



**C'EST VOUS QUI  
PROPOSEZ,  
C'EST VOUS QUI  
DÉCIDEZ !**



## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETS

### GIVING CITIZENS THE POWER TO ACT

*Participatory budgets allow citizens to suggest ideas and make decisions by voting on projects that they would like adopted for the future of their city or to improve their quality of life and everyday experience. Voting is open to all residents everywhere regardless of nationality and a majority is not required.*

*The concept of participatory budgets is rapidly expanding in France. Paris, Grenoble, Rennes and Montreuil are just some of the local authorities that have chosen to ask their citizens to vote on part of their budget in order to strengthen citizen participation and modernise public policy.*

#### PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN PARIS

- In Paris, participatory budgeting takes place in several phases:
  - **January-February:** registration of ideas and projects by Paris residents
  - **March to May:** participation in workshops to jointly create projects derived from convergent proposals
  - **March-September:** consultation of residents on the projects proposed via the web platform [www.budget-participatif.paris](http://www.budget-participatif.paris) while city council departments study their feasibility and cost
  - **September:** voting via the Internet or in locations around the city
  - **December:** funding of winning projects is released when the Council of Paris votes on the City Council budget and project sponsors are convened to start their implementation.

#### PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN RENNES

- In Rennes, a list of votable projects was presented by the project sponsors in a citizens' agora during which residents were able to vote. Up to a limit of €3.5 million, the amount allocated by the city council to the participatory budget, residents could "purchase" projects via an electronic wallet. The project that came first in each neighbourhood was adopted together with the projects receiving the most votes within the €3.5 million limit. Elected representatives then made the choices of residents official in the municipal budget.
- For its first participatory budget, Rennes City Council was awarded first prize in the SmartCities innovation competition organised by the newspaper Le Monde, in the "civic participation" category.

#### → FROM IDEA TO VOTE:

- **Paris (2015) :** 5115 ideas proposed, 1376 judged suitable. After technical analysis and costing by the City Hall's departments, 938 of them were voted on by Parisians and 188 adopted
- **Rennes (2015) :** in the first year, 992 projects registered, 241 selected after examination by a monitoring committee and 54 projects adopted after voting by Rennes residents

## MY NEIGHBOURHOOD, MY CITY

► The participatory budget is a community-wide initiative but residents react based on their own experience of the city and in relation to their own street or neighbourhood. They can suggest a specific idea for a school, street or green space, but also for a city-wide project such as the improvement of cycle lanes. In 2015, 47% of the projects submitted to Paris related to the whole city and 33% to a given arrondissement. For 2016, 30% of the participatory budget is targeting working-class districts. In the case of Montreuil, a municipality in the suburbs of Paris, it grouped its districts into 6 sectors in order to ensure equal distribution of the participatory budget.



## RESULTS

/// In addition to the fact that increasing numbers of citizens are taking part in the budgeting process (voter numbers in Paris up 64% between 2014 and 2015), participatory budgets can be used to:

- Strengthen participatory democracy by giving inhabitants the opportunity to act in areas of community life that directly affect them
- Modernise public policy by prioritising bottom-up approaches based on needs and aspirations
- Improve public policy by combining the technical expertise of city hall departments with the practical expertise of residents
- Offer a positive vision of the local area based on collective mobilisation around projects to improve quality of life.

### → BANDSTANDS FOR CELEBRATION: AN EXAMPLE OF A PROJECT ADOPTED IN PARIS

Under this project, 33 Parisian bandstands of varying styles and periods will be renovated. In addition to refurbishment and material improvements, the project also plans to expand use of the bandstands and transform them into convivial spaces. The aim? To use the renovated bandstands for creative activities and as rehearsal spaces for amateur theatre groups, but also as venues for leisure activities, for example sheltered play areas for children, mime, puppet and dance shows, demonstrations and sports.

## PROJECT SECTORS

► Paris: In 2015, more than a third of proposals related to quality of life (23%) and the environment (14%). These were followed by transport and mobility (12.5%) and culture (8%).

► In Rennes, the most popular projects suggested by residents related to green spaces followed by cycling measures.

► Generally speaking, the «winning» or «top» projects are an expression of the desire of residents to re-appropriate their city and its public space. Modification of intersections into squares, the demand for more space and protection for pedestrians and cyclists, the desire for more nature in the city (planting of pavements, roofs and walls, city farms, etc.) are some examples of this.

## KEY DATA

- 2800 participatory budgets in the world
- 1989: first participatory budget in Porto Alegre (Brazil)
- 5%: the average percentage of a local authority's investment budget allocated to the participatory budget in France
- 1/2 billion euros for the participatory budget of Paris City Council between 2014 and 2020