrities, athletes, politicians, business people and other well-known people can attract further interest • Practical and daily information should be provided by a person designated as the project’s press officer/representative

Method	Phone Information/Support Line
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Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	A phone number citizens can call and ask questions or comment about a local issue or a service
Purpose	Provide information, answer questions, take comments
Number of Participants	Wide use
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses can gather all information they need by dialling a single phone number • Information is general and easy to understand • Phone calls (interpersonal) are more sincere • If calls are not charged, it almost provides unlimited access
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All calls without exception are answered during working hours • It is not possible to provide in-depth information or answer more complicated questions with a general phone line • If the call costs are not borne by the project or the institution, it may prevent citizens from calling the line • In some instances, the phone line can be overloaded which may upset citizens
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The phone number should be announced to everyone • The phone line costs can be included in the project or institution budget • Frequently asked questions should be listed which should be put on the web page. Persons who are able to answer more complicated questions should be made accessible too • It is more useful if calls are answered by a live person rather than automatically • Attention should be paid to promoting the number, the success of this kind of phone lines depends on the familiarity with the line • Attention should be paid to providing feedback to information and comments provided by citizens

Method	Press Release/Press Meeting
Level of Participation	Information provision
Brief Description	A method where authorities can give preliminary information or briefing, emphasize important points and take and answer questions.

Purpose	Provide information about a certain topic
Number of Participants	A certain group
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contradictory information provision is not much probable • The press can ask questions during the meeting • Information can be provided in a single moment or at a single place • Journalists can make official declarations more interesting for readers (in other words, they can translate the official language to a more understandable language)
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the press ask questions, the spokesperson can give wrong or incomplete information • Journalists generally pick the most interesting and disputed topics for the public, therefore, important or fundamental decisions can be overlooked
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information which reflects the reality to the highest extent possible should be given to journalists • A press release should be prepared to hand in during the press meeting • The location of the press meeting should be carefully selected, the municipal council hall or locations where a certain project is implemented can be preferred

Method	Interactive Demonstrations
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling
Brief Description	Interactive demonstrations are computer and computer-like tools with which people are able to obtain information and provide feedback. Although they are very similar to online portals, they are generally placed in public spaces.
Purpose	Encourage citizens to provide information and feedback
Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The message can be given in a creative way • As there is little time to get summary information, it can easily be used at locations especially where citizens have to wait or queue

Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These spaces should be easily accessible • Very open to be vandalized
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-known public spaces such as the townhall, library, cultural centres should be used

Method	Organizations/Festivals
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling
Brief Description	A lot of attention can be drawn to a topic during a certain organization or a festival. Organizations attract masses of visitors. Using the presence of visitors, information can be provided, recommended solutions can be discussed, new members can join working groups. A pleasant and comfortable ambience can help addressing disputed matters in a more constructive way.
Purpose	Draw attention to a topic, provide information, discuss recommended solutions, address disputed subjects in a more constructive way
Number of Participants	Large group
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good way of raising large scale public awareness • A very good way of finding support for expressions, opinions and ideas • Short questionnaires are possible • Signatures can be collected to support or condemn
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should be a good organization in all aspects, a bad organization causes bad reputation for the organizers, and can redirect attention to shortcomings in the organization rather than the topic itself • May be superficial • Participants can arrive for the organization not for the topic • Visitors should not be considered representative of the general population
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations should be made for children, they will certainly ask their parents to visit the organization • Participants should not be bored with serious talking or workload • A fine balance should be established between work and fun

Method	Questionnaires ¹¹
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	<p>Make surveys through sending questionnaires via mail or e-mail or through phone or in person interviews.</p> <p>In this method, a large group is asked to provide feedback about certain topics. Feedback is summarized and conclusions are made to be used later. There are various ways to make surveys. The lowest cost way is the short questionnaire form distributed attached to the municipality magazine or published online. The highest cost questionnaire methods are surveys which are prepared with the help of sociologists and statisticians and for a segment to reflect the population's representation power. With these methods, it is possible to make an in-depth study on more complicated topics.</p> <p><u>In person:</u> Surveys are performed when a previously prepared question form is directed to a participant group as required by the topic by the pollster/facilitator. Answers to the questionnaire are analysed, survey results are evaluated and used as inputs in decision making processes.</p> <p><u>Online:</u> Online questionnaires are answered by participants without a facilitator. They are analysed and results are used as inputs in decision making processes. It is not sufficient to solely use online survey results as a basis for decisions, they are used together with other methods.</p>
Purpose	In general areas, learn individual opinions, experiences, beliefs and motivations, set an agenda, evaluate policy and service outcomes
Number of Participants	Large groups, everyone can participate
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is possible to get easy and understandable feedback from a large group • Confidentiality can be assured in general although persons are interviewed one by one • It is easy to summarize feedback
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcomplicated or technical issues cannot be included • Questions can be misunderstood
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain print information materials should be provided • Complimentaries are suitable at certain central points

¹¹ To prepare, implement and analyse stakeholder questionnaires in participation processes, see: "Stakeholder Questionnaires: A guide for preparing, implementing and analysing stakeholder questionnaires in strategic management processes" http://www.sp.gov.tr/upload/Sayfa/18/files/Paydas_Anketleri_Rehber.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is useful for reporting to not use many open ended questions • It is important to clearly identify the topic that needs to be learned, questions should be clearly expressed but not open ended • It may be more useful to harmonize different interview methods such as questionnaires and conversations • Using social networks to distribute questionnaires can provide contributions
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Method	Focus Group Discussions, Conversations, Group Conversations
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	<p>Meetings with representative small citizen groups to discuss and comment on one or more related topics. Feedback can be received on content, information provision, planning, communication, cooperation etc. through conversations whether individually or as intra-group or intra-focus group. With conversations, a more qualitative method, it is intended to obtain deeper and more developed understanding of citizens' opinions. On the other hand, findings cannot be generalized to the entire population.</p> <p>Feedback is received through consultation meetings which are organized mixed or with certain target groups. Participants are selected depending on the topic and common specifications. Mutual communication within the group enriches the outcomes. This method is generally used to create an idea or a hypothesis or evaluate it. A structured and facilitated discussion allows for clearly expressing ideas. Therefore, it may be possible to reach in-depth information very soon.</p>
Purpose	Gather opinions about various topics through structural small group discussions. In-depth review of approaches and opinions about a topic, understand personal preferences, evaluate strategies. Briefly, collect information about priority areas, analyse the situation and develop and evaluate policy options and strategies.
Number of Participants	Small group (less than 15)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons can express themselves however they want, they are not forced to use a specific form • Both verbal communication and body language provide useful feedback • The atmosphere within the group can create a positive impact
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information overload is possible, it is hard to summarize information • The atmosphere within the group can create a negative impact • Not everybody likes to speak before the group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be costly and take time to make interviews and analyse results
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A carefully structure agenda should be developed for discussions • All opinions should be taken into account • Group conversations and conversations in focus groups should begin with individuals who have positive view of life and think constructively • Meetings should be organized in a way that participants can sit around a round table, not directly in front of each other • A friendly environment should be created and complimentaries should be offered • Access should be provided to detailed information through print media or posters • Photos should be taken to communicate with participants later • Attention should be paid to make the meeting last one or one and a half hour to the maximum

