

Local participation in creating development strategy

Andrzej Pawluczuk 

Białystok University of Technology, Faculty of Engineering Management

e-mail: a.pawluczuk@pb.edu.pl

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Abstract

This paper describes the issue of residents' participation in the process of creating a local development strategy. The author presented the results of a study concerning the residents' activity, their structure and the scope of participation for three selected strategies: one for the voivodeship level and two local strategies for the communal level. The requirement of including residents in the process of establishing the strategy for a voivodeship results directly from the law, and as for the local level, consulting the strategy is recommended. The inclusion of residents in the process of creating the development strategy requires taking various actions and using various tools. In the analyzed cases, these were: a survey, meetings with stakeholders, expert panels and informing of the work on the strategy through the media. The process of resident participation had a positive influence on the adoption of the development strategy document at the council session and enhanced the residents' awareness of the plans of the voivodeship's or commune's strategic development.

Key words

participation, strategic planning, regional strategy, local strategy

Introduction

The roots of citizen participation can be traced to ancient Greece. Through participation, private individuals and other organizations could influence public decisions and formulate strategic development plans. In the USA, citizen participation was institutionalized in the mid-1960s with President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs (Cogan and Sharpe). In Poland during the 1980s, citizens at the local level not only participated in the decisions but also actively performed tasks in their

places of residence such as the construction of infrastructure as part of the so-called social action. With the change of the socio-political system and a number of reforms at the local level, the administration reform in 1997 and further becoming part of the European Union, the role of participation grew and formalized. The reference to the legislation on participation, however, is varied. The reference to the legislation on participation, however, is varied. The process of changes in Poland was described by B. Jaworska-Dębska for the last 30 years and comparative study to France – M. Augustyniak.

1. The trajectory of local participation regulation in Poland

In the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, there are no provisions which directly mention public consultations or other forms of participation activities (Starzyk, 2012). However, certain references to broadly understood civic participation can be found in provisions which consider:

- each person's right to information:
 - Article 61 the right to obtain information on the activities of organs of public authority as well as persons discharging public functions;
 - Article 74 the right to be informed of the quality of the environment and its protection;
- social dialogue: Article 20 describing the general need for dialogue and cooperation between social partners, but only in the context of economic system (reflected e.g. in the Trilateral Commission), so the “civic virtue” is only narrowed to trade unions and employer associations;
- tools for the assessment of the operation of authority institutions: Article 63, giving.

The Act on the Principles of the Development Policy Making (based on Article 6). The documents on the basis of which the development policy is made at the national and regional level are subject to public consultations. The consultations should be carried out with territorial self-government units, social and economic partners and the Common Government and Territorial Self-government Committee. The information of public consultations should be announced in the official journal and on Internet websites. An opportunity to submit comments should be given to people and organizations for 35 days, and after another 30 days, a report from the consultations should be issued to the public. The detailed information about the set of acts and rules about the participation in Poland are described in the book by the author of K. Noworól [2020].

2. Theory of participation in public administration

Theory and practice in public participation is extended in many countries, many solutions are incorporated directly from development countries to other countries on different level of development. The reach papers of theory and practice could give a good background how to learn it and conduct a successful local participation (Alberts 2008; Andersen, Richardson 1997; Arnstein 1969; Berner, Amos, Morse 2011; Blair 2004; Brody, Godschalk, Burby 2003; Cogan, Parker 1986; Cook 2002, Daley 2008; Denrell, March 2001; Fischer 1993; Fishkin 2011; Grabow, Hilliker, Moskal 2006; Hakkarainen, Tuulentie 2008, Halseth, Booth 2003; Hillman, Hitt 1999; Jansson, Ramberg 2012; King, Feltey, Susel 1998; Maier 2001; Mashayekhi 1998; McKenna 2011; Muresan, Gogu 2010; Petrova 2011; Szpilko, Szydło, Winkowska 2020; Piasecka, Pettigrew, Ryan 2010; Purba 2011; Schooley 2008; Widianingsih, Morrell 2007).