Method	Phone Conversations
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	Conversations can also be realized through phone calls. Persons can be called to ask about their opinions. Phone conversations can be among the previously described surveys and conversations. This method can reach a large group of participants. Feedback from these calls can be summarized and used at further stages.
Purpose	Feedback can be received on content, information provision, planning, communication, cooperation etc. through phone conversations whether individually or as intra-group or intra-focus group. With conversations, a more qualitative method, it is intended to obtain deeper and more developed understanding of citizens' opinions. On the other hand, findings cannot be generalized to the entire population.
Number of Participants	One by one interviews for small or large groups
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons can be interviewed one by one • Detailed information can be obtained and then questions can be asked • Deeper conversations are possible about certain topics
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited number of people can be reached. If more people are to be reached, more pollsters are necessary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a high cost method and sometimes can require special software • It may be hard to create a database to form a good sample, fixed phone lines are gradually used less, there is no phone guide for mobile phone numbers
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons to the make the conversation should be the related decision makers themselves. • Well-known and reputable persons can be used as pollsters. This draws more attention and encourages participants to volunteer to answer • The municipality building and offices can be used for calls • Timing should be scheduled considering the working hours of participants, calls can be made in the afternoon and evening.

Method	Social Networks and Online Communities
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	Build an interactive web page or a social media account (Facebook, twitter, Instagram etc.) to provide information and allow citizens to share their opinions and comments. The social media method offers information about current developments and further steps and broadcasts to raise awareness about the topic.
Purpose	Provide information, gather comments and opinions, wide scale information and awareness campaigns, create an agenda, monitor implementation
Number of Participants	Wide access.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows participants to discuss an issue at a time that is suitable for themselves, independently from time and space • Anonymous processes can encourage an open discussion • Multiple persons can participate
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible inequality in access to information technologies • May be hard for users who are not skilful in using the internet • Unmoderated online forums can be chaotic • Any complications with registration can prevent participation • In general, participation of decision makers can be insufficient
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel should be commissioned to keep the web page or Facebook page up to date, answer questions and make reports on received comments • When to use it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you have a clear idea of what you want to access

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It you are involved with a large and/or very dispersed group of participants ✓ If your participants can easily participate online compared to other methods ✓ If you are willing to offer people an unofficial 'chat' • When to not use it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you are unable to ensure everybody participates in the process or you cannot offer acceptable alternative participation methods ✓ If the main purpose is to build strong relations
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Method	Gamification
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	A decision process if gamified to ensure citizen participation in the development of public policies and services. Although generally IT based game designs are preferred, the game design does not necessary include technology at all times. The process turns into a game design where they can share their opinions, evaluate options and make preferences. Gamification can add the fun factor to participation processes and improve participation of young people, draw attention of large groups to the issue, allow for practical and fast involvement of local users in the process.
Purpose	Especially when options are clear, evaluate policy options and make decisions
Number of Participants	Wide participation
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases team work and cooperation • Learning also happens on occasions of struggle and cooperation
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited sources and technical problems possible • Participants can engage in hard struggles or strong cooperation, the event needs a specialised moderator
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games should be designed for the target group • Options should be clear

Method	Neighbourhood Meetings
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Inclusion

Brief Description	Neighbourhood based meetings where citizens can ask decision makers questions or express their problems in person
Purpose	Provide information to the public and ask for their comments in areas of interest
Number of Participants	Wide participation. Meetings are open to all citizens. Especially neighbourhood residents and tradesmen are expected to participate.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many people can be reached and informed in a very short time • A large amount of general information can be provided, listener can immediately share their evaluations • Direct communication between neighbourhood residents and authorities strengthens trust
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The atmosphere can be tense if the topic receives strong opposition, conflicts may occur between the group and individuals • Not everybody may be willing to speak before a group • Organized interest groups can dominate the discussion • Skilful speakers can abuse rather passive listeners, it may appear as if the opinions of the speakers are supported by others
Practical Tips	It should be widely promoted on local media. Decision makers should be present and prepared to answer questions.

Method	City Panel
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	City panels are established by the municipality. The members of the panel are selected among ordinary citizens. Selection methods may vary. They can be selected randomly or according to certain criteria (e.g. age, women-men ratio and minorities). The city panel assembles a few times a year and provides feedback about the activities of the municipality. Members are given necessary information in advance. They can comment on the activities of the municipality or the citizens' assembly during the meeting.
Purpose	Provide information about municipality activities, receive feedback
Number of Participants	City panels can be at varying scales (20 to 100 persons)

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of the members in the panel can provide representation of different opinions • It can offer in-depth feedback to the municipality • The members of the city panel can promote information received from the municipality around their own circles • Although the members are still representatives of the general public, they develop deeper understanding of the municipality's activities
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The members of the panel should be replaced from time to time. Clear circulars and certain sources may be necessary for the process of changes in the panel (especially while including new members). • The members of the panel can be open to abuse of certain lobbyist or interest groups.
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and transparent processes should be stipulated for selecting members to the city panel • The panel members can be motivated by small gifts • The city panel and its members should be well promoted.

Method	Online Communication/Online Forum/Online Portal
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	An online portal is a web site or a web page where information is provided about a certain topic.
Purpose	This portal allows the visitors of the web page to submit their feedback, chat with municipality representatives, fill out questionnaires, share important information etc.
Number of Participants	Wide access.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals are able to send feedback anytime 24/7 • Statistical interpretations are possible based on the number of visitors of the portal • Visualization and other graphic effects facilitate sharing information • A low cost way of receiving feedback
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some citizen groups can have limited access to the internet

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts and administrators should be employed for the maintenance and upgrade of the portal, which can be costly.
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The internet can be used not only to provide information but also as a versatile tool • It should be made clear how to use feedback before launching the portal • Links to the portal can be embedded at other web sites and the portal can include links to other sites • It is required to understand currently available information and use these channels • Avoid opening new channels which will require to be maintained in operation

Method	Open Mail Box
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	An online opportunity where feedback can be provided in a way to be easily readable by everyone. It resembles discussion forums in a way.
Purpose	Provide information and receive feedback
Number of Participants	Wide access
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to prepare and sustain • A good method for allowing discussions that can be read by everyone online • Individuals can use pseudonyms and offer feedback that cannot be heard otherwise
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regulator is required to be involved with the level of feedback • Attention should be paid to the possibility of harsh reactions, angry statements, discriminatory statements or threats
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactions should not be focused on much • A regulator is absolutely necessary to be involved with the level of feedback

Method	Round Table Meeting
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement

Brief Description	A type of meeting where persons do not sit opposite of each other but around a round table independently from their position in the organization. All members in the discussion are equal. Citizens also have the same right to express their ideas and opinions with public officials, experts and others on the table.
Purpose	Obtain in-depth information and stakeholder opinions about a certain topic, analyse the situation and evaluate alternatives
Number of Participants	Small group (less than 20)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the participants do not trust each other or disagree on who is the most important actor on the table, it allows focusing on the content of the topic and solutions rather than arguments
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of participants is limited. If more than 15 people attend the round table discussion, it gets harder to manage the group.
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few people should be invited, if more people are to come, more than one parallel discussion tables should be arranged • Participants can discuss on different tables, moreover, it is possible to divide the topic and ensure each table focuses on a certain aspect of the topic • A good moderator is necessary to moderate the discussion and help the group reach an outcome

Method	Public Meetings
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	Individuals from the general public are invited to public meetings to obtain information and express their opinions in an environment open to the public. It is open to everyone interested. Public meetings have many various forms from more official ones (especially focuses on providing information, e.g. briefing) to highly interactive ones (such as the previously mentioned round table conference). Information is provided about a policy, project or service and citizens' opinions or feedback are received. In this meeting where citizens sit in a listener order and decision makers or experts sit opposite of them, participants take the floor in turns and express their opinions in 2-3 minutes.

Purpose	Provide information at local level, create an agenda, monitor implementation in communities where stakeholders are willing to attend the meetings
Number of Participants	Large group
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is possible to reach and inform many people in a short time • A large amount of general information can be provided, listeners can immediately share their evaluations • Direct communication between citizens and authorities strengthens trust
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The atmosphere can be tense if the topic receives strong opposition, conflicts may occur between the group and individuals • Not everybody may be willing to speak before a group • Organized interest groups can dominate the discussion • Skilful speakers can abuse rather passive listeners, it may appear as if the opinions of the speakers are supported by others
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should be ensured that everybody is able to hear and see everything, good communication tools should be used • A good moderator should be appointed to alleviate tension • Drinks can be offered and a pleasant work environment can be created • The place, date and time should be suitable for the participants • Targets and the time schedule should be clearly expressed in the beginning of the public meeting • Promotion and invitations are significantly important for public meetings. A good public meeting cannot be held without sufficient participation

Method	Discussions Open to Public
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	Discussions open to public focus on exchanging and discussing opinions. Various panellists are invited to demonstrate basic information or different opinions. After that, anybody can ask questions, share their opinions or their evaluations of others' opinions.
Purpose	Exchange ideas, discuss ideas, express different opinions
Number of Participants	The number of participants is high in discussions open to public. The number of those who actually participate in discussions can be limited.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As participants are informed about the content (solutions, probabilities and risks), they can spend more time and energy in discussions • Every discussion can be realized in the most suitable environment for the topic, for example, if a discussion is being performed about young people, the music club can be preferred for the location • The environment of discussion is a natural part of discussions, it can make the discussion more lively and target oriented
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of participants in discussions open to public may be high, but the number of participants who actually participate in the discussion can and should be limited • An experienced moderator should be employed to play an active role in the environment to facilitate discussions open to public
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It must be a moderator with a good sense of humour • Good communication tools should be used • The place should be big enough for everyone to have a seat • It might increase attention to invite interesting guests related to the topic (decision makers, experts, opinion leaders etc.) • The place, date and time should be suitable for the participants • Complimentaries can create a pleasant work environment

Method	Field Trip/City Walk/Visits to Certain Locations
Level of Participation	Information provision, Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	People, public officials and other stakeholders walk together in the city. They visit related places, discuss the topic and probable solutions. It is a trip which is organized to allow for receiving feedback about plans, investments and projects about an area and includes discussion and questions and answers sessions. It helps stakeholders more easily dream of future plans on the field, more clearly see problems, and create references for feedback.
Purpose	Identify problems on the field, make future predictions more concrete, plan and evaluate options
Number of Participants	Small or big stakeholder groups comprised of certain or expert stakeholder groups
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It helps see the reality of the situation • It can be directly discussed where the issue at hand occurs with all its aspects • Real situations can trigger imagination and creativity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is fun to walk together around the city, it helps parties understand each other • It is more interesting and active than sitting in a meeting hall
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention should be paid to the capacity of the group to walk together. If there are many people, small groups should be created to walk separately • Weather conditions can affect city walks
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The city walk and the route should be announced in advance, some people can join the walk at a certain point of the route • The city walk should be organized according to the requirements of the topic and needs of the participants • Materials should be kept ready to contribute to the topic (e.g. summary reports, analyses, plans etc.) • All comments and opinions should be recorded. A summary should be prepared at the end of the walk

Method	World Cafe
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement, Partnership
Brief Description	World Café is a pretty easy and flexible method, based on the principle of good conversation with which everyone can talk about anything that concern them, assuming that everyone has the capacity to act in cooperation. In a hall comprised of sub-tables organized as a café, participants move to different tables in certain intervals and have a conversation and develop ideas on every table. It is a method of joint learning and developing information.
Purpose	Discuss the topic in an open manner in both the organizations and the society, determine a common approach, analyse the situation, develop alternatives, evaluate policy options
Number of Participants	Multiple sub-tables at the same time (4-8 persons in every small group)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative, simple and easy • Elevates people, manifests the common sense • Everyone's ideas is equally valid
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The method loses its efficiency unless quality listening is performed
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sincere environment should be created • Complimentaries should be offered

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time should be planned well • Interesting questions should be prepared
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Method	Citizen Advisory Committee/Advisory Board
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	A special committee is comprised of local people to engage in studies about a topic and provide counselling about how to address the said topic. The advisory board includes a limited number of citizens (generally max. 20). The citizens are selected based on their willingness to be involved in the process, the number of people they acquaint with, their background, professionalism, reputation etc. The advisory board is mostly established as a temporary board to provide expertise and feedback about a certain topic. Even though it does not have official authority, the recommendations of such a board receive respect thanks to the reputation of its members.
Purpose	Engage in long term studies about a topic, receive opinions and comments, make recommendations
Number of Participants	Small groups (not to exceed 15-20 persons)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are carefully selected to ensure the committee represents the entire society and has necessary experience • Acquired information is mostly information based on experience • Detailed discussions allow for developing ideas and making decisions based on information • It is ensured that the board represents different interests in the society in a balanced and complete manner and includes related expertise about the topic
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A huge gap can develop between the advisory board and other citizens if the local community does not support the process • By discussing the topics with the advisory board, misperception can develop in the sense that the consultation method has been completed and there is no longer a need for discussing with citizens
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of necessary meetings depends on the complexity of the topic. It is generally necessary to ensure the support of the personnel of the institution that organizes the meeting • Citizens should be well explained why the advisory board is consulted • The advisory board and its members should be well introduced • It must be ensured that the advisory board members receive sufficient support from the local community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The advisory board can be established for certain groups or a certain topic
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Method	Workshops
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	Workshops are comprised of people who work together for a purpose. This cooperation has a definite start and end. The president of the workshop moderates the workshop and is also responsible for its order, agenda, planning and outputs. Of course, the output is under common responsibility of all participants. Workshops can reach various solutions. Creativity is one of the main components and main principles. The work environment is unofficial. Cooperation and the principles of equality are applicable among the participants. Workshops are short and one-off organizations.
Purpose	Bring together people who work together for a purpose to meet a certain need and reach various solutions
Number of Participants	Small group (less than 10)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the problem is clear, it is possible to work with professionals on solutions • Different options can be evaluated • It may be easier to build a communication network among different stakeholders • Different professionals can affect one another and provide out of the ordinary solutions
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes a long time • A certain number of people can attend • Requires significant preparations
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is suitable to invite a limited number of people, more than eight people will not be productive • An experienced moderator is needed • It is suitable to keep ready materials which support creativity