Fears connected with taking the decision on public consultations:

- the process of social participation may reveal contradicting goals. It is difficult to satisfy the interests of one group of residents or village without violating the interests of another one, so from the political point of view, it is better to avoid such confrontations;
- people who do not have the substantive competence to create the strategy may participate in the process,
- public consultations generate additional costs and time needed for carrying them out, whereas it is not obvious whether the action will be effective;
- when there is a large group of people participating in the programming of the development, the responsibility for the created documents – and as a result, for the execution of the goals included in it – gets blurred;
- there is a risk that people will be unwilling to participate in the strategy making, come to the meetings etc.

Tab. 1. Characteristics of select citizen participation methods

Method	Citizen Time Commitment	Number of Citizens Engaged	Resource Commitment By Local Government
Direct Mail	Low	High	Moderate
News Releases and Mass Media	Low	High	Low
Displays and Exhibits	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Public Educational Meetings	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Websites	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - High

Method	Citizen Time Commitment	Number of Citizens Engaged	Resource Commitment By Local Government
Open Houses	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Public Hearings	Moderate	Low - Moderate	Low
Visual Preference Survey	Moderate	Low	Moderate - High
Focus Groups	Moderate	Low	Low
Opinion Surveys	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Visioning	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Citizens' Advisory Committee	High	Low	Moderate
Citizens' Planning Committee	High	Low	Moderate - High
Referenda	Low	Low - High	Moderate
Total	100%		60.5

Source: Grabow, Hilliker, Moskal, 2006, p. 45.

Benefits resulting from conducting public consultations are various, among others (Wiatrak 2010):

- better public information on decisions made and, consequently, a decrease of the possibility of protest against planned strategic actions,
- easier obtaining of support for planned strategic actions,
- improvement of the quality of decisions made by taking into account various standpoints and needs of diverse groups of interest, and therefore a stronger legitimization of decision-making and avoiding numerous conflicts in the process of making and execution of strategic decisions,
- better preparation of a strategy, and, in particular, taking care of its proper implementation, when an individual personally participated in its creation,
- improved conditions for disseminating and promoting a strategy in the stakeholders' environment and outside it, including promotion in the mass media,
- stimulation of the community's activity in favour of its own (work and/or living) environment.

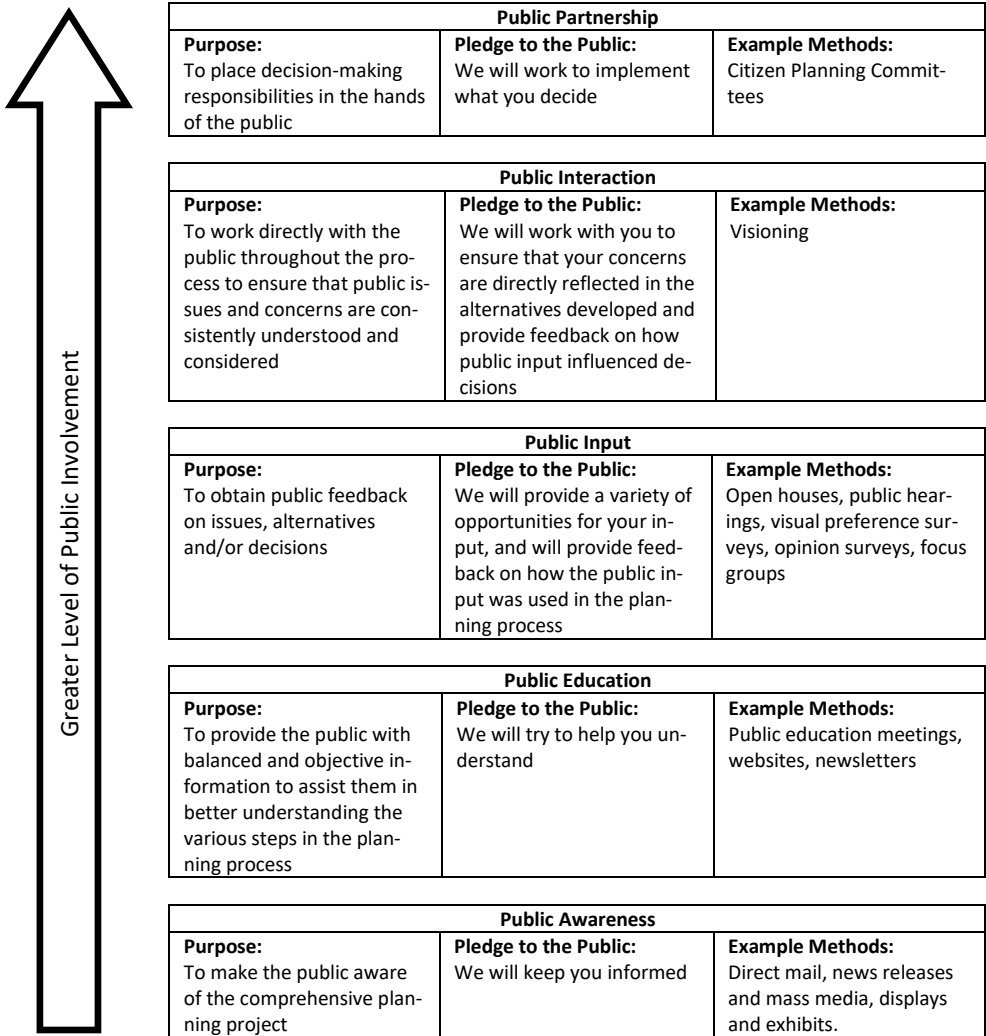


Fig. 1. Multi-level approach for citizen involvement
 Source: Grabow, Hilliker, Moskal, 2006, p. 35.

When analysing public consultations and their partnership relation, conditions in which they are conducted should be determined, as the effectiveness and

usefulness of public consultations are at stake. Therefore, their specific features should be assured, such as (Gawroński 2009):

- early – starting consultations before making a decision on a strategy, project etc, when anything is possible, and at the same time stakeholders have time for consideration,
- known – as a result of their efficient promotion through numerous media, including direct information and assuring public knowledge on the decision being the subject of consultations,
- common – guaranteeing everyone the possibility to submit their own proposals and opinions,
- objective – ensuring reliable and objective analysis of proposals submitted;
- integrating – regarding the planning and project processes as well as stakeholders,
- repetitive – undertaken at each stage of building and implementation of a strategy, project etc., along with assuring the proper examination, solution elaborating, acceptance and evaluation,
- active – stimulating activities and comprising implementing changes resulting from experience acquired so far and from acquiring knowledge on factors rationalizing the undertaken activities;
- methodical – with applying research methods and choosing these methods, choosing samples, questions etc.

The scope of participation is directly related to the management style in the territorial self-government unit. The synthetic structure of the scope, dependent on interactive or non-interactive management style, is presented by the so-called ladder of citizen participation, from lack of participation in the closed, authoritarian style of management up to the initiator autonomously executing particular actions with the organizational and financial support of territorial self-government units, in other words, from authoritarian power to approving power. In that “ladder”, the following levels can be enumerated (Swianiewicz, Klimska, Mielczarek 2004):

- closed authoritarian style – the self-government takes decisions and does not even try to inform the local community of them;
- open authoritarian style – the self-government formulates its policy in an independent way and shares the information with the residents, trying to convince them to the proposed solutions, a local community participant is a passive recipient of the information;
- consultations concerning the solution proposed by the self-government within the framework of a limited number of acceptable options – the residents can express their opinions on the solution at a particular time;