Method	Planning Weekend
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	On the planning weekend, different stakeholders come together to work on a certain topic. As there is limited time, the need for an outcome triggers

	creativity and make participants more likely to cooperate to get a result. Participants play an important role here. Experts, for example architects or planners stay in the background and monitor participants' discussions or activities. Weekends are the most suitable times for this kind of a planning event as they provide enough time to analyse and evaluate the current situation, and develop ideas for the future, for example, what the city park will look like.
Purpose	Bring different stakeholders together to work on a certain topic
Number of Participants	Small groups.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be significantly productive as it is possible to demonstrate significant creativity in a short time • Due to time limitations, the planning weekend supports productive work in a limited time and increases the possibility of getting a result • An open and comfortable atmosphere is created • An event can be organized following the planning activity
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It requires participants to be fully committed to the process • Participants should stay in the process until it is completed
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pleasant environment should be created to motivate participants • Complimentaries should be offered

Method	Citizen Working Groups
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	The members of the working group are appointed by decision-making authorities to analyse problems and develop solutions. The working group meets a few times and provides decision makers with a comprehensive and quality output. The representatives of different stakeholders are members of the working group. The working group is a respectable institution in the eyes of public authorities and operates on cooperation basis, all members are equal and all opinions can be discussed. Citizen Working Groups have similar missions to those of working groups establishing within citizens' assemblies. These working groups can be activated in cities where citizens' assemblies are yet to be established.
Purpose	Support analysing problems and developing solutions through working groups appointed by decision-making authorities
Number of Participants	Small groups (maximum 20 persons)

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The working group can address and solve more complicated and serious issues • Outputs can be directly adopted by decision makers • More requests, needs and opinions are taken into account in working group discussions
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups have limited resources (time, budget, material, human resources etc.)
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of members of the working group should not exceed 20. If more people are to attend, try to organize small group activities within the body of the working group • Always try to get contact information from active people, active participants can be invited to become a working group member in further activities

Method	Municipal Commissions
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	Individuals are invited by the municipality to municipal commissions to discuss and evaluate recommendations and solutions. The environment is highly official. Compared to citizen working groups, these commissions are longer term but not as flexible. On the other hand, commissions have more developed specific competence.
Purpose	Ensure citizens or related stakeholders discuss and evaluate recommendations and solutions about identified topics
Number of Participants	Small group
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the official environment, discussions are subject to more regulations • Outputs are more significant
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not an environment to trigger creativity • The work environment (municipality) can discourage certain participants • The political influence can be more visible
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to invite related field professionals to support discussions with materials, contributions, studies etc.

Method	Future Seeking Conference
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement, Partnership
Brief Description	<p>This method is used to ensure participants approach a problem or a topic with a new perspective. Participants from different stakeholder groups (groups who are knowledgeable about or expert in the topic, have related sources and authority with regard to the topic, are affected by the outcomes of the conference) meet to develop new ideas and recommendations outside their daily agenda. The conference is for finding a common ground that can be embraced by all stakeholders. In a 2-3 day event, what shared values are and which strategies and actions are necessary to reach the common mission are determined.</p> <p>A Future Seeking conference includes as members a large stakeholder group that is selected because they have power or knowledge about the addressed topic or are affected by the outcomes. Ideally, it includes 64 persons, eight from each of the eight stakeholder groups. Examples to these groups include healthcare service users, young people and shop owners. Participants participate in a well-planned process which ideally lasts two and a half days, but occasionally one day.</p>
Purpose	Set the agenda, develop strategies and make planning, create a vision
Number of Participants	Large group. It may include hundreds of participants among stakeholders selected because they have power or knowledge about the addressed topic or are affected by the outcomes.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone who has an interest in the issue attends the conference, it is easy to obtain a rich mix of information and ideas • All stakeholders can act according to the plan • The activity is designed in a way to ensure participants understand each other's agenda and value them so that it contributes to expanding the common ground • People generally become more active and willing to participate when they see complicated problems are solved when an entire system is available, a common ground is set with other people, a shared vision is created and concrete activities are agreed upon
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and preparations are necessary for the organization
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This method is suitable to use when commitment is asked from all stakeholders • It must be ensured that all planned participants attend the conference

Method	Deliberative Polling
Level of Participation	Involvement, Partnership
Brief Description	It was developed by Professor James S. Fishkin. It was designed to demonstrate how people’s ideas would change if they had more information and thought more seriously about a topic. A large and scientific sample is informed about the topic with information materials. They are invited to discuss the topic in a weekend event, it is supported with interviews with public authorities and experts and sub-group discussions are held with the help of a facilitator. Questionnaires are applied both before and after these discussions, thus the extent and nature of the change in the opinion is measured and documented.
Purpose	Make decisions especially when the public has little information about the topic, there are various policy recommendation and each of them requires different compromises.
Number of Participants	Large group (200-300 persons)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines statistical representation of the scientific sample with interaction and deliberation • Better represents the population on a demographic basis than Citizen Panels and Consensus Conferences • Increases people’s understanding of the complexity of the topic • May include people who would normally prefer not to be involved • Demonstrates the big difference between people’s informed and uninformed opinions • A good tool to measure the variety of public opinions
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires using TV to reach larger masses and increase awareness • Does not offer qualitative information • Expensive • Offers participants fewer opportunities of identifying and questioning experts or determining the scope of questions compared to some other approaches (e.g. Citizen Panels and Consensus Conferences)
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberative polling is suitable when people have little information and awareness especially about the balance in public policies • If it is a topic that does not cause disagreement, if the issue and the associated balance is already well understood by the public, there is no need to use this method • A public opinion poll takes a few days. Months before that, participants attend a series of events where the public opinion poll is performed for the first time and they get acquainted with the

	matters (generally takes a weekend). The period should be planned as at least six months.
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Method	Community Mapping
Level of Participation	Counselling, Involvement
Brief Description	It allows stakeholders and citizens to map social, environmental, economic and cultural assets in association with events in the past of communities. Stakeholders divided into small groups mark various assets on the map using a map of the neighbourhood or the city or large blank papers.
Purpose	Start a dialogue, analyse and document strengths and weaknesses and the current situation with different perspectives, gather information and make planning
Number of Participants	25-35 persons
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used at different urban scales • Small group maps can be integrated on a large and joint map • Interactive and fun method that can also be used with children and young people
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather takes long • Costly • Requires expertise
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay attention to accurately group stakeholders • Perform urban scale and stakeholder grouping integrated with each other

Method	Participatory Budgeting
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	Participatory budgeting is an umbrella term which combines multiple tools. It gives power and an opportunity to create an influence on local people and stakeholders to determine the local budget, investment priorities and spend financial resources. While it increases participation, it also contributed to social harmony and offering cost efficient services. While regular negotiations and meetings are held in a defined area and at suitable times for local budgeting, policy makers get directly involved with the participatory budgeting process.