- participation – wide-range discussion concerning solving certain problems, its participants, meaning the society (individuals, groups and their associations) can autonomously define problems and suggest or clearly define the proposals of solutions to them;
- delegation – giving the authority to take certain decisions and implement industry policy, members of the community become participants of the decision-making, e.g. the village council receives certain competences and funds for the execution of tasks;
- equal cooperation with organizations as part of public-private partnership projects, e.g. council housing executed by a private developer, selected forms of social relief provided by non-profit organizations;
- the self-government supporting (with time, money and knowledge) autonomous developmental initiatives of the community and its organizations, e.g. the Voluntary Fire Brigade executes the program.

Tab. 2. Levels of local participation

Stage	Possible social participation (proposals)	Level of social participation
Organization of work on the strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the beginning of work on the strategy, • presentation of the team and schedule of work on the strategy, • introducing the process of strategy creation 	information
Vision and mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation of proposals of the created visions and missions, • justification of choices, • analyzing the formulated visions and missions, potential comments and suggestions 	information consultation
Strategic diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the results of strategic diagnosis, • studying the criteria of values of the community, • studying the public opinion on particular phenomena, • analyzing the conclusions from the diagnosis, discussion of the results 	information consultation

<p>Problem analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the result of problem analysis (e.g. presentation of the ready SWOT analysis), • justification of the choice of indicated problem areas, • analyzing the proposals of problem analysis, submitting comments and suggestions, • common creation of the SWOT analysis and problem tree 	<p>information consultation co-decision</p>
<p>Strategic plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation of the formulated strategic goals, • justification of choices, • analyzing the formulated strategic goals, submitted comments and suggestions, • common creation of strategic goals 	<p>information consultation co-decision</p>

Source: Dziemianowicz, Szmigiel-Rawska, Nowicka, Dąbrowska, 2012, p. 153.

3. Case study in local participation in Poland

The case study concerns the consultation process for three strategic documents: Development Strategy for Podlaskie Voivodeship and two local development strategies for communes located in Białystok Poviát. The more detailed information about the metrics of individuals were obtained for municipality A, which means here Michałowo Municipality.

As part of creation of the document Development Strategy for Michałowo Commune for the years 2014-2021, a survey was conducted among 329 respondents in September and October. 295 of the respondents declared residency in Michałowo commune; the others are persons who live in the commune without being registered, fans and lovers of Michałowo as well as those who gave no answer to that question. In general, the studied population accounted for nearly 5% of the total number of Michałowo commune residents, which ensures high reliability of the study.

Nearly 60% of the respondents have lived in the commune all their lives. There is a relatively big group of people who have moved here from other communes: 40%, which casts a positive light on the commune and proves a relatively high level of migration. The most frequent reason for moving to Michałowo, mentioned by those who have lived in the commune for a few years, was family relationships (57%). One fifth have chosen Michałowo due to its proximity to their workplace, and 12%

have decided the commune is an attractive place to live for them and their families (Figure. 2).

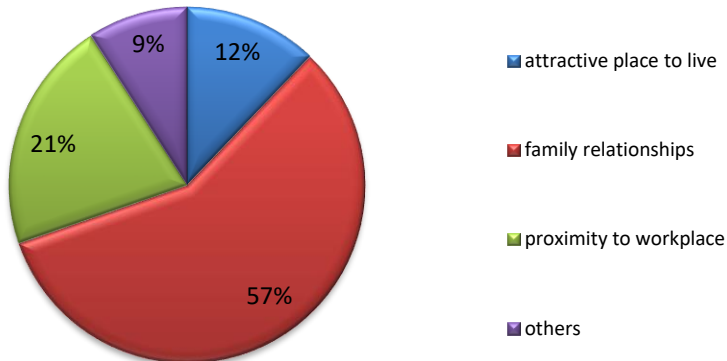


Fig. 2. Reasons for moving to the commune

Source: own study based on participation in the project.

The documents were created in different forms and different public organization with involvement of external experts were responsible for their creation. On the other hand, each document covered a different area the strategy referred to local and regional level. General aspects connected with the consultation process are presented in the Fig. 1. Creating the strategy document was quite long and time-consuming. The process of consultations can be divided into two phases: the first, up to the preparation of the draft version of the strategic document, and the second, covering consultations based on the presented document. The basic information for the initial participation process is included in the Tab. 3.

Tab. 3. Participation process in examined institutions

Detailed list	Voivodeship strategy	Strategy of commune A	Strategy of commune B
Number of meetings with residents	6	2	5
Number of expert panel sessions	More than 10	3	6
Survey for residents	Indirectly form other documents	Yes, around 5% inhabitants participation	Yes, around 3% inhabitants participation
Opportunity to submit comments via e-mail	Yes	Yes	Yes
External experts in supporting the participation process	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: own study based on the website and own research

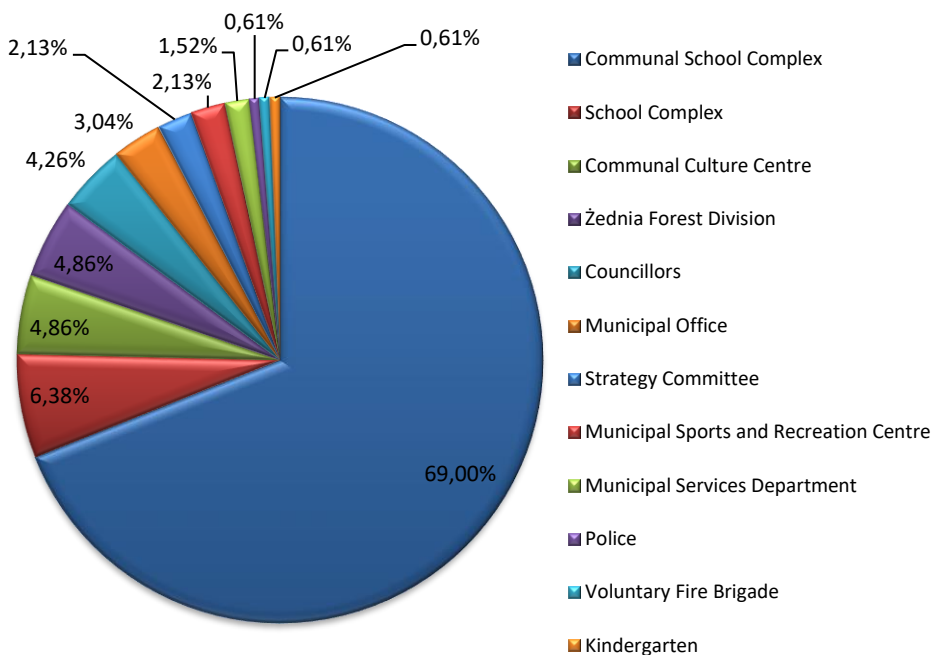


Fig. 3. Structure of survey questionnaires

Source: own study based on participation in the project.

There were also some questions related to satisfaction with the life conditions in the commune, interest in the current activity of Michałowo commune, forms of interest etc. On the regional level, everyone can read the remark to the provisional version of the strategy document with the justification from the municipality [Tab. 4]. Statics of taking into account in full version proposals from stakeholders was 23.6%, partly taking into account were 23,6% and 52,8% were rejected. The regional authority was obligated to publish a report from participation process. It was a main reason of keeping the quality and transparency of the participation process. However on a local level strategy document, such open discussion was closed.