Purpose	Decide on creating the public budget, prioritizing public investments and using financial resources
Number of Participants	Large group (Tens of thousands of people can participate)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the participatory budget allows citizens to participate in decision making processes, it also contributes to creating transparency, efficiency and accountability in budgeting activities in the municipality • It can be realized at a certain service scale or neighbourhood, district and city scale
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is common that the senior management is unwilling due to financial limitations of local administrations
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It must be ensured that policy makers get directly involved in the participatory budgeting process • Regular negotiations and meetings should be held at suitable times for local budgeting

Method	Participatory Strategic Planning
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	<p>Participatory Strategic Planning is a consensus approach which allows a community or a working group to collectively express their ideals about how their communities or organizations will develop in a few years.</p> <p>It is a four stage approach. First, the group determines the future vision of the organization or community. Then, they express possible conflicts or obstacles they can experience on the way to accomplishing their vision. At the third stage, they agree on strategic aspects that might help overcoming obstacles and reaching the vision. The last stage is related to planning implementation, about what we should do in the first year and finally, what we should do in the first quarter in detail. Every stage uses a consensus workshop process which includes clustering for brainstorming to develop ideas and explore new understandings and designation to distinguish the consensus in every cluster. Every workshop is constituted by a combination of the methods of working individually, in small groups and as an entire group.</p> <p>There is a need for internal or external, educated and experienced team (a team of two is preferable). In either case, other people in the group as with the team should participate in planning the process. A two day event and a monitoring period is needed which is recommended for the next 6 months.</p>

Purpose	Help a group agree on where they want to arrive and how they can arrive there
Number of Participants	Typically 5 to 50 persons, but can be more or less. The method works effectively with a mixed group comprised of participants from all levels of a community or organization.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and can be applied in multiple numbers • A very fast method for consensus within a diversified group • It can operate for people with both audio and visual preferences • Participants mostly find the process and outcomes inspiring
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An educated and experienced planning team is necessary • It should be owned or promised by the administration in advance • Requires a significant amount of work and responsibility both on the respective day and afterwards • All important stakeholders should be included
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This method can be used when you want to create a spirit of ownership and a group promise, and a prospective consensus • This method may not be suitable in hierarchical situations, when the senior management does not promise for the group to make decisions and convey them further

Method	Neighbourhood Councils
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	<p>Neighbourhood councils are established under the roof of the citizens' assembly as a method intended to be extended to realize local administrations' goal of democracy through participation.</p> <p>Neighbourhood councils which contribute to extending a democratic local administration culture are established upon the "Operating Instructions of Neighbourhood Councils" which regulate the principles and procedures of operation are prepared and approved by the related Citizens' Assembly General Meeting.</p>
Purpose	Neighbourhood councils offer the opportunity to neighbourhood residents of meeting administrators on the same platform and also give a chance to individuals to directly participate in administrative decisions about the environment they live in. Individuals get a chance to submit their requests, wishes and complaints to the administration in certain intervals and become players in policy making.

Number of Participants	<p>Neighbourhood councils that are generally made of natural members including neighbourhood mukhtars, members of the executive committee, representatives from family health centres, representatives from NGOs (associations, unions, clubs, cooperatives etc.), representatives from sports clubs operate under the principles of owning the city, active participation and partnership in solution.</p> <p>Considering examples to neighbourhood councils in practice in Türkiye, it can be seen that every citizens' assembly create neighbourhood councils with slight differences according to their own functioning. While the neighbourhood councils established under the roof of the Bursa Nilüfer Citizens' Assembly have one representative for every 300 citizens, it is one representative for every 100 citizens in the neighbourhood councils established under the roof of the Bodrum Citizens' Assembly. The neighbourhood councils within the body of the Eskişehir Odunpazarı Citizens' Assembly do not implement any quotas.</p> <p>Although minor chances specific to the city are possible in practice, all neighbourhood councils are basically based on volunteering and realized under the same operating instructions.</p>
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer neighbourhood residents and administrations a chance to meet one the same platform • Allow individuals to directly participate in administrative decisions about the environment they live in
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No standard regulation in establishment and operation • Occasional challenges in coordinated operation with the neighbourhood mukhtars • Low efficiency in settlements without a citizens' assembly
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of all stakeholders in the neighbourhood should be involved • Cooperation is necessary between the Citizens' Assembly and neighbourhood councils

Method	Citizen Scorecard
Level of Participation	Partnership
Brief Description	<p>Citizen scorecards score the quality of public services based on information from citizens and thus, encourage fulfilment of the public's responsibility of accountability.</p> <p>The first thing to do is to identify the necessary evaluation framework. It addresses which sectors or which service delivery units evaluations is associated with.</p>

	<p>Second, management of the scorecard practice is important. For this reason, it is necessary to identify highly reliable organizations with good organization skills to realize this practice. The reputation of the intermediary organization/person directly affects final credibility of findings.</p>
Purpose	<p>Citizen scorecards measure the experience of those who use the service and the perception of those who do not use the service through household questionnaires. Citizen scorecards build a communication channel about the results of services between the organizations which provide public services and citizens. While this communication channel allows for realizing the accountability responsibility, which occurs from one election to another, in shorter intervals, it also contributes to focusing on the quality of the public service offered.</p>
Number of Participants	<p>Wide access</p>
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen scorecards can be used for a holistic public opinion review about the performance of services by using it together with other tools of participation. For example, budget monitoring/public spending monitoring efforts based on inputs and productivity indicators can be combined with the results of citizen scorecards. • Customizable for service users or disadvantaged groups • Can focus on a single service or multiple services • Can focus on the services of a single organization or multiple organizations
Weaknesses	<p>To ensure citizen participation with an aim to reach the ideal, many innovative mechanisms/tools/methods such as citizen scorecards, participatory budgeting, citizen juries, monitoring of public accounts and citizens’ assemblies are used in many countries. The success of these tools does not only depend on how well they are implemented. An effective relationship between accountability / calling to account requires the respective public realm to have certain main characteristics, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Freedom of meeting, thought and expression ✓ Independent media without the control of the state ✓ Access to public data and a culture of open and transparent management ✓ A culture of opinion sharing and conversation on public issues among people ✓ Organization of the civil society
Practical Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, a successful citizen scorecard initiative depends on the ability to realize all of the following at the same time. These success criteria are also the main criteria for deciding on implementing the citizen scorecard in your city.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Create local partnerships with service providers to implement it○ Understand actors in public service delivery and factors which affect the quality of services○ Understand the socio-economic structure and service usage habits in the area where it will be implemented○ Technical competence for scientific application and questionnaire analysis○ Media support and a advocacy campaign to publish findings in the public arena○ Steps to be taken towards institutionalization for repeatability of the practice
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Annex-2: Main Policy Papers and Legal Regulations on Participation at Local Level in Türkiye

There are multiple laws and regulations on participation in Türkiye. The Law No. 5393 on Municipality, Law No. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities, Law No. 4982 on Right to Information, Law No. 5018 on Public Fiscal Administration and Control, Regulation on the Principles and Procedures of Strategic Planning in Public Administrations, and Regulation No. 26313 on Citizens' Assembly describe various tools and mechanisms.

The Law No. 5393 on Municipality include the following provisions on different levels of participation:

- **Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Administration (Article 9):** *“A neighbourhood shall be governed by a mukhtar and an executive committee. The mukhtar shall, with voluntary participation of neighbourhood residents, identify common needs, enhance the neighbourhood’s quality of life, conduct relations with the municipality and other public entities, deliver opinion on matters of interest for the neighbourhood, cooperate with other institutions and perform other duties as prescribed by laws. The municipality shall provide the necessary assistance in kind and support, within the limits of its budgetary resources, to meet the needs of the neighbourhood and the master’s office and resolve any problems; it shall consider the neighbourhood residents’ common wishes when making decisions and endeavour to ensure that services are provided in such a way as to meet the neighbourhood’s needs.”*
- **Townsmen’s Law (Article 13):** *“Everyone is a townsman of the town in which he lives. Townsmen shall be entitled to take part in municipal decision making and services, receive information on municipal activities and benefit from the aids distributed by the municipal administration. Aids shall be provided in such a way as not to injure human dignity. The municipality shall make necessary efforts to develop social and cultural relations among townsmen and preserve cultural values. It shall take steps to ensure that universities, public professional organizations, trade unions, civil society organizations and experts take part in such efforts. Every individual residing or being present or having connections within the boundaries of a municipality shall comply with the municipality’s lawful decisions, orders and announcements and pay municipal taxes, duties, charges, fees and contributions.”*
- **Powers and Privileges of Municipalities (Article 15):** *“Municipalities may conduct public opinion polls and surveys to find out the town inhabitants’ views and opinions on municipal services.”*
- **Municipal Council Meetings (Article 20):** *“The municipal council shall convene in the first week of each month, on a day agreed in advance. In addition, the town’s inhabitants shall be informed of the venue and time of the meeting by the usual means. Council meetings shall be public. A reasoned proposal by the council chairman or one of the councillors, it may be decided by the simple majority of the participants to hold the session in camera.”*
- **Agenda (Article 21):** *“The municipal council’s agenda for the first day of each month shall be determined by the mayor and notified to the councillors at least three days in advance and the public shall be informed of the agenda by various means.”*
- **Finalization of Council Resolutions (Article 23):** *“Summaries of the council resolutions which have become final shall be made public by appropriate means within seven days.”*

- **Specialist Commissions (Article 24):** “Neighbourhood masters, heads of the public entities, representatives of the public professional organizations, universities and trade unions in the province, and those of the civil society organizations concerned with the items on the agenda may attend the meetings of specialist commissions discussing issues that lie within their spheres of responsibility and activity and state their opinions without voting rights. Commissions may enlist the aid of experts in the course of their work. Commission reports shall be public, and publicized by various means, and copies shall be given to members of the public on request and on payment of a fee not exceeding the cost, as determined by the municipal council.”
- **Strategic Plan and Performance Programme (Article 41):** *“Within six months of the nationwide local elections, the mayor shall draw up the strategic plan in accordance with the development plan and program and with the regional plan if any, and submit it to the municipal council; he shall likewise draw up the annual performance program and submit it to the council before the beginning of the year concerned. The strategic plan shall be prepared in consultation with universities if any, professional organizations and civil society organizations concerned with the subject, and enter into force after adoption by the municipal council.”*
- **Citizens’ Assembly (Article 76):** *“In the day-to-day life of the town or city, the citizens’ assembly shall endeavour to implement the following principles: development of a vision of the town or city’s future and of an awareness of citizenship of the town or city; protection of the town’s or city’s rights, laws and regulations; sustainable development; environmental awareness; social solidarity and mutual assistance; transparency; accountability; participation and local self-government. The citizens’ assembly shall comprise representatives of public professional organizations, trade unions, notaries public, universities if any, the civil society organizations concerned, political parties, public entities and neighbourhood masters, and other parties concerned. The municipality shall provide assistance and support in order to ensure that the assembly’s activities are conducted effectively and efficiently. Opinions formed within the citizens’ assembly shall be placed on the agenda of the municipal council and deliberated at its first meeting. The working procedures of the citizens’ assembly shall be laid down in a regulation to be issued by the Ministry of Interior.”*
- **Voluntary Participation in Municipal Services (Article 77):** *“Municipalities shall carry out programs designed to encourage the voluntary participation of individuals with a view to ensuring solidarity and participation in the town’s or city’s provision of health care, educational, sporting and environmental services, social welfare and assistance services, libraries, parks, traffic and cultural services and services for the elderly people, women, children, the persons with disabilities, the poor and destitute, and to increase effectiveness, economy and efficiency in service provision. The qualifications required of volunteers and the procedures and principles governing their work shall be laid down in a regulation issued by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation.”*

The Law No. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities include the following provisions on different levels of participation:

- **Duties and Responsibilities of Metropolitan, District and First Tier Municipalities (Article 7):**

*“a) In consultation with the district and first-tier municipalities, prepare the metropolitan municipality’s strategic plan, annual goals, investment programs and, accordingly the budget.
v) Manage and develop health care centres, hospitals, mobile health care units and social and cultural services of all kinds for adults, elderly people, persons with disabilities, women, young people and children, and to this end, establish, operate or cause to operate social facilities, open vocational training and skills courses; cooperate with universities, colleges, vocational schools, public entities and civil society organizations in the provision of such services.”*

- **Infrastructure Services (Article 8):** *“An infrastructure coordination centre shall be established to coordinate the management of infrastructure services in the metropolitan area which shall be chaired by the metropolitan mayor or his designee, and include representatives of public entities and private organizations to be designated by the regulation. The mayors of metropolitan district and first-tier municipalities shall take part as members in the meetings of the coordination centre when issues of concern to their own municipalities are discussed. Representatives of public professional organizations (or their umbrella organizations in metropolitan areas if any) concerned with issues on the agenda shall also be invited for consultation purposes to the meetings of the infrastructure coordination centre.”*
- **Transport Services (Article 9):** *“A Transport Coordination Centre shall be established to coordinate all land, maritime, waterway, lake and rail transport services in the metropolitan area which shall be chaired by the metropolitan mayor or his designee, and include representatives from public institutions and organizations. The mayors of metropolitan district and first tier municipalities shall take part as members in the meetings of the coordination centre when issues of concern to their own municipalities are discussed. Representatives from specialized professional organizations of public nature (from the parent organization where there is a parent organization for the chamber) shall be invited and consulted on the agenda items in the meetings of the Transport Coordination Centre.”*
- **Metropolitan Council Meetings (Article 13):** *“The metropolitan council shall convene at its usual meeting venue in the second week of each month on the date specified in advance by the council. Meetings for discussion of the budget shall last no longer than twenty days and other meetings no longer than five days. Where it is essential for the council to convene elsewhere than at its usual meeting venue, the meeting shall be held at the venue designated by the chairman of the council, within the metropolitan municipality boundaries, provided that the councillors be informed in advance. In addition, the town’s inhabitants shall be informed of the venue and time of the meeting by the usual means.”*
- **Specialist Commissions (Article 15):** *“The specialist commissions shall be formed according to the ratio of the number of members of each political party group and the number of independent members in the metropolitan council to the total number of councillors. It is mandatory to set up a land development planning and public works commission, an environment and health commission, a planning and budget commission, an education, culture, youth and sports commission and a transport commission. Commissions may enlist the aid of experts in the course of their work. In connection with the items on the agenda, representatives of institutions, public professional organizations, the relevant university departments, trade unions (umbrella*

organizations of professional organizations in metropolitan areas if any and trade union confederations in metropolitan areas if any) and civil society organizations that have acquired expertise in the matter, as well as invited experts, may attend a specialist commission's meetings and state their opinions, without voting rights. Commission reports shall be public, and publicized by various means, and copies shall be given to members of the public on request and on payment of a fee not exceeding the cost, as determined by the metropolitan council."