Tab. 4. Remarks with justification to proposal of the strategy document

No.	Institution	Note content	Justification
1.	Individual (inhabitant of the voivodeship)	p. 22 - it is a regret that there is no data on competitions from the National Science Center and the National Center for Research and Development, here we seem to be doing well compared to the country - I personally do not have detailed data	Strategic diagnosis - synthesis (p. 17), as the name suggests, briefly describes the most important features of the Podlaskie Voivodeship and the phenomena in its surroundings that will affect the socio-economic development of the region. For this reason, this part presents only the most important data describing the condition of the region. Too detailed provisions miss the purpose of the Strategy, which by definition is a synthetic document
2.	Individual (inhabitant of the voivodeship)	Due to the fact that the Strategy will be adopted in mid-2013, it is a regret that the statistics did not cover 2011, it was enough to update the charts and correct the data, the substantive part would certainly remain the same. The more so that sometimes there is a reference to more recent data	The draft document was developed on March 19, 2013. Statistics (e.g. Central Statistical Office) and research are published with a long delay. Therefore, the most recent data available at that time were used. At the same time, for procedural reasons, data cannot be updated continuously, as published by the Central Statistical Office. However, it should be emphasized that the latest statistics appearing are analyzed in terms of possible changes in the socio-economic trends of the voivodeship and, as it has been rightly noticed, these statistics change to a small extent, which does not make it necessary to draw new, different conclusions

Source: based on the *Sprawozdanie z konsultacji społecznych ...*, 2013.

Developed in the second half of the twentieth century, the system dynamics approach, nowadays covers almost all areas of the economy, natural environment, natural resources, and many others. It can be seen in recent years, appearing in articles about the public affairs of the transport and logistics, which was kind of domain system dynamics already in the twentieth century after other studies of public administration (Abdelgawad, Snaprud, Krogstie 2010; Fiddaman 2002; Homer, Hirsch, Pierson 2004; Landsbergen, Coursey 1997; Lyneis, Ford 2007; Otto, Simon 2008). It could be the next step of using more advanced method for analyses the participation. The other new approach for participation is the given possibility for students of primary school to propose and vote for the small projects.

Conclusions

Theory of local participation was extended in last century. Countries like Poland after transformation in 1989/90 must unlearn old habits in area of creating plans and established new methods. To increase participation our government partly change some regulations according to new theory of building strategy of development and EU guidelines. In author opinion and light of conducted research the low level of participation is results of low trust between inhabits and governments even local level, caring of my own business, lack of faith that the voice will be heard, as well as the lack of good ideas and time to read documents. However, the idea of participatory budgets, which has been growing in recent years, not only in cities and communes, but also in primary schools, as well as the awareness of civil rights resulting from national regulations and the EU level, causes the involvement of various NGOs, public and private institutions as well as individual in the process of participation in the creation of strategic documents.

ORCID iD

Andrzej Pawluczuk: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1642-9894>

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Partycypacja lokalna w tworzeniu strategii rozwoju

Streszczenie

Artykuł poświęcony jest zagadnieniu udziału mieszkańców w procesie tworzenia lokalnej strategii rozwoju. Autor przedstawił wyniki badań dotyczące aktywności mieszkańców, ich struktury oraz zakresu partycypacji dla trzech wybranych strategii: jednej dla poziomu wojewódzkiego i dwóch lokalnych dla poziomu gminnego. Wymóg włączenia mieszkańców w proces tworzenia strategii dla województwa wynika wprost z prawa, a na poziomie lokalnym wskazane jest konsultowanie strategii. Włączenie mieszkańców w proces tworzenia strategii rozwoju wymaga podejmowania różnych działań i korzystania z różnych narzędzi. W analizowanych przypadkach były to: ankieta, spotkania z interesariuszami, panele eksperckie oraz informowanie o pracach nad strategią za pośrednictwem mediów. Proces partycypacji mieszkańców pozytywnie wpłynął na uchwalenie dokumentu strategii

rozwoju na sesji rady oraz zwiększył świadomość mieszkańców na temat planów strategicznego rozwoju województwa lub gminy.

Słowa kluczowe

partycypacja, strategiczne planowanie, regionalna strategia, lokalna strategia