- **Duties and Powers of the Metropolitan Mayor (Article 18, b.):** *"Govern the municipality in accordance with the strategic plan, formulate the municipality's institutional strategies, prepare, implement, monitor and appraise the budget and the performance criteria for municipal activities and staff in accordance with such strategies, and submit reports on such subjects to the municipal council."*

The Law No. 4982 on Right to Information includes the following provisions.

- **Right to Information (Article 4):** *"Everybody has a right to information."*
- **Responsibility of Providing Information (Article 5):** *"Organizations and institutions are responsible for taking necessary administrative and technical measures to present all kinds of information and documentation, other than exceptions under the law, to the use of applicants and conclude applications of information in an efficient, fast and accurate manner."*

The Law No. 5018 on Public Fiscal Administration and Control includes the following provisions.

- **Strategic Planning and Performance Based Budgeting (Article 9):** *"Public administrations shall prepare **strategic plans through participatory methods** in order to formulate missions and visions for future within the framework of development plans, programs, relevant legislation and basic principles adopted, identify strategic goals and measurable objectives, measure their performances according to predetermined indicators, and monitor and evaluate the overall process."*

Regulation on the Principles and Procedures of Strategic Planning in Public Administrations

- **General Principles (Article 5):**
"(1) The process of strategic planning shall follow the following general principles:
 - a) Strategic plans shall be prepared by public administrations and their own personnel.*
 - b) Public administration personnel, users of services of the public administration, **NGOs operating in the field of activity and related to services of the public administration and related public administrations and other stakeholders shall participate in and contribute to the process.***
 - c) Public administrations which have a provincial organization shall determine their targets and performance indicators in the strategic plan preparation process in coordination with provincial organizations.*
 - ç) Activities shall be performed under the presidency of the senior director, coordinated by the strategy development unit with active participation and contribution of all units.*
 - d) All units shall be responsible for the effective and efficient execution of the strategic planning process.*

e) Activities which require a long analysis for public administrations shall be initiated as a special activity before the strategic plan preparation process.

f) In public administrations with a provincial organization, measures to increase the strategic management capacity of provincial organizations shall be taken by the central organization.

g) All related public administrations shall work in harmony, cooperation and coordination with each other.

ğ) The strategic plan preparation process shall be executed in close cooperation with the Ministry.

h) The strategic plans of public administrations shall be prepared in compliance with the Law, this Regulation, Guideline, instructions and communiques on strategic planning issued by the Ministry.”

- **Presenting Strategic Plans and Sharing with the Public (Article 14):**

“(1) Strategic plans shall be submitted together with their electronic copies to the Ministry and the Ministry of Finance to be taken as a basis in preparing the performance programme and the budget upon being approved by the minister in ministries and their affiliated, related and associated entities, and by the senior director in other public administrations than local administrations.

(2) Strategic plans shall be submitted by the related public administration together with their electronic copies to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye Planning and Budget commission and the Court of Accounts to be taken as a basis in budget and audit processes.

(3) Local administrations shall submit their strategic plans together with their electronic copies to the Ministry and the Ministry of Interior upon being approached by their council.

(4) Strategic plans shall be **published on the web pages** of public administrations.”

- **Monitoring and Evaluation of Strategic Plans and Implementation Results (Article 16):**

“(1) The main responsibility in the monitoring and evaluation process shall lie with the senior director. It shall be the responsibility of the strategy development unit to follow the targets as well as related performance indicators and risks, collect values on realization of the targets from expenditure units by the expenditure officer of the unit in charge of the respective target, and present them to the senior director. The fact that the duty of monitoring the targets as well as related performance indicators and risks is assigned to the expenditure officer of the unit in charge of the respective target shall not reduce the level of responsibility of other units to be cooperated with.

(2) Public administrations shall prepare the strategic plan monitoring report by the end of July and the strategic plan evaluation report by the end of February the following year.

(3) After the reports are prepared, the Strategy Development Board shall hold monitoring meetings in six month intervals and evaluation meetings on an annual basis. These meetings shall also be attended by the head of strategic development unit. As a result of these meetings, the senior director shall manifest necessary measures about how to reach the targets in the remaining time of the strategic plan period and commission related units.

- (4) The strategic plan evaluation report shall be finalized including the necessary measures to be taken about how to reach the targets and submitted to the Ministry by the end of March.*
- (5) A strategic plan realization report shall be prepared at the end of the strategic plan.*
- (6) The Ministry can **share the evaluation and implementation results of the strategic plans of public administrations with the public.***”

The **Regulation No. 26313 on Citizens’ Assembly** put into force in 2006 and amended in 2009 regulates the operating principles and procedures of citizens’ assemblies which endeavour to implement the principles of developing the city vision, enhancing sense of townsmanship, protecting the city’s rights, sustainable development, environmental sensitivity, social assistance and solidarity, transparency and accountability, participation, governance and decentralized administration.

The Regulation defines as common structures the assemblies and working groups formed on voluntary basis aiming that various community groups contribute to the administration of the city, take active part in the administration of a high quality and liveable city based on governance approach and sustainable development in the functional areas of the citizens’ assembly including mainly women’s and youth assemblies.

Citizens’ assemblies are established composed of the following persons and representatives of organizations and institutions indicated in Article 8 to bring together the central government, local administration, professional associations of public status and the civil society with an approach of partnership in 3 months from the announcement of results of the nationwide local elections in places that have municipal organizations:

- **Membership in the Citizens’ Assembly (Article 8):**
 - a) *The highest civil administrator of the locality, or his representative,*
 - b) *The mayor or his representative,*
 - c) *Representatives, not to exceed 10, of public entities to be nominated by governors in provinces and by district governors in districts,*
 - d) *All neighbourhood masters in municipalities that have up to 20 neighbourhoods, or for other municipalities, representatives elected by neighbourhood masters convened upon the mayor’s call from among themselves not to be less than 30 percent of the total number of neighbourhood masters and not to exceed 20,*
 - e) *Representatives of political parties with an organization established in the town,*
 - f) *At least one and at most two representatives from universities; or in case there is more than one university, one representative from each university,*
 - g) *Representatives of public professional organizations, trade unions, notaries, bar associations and related associations and foundations,*
 - h) *One representative from each of the assemblies and working groups formed by the citizens’ assembly.*
- **Duties of the Citizens’ Assembly (Article 6):**
 - a) *Ensure the spread of democratic participation at local level, development of townsmen’s law and sense of common life, adoption of multi-partner and multi-actor governance,*

- b) *Ensure sustainable development, preparation and implementation of plans for solving problems that may arise during this process,*
- c) *Contribute to creating common sense that encompasses the entire city in determining, implementing and monitoring the main strategies and action plans for the city,*
- d) *Develop culture of participation, democracy and consensus in the framework of the principle of subsidiarity,*
- e) *Protect and develop historical, cultural, natural and similar values of the city's identity,*
- f) *Contribute to effective, efficient and fair use of the city's resources,*
- g) *Promote programs that are sensitive to environment, reduce poverty and enhance the quality of city life based on sustainable development approach,*
- h) *Contribute to the development and institutionalization of the civil society,*
- i) *Increase the activity of children, youth, women and people with disabilities in social life and ensure their active participation in local decision-making mechanisms,*
- j) *Contribute to the implementation of principles of transparency, participation, accountability and predictability in the city administration,*
- k) *Ensure that the opinions of the citizens' assembly are communicated to the relevant municipality for consideration.*
- **Organs of the Citizens' Assembly (Article 9):**
 - a) *General Assembly*
 - b) *Executive Committee*
 - c) *Assemblies and working groups*
 - d) *Chairman of the citizens' assembly*
- **General Assembly (Article 10):**
 - 1) *The general assembly shall be the most powerful organ of the citizens' assembly and composed of members listed in Article 8. The general assembly shall convene with the simple majority of the members at least twice a year in January and September.*
 - 2) *The chairman of the citizens' assembly shall preside over the general assembly. In his absence, the eldest member of the executive committee shall preside.*
 - 3) *The general assembly shall lay down the election and working principles of the executive committee, assemblies and working groups in compliance with this Regulation.*
- **Executive Committee (Article 11):**
 - 1) *The executive committee shall be composed of at least 7 people elected by the general assembly for a two-year-period in the first term and for a three-year-period in the second term. The chairman of the citizens' assembly, or in his absence the eldest member of the executive committee, shall preside at the executive committee meetings.*
 - 2) *The executive committee shall determine the agenda of the general assembly, submit the opinions formulated by the general assembly to the relevant municipality and monitor implementation thereof.*
- **Chairman of the Citizens' Assembly (Article 11/A):**

- 1) *The chairman of the citizens' assembly shall be elected by the general assembly. The term of office of the chairman of the citizens' assembly shall be similar to the term of office of the executive committee, namely two years for the first term and three years for the second term.*
 - 2) *To elect the chairman of the citizens' assembly, two thirds majority shall be sought in the first round of voting, and the simple majority of the full membership of the assembly in the second round. Failing to obtain the simple majority in the second round, a third round of voting shall be held on the two candidates who have received highest votes in the second round. The candidate who has received the highest number of votes in the third round shall be elected the chairman.*
 - 3) *The election of the chairman of the citizens' assembly shall be completed in the first union of the first meeting of the citizens' assembly.*
 - 4) *The eldest member of the executive committee shall act for the chairman in his absence due to leave, sickness or any other reason.*
- **Assemblies and Working Groups (Article 12):**
 - 1) *Citizens' assemblies may form assemblies and working groups on matters within their purview.*
 - 2) *The general assembly shall lay down the working procedures and principles for such assemblies and working groups.*
 - 3) *Opinions formulated in the assemblies and working groups shall be deliberated in the general assembly of the citizens' assembly, and if adopted, be submitted to the relevant municipal council for consideration.*

Chapter Four of the Regulation includes the following provisions.

- **Announcement of Opinions (Article 14):**

“Opinions formulated at the general assembly of the citizens' assembly shall be considered in the first meeting of the municipal council, then communicated by the municipality to the citizens' assembly and publicized by appropriate means.”

- **Financial Structure of the Citizens' Assembly (Article 16/A):**

“Municipalities shall provide in-kind and cash aid and support to citizens' assemblies by allocating funds from their budgets.”

Participation in the 10th and 11th Development Plans

Development plans are important for the future plans and projections of policies in practice. The **10th Development Plan (2014-2018)** includes targets for participation and governance. The second chapter of the plan that focused on target policies intends to maximize participation of all citizens and all regions through a human oriented development process and ensure everybody enjoys development outcomes in a more dignified way. With regard to targets for fundamental rights and freedoms, it says: “In the framework of pluralist and participatory democratic political process, mechanisms to get opinions and proposals of different social groups and NGOs will be strengthened”. The participatory strategic

management target is expressed as “The main goals are to increase the effectiveness of implementation of strategic management in public administrations and putting accountability into practice at all stages of management, from planning to monitoring and evaluation. Main principles are to increase the pace and quality of public services and to ensure participation, transparency and citizen satisfaction to achieve these goals”. The 10th Development Plan aims for ensuring citizen participation in sectors. For example, for tourism sector, it says: “In the regions where tourism activities are more concentrated, participation of local administrations, NGOs and citizens in tourism related decisions will be ensured”. With regard to goals and targets for local administrations, it intends to make local administrations acquire a participatory, transparent, environmentally sensitive structure which can offer higher quality services in a more efficient and faster way, cares for the needs of disadvantaged groups and has secured its financial sustainability.

The 11th Development Plan (2019-2023) The Plan has five fundamental pillars; namely, stable and strong economy, competitive production and productivity, qualified human and strong society, liveable cities and sustainable environment, and rule of law, democratization and good governance. Policies and measures on participation under “Good Governance” of the Pillar of “rule of law, democratization and good governance” are as follows:

- (782) The active participation of citizens and all relevant sides to policy-making processes will be ensured.
- (782.1.) Arrangements will be made to make the ~~city councils~~ citizens’ assemblies more active.
- (788.4.) New participatory mechanisms that enables citizens to submit their wishes, complaints and suggestions to decision-makers will be developed in order to ensure equality and justice in public services, and to contribute to the implementation of good governance principles.

Policies and measures on participation under “Local Administrations” are as follows:

- (800) Citizens’ participation and supervision role in municipal decision-making processes will be strengthened.
- (800.1.) The participation mechanisms of disadvantaged groups in the representation and decision-making processes of the local administrations will be strengthened, a certain amount of participation will be ensured in the ~~city councils~~ citizens’ assemblies, and the needs of these groups will be taken into consideration more in the provision of local services such as public voting in important decisions to be taken.

The 11th Development Plan was prepared with a participatory approach with contributions of many representatives from public institutions and organizations, mainly ministries, as well as all segments of the civil society. 75 specialised commissions and working groups were established for which more than 3,500 public personnel, representatives from the private sector and NGOs and academicians offered their contributions. Under the process of opinion exchange about the development priorities of Türkiye, a total of 267 meetings and workshops were organized in 81 cities which received contributions from approximately 12 thousand people at local level. In addition, local administrations and local players were consulted to their opinion about the development priorities of Türkiye through development agencies. Moreover, the online “citizen questionnaire” collected opinions and recommendations from more than 10 thousand people about the priorities of the plan. This shows us the 11th Development Plan was prepared with a participatory method and cared for participation.