

Les budgets participatifs français sont-ils sortis de la “démocratie de proximité” ?

Communication pour les cinquièmes journées doctorales
du GIS DÉMOCRATIE ET PARTICIPATION

*Merci de ne pas citer ce travail.
Les commentaires sont les bienvenus.*

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When a democratic innovation such as participatory budgeting travelled from Brazil to Europe, many scholars pointed that some initial goals and features (of...) had disappeared (Baiocchi and Ganuza 2016; Ganuza and Francés 2012; Porto de Oliveira 2017; Röcke 2014; Sintomer, Röcke, and Herzberg 2016). The Porto Alegre model was distinct from what European cities were trying to implement and a much smaller portion of capital expenditure was really discussed within European participatory budgeting. While participatory budgeting used to be one of the first step towards a much bigger discussion about local assets and source of incomes.

Since the last local elections in 2014 in France, a new increase of PB cases has emerged after Paris decision to start one in 2014. Paris was the second capital in Europe to adapt participatory budgeting after Lisbon (Alves and Allegretti 2012). Even if participatory budgeting is not compulsory by national law, many new cases went down the road of Paris, and the French capital city claims the biggest participatory budgeting experience in the world. There might be some concerns about what is now called by local actors participatory budgeting and how academic definitions might be challenged by current cases.



Illustration 1: Anne Hidalgo claims, as Mayor of Paris, that "Paris has the biggest participatory budgeting in the world" in September 2015. "I give you the keys for the budget. Use them!"

This research will focus on the different ways this participatory device travels in France. After the last local elections in 2014, only 4 cases were active. In 2018 more than one hundred are being now implemented. This paper tries to shed light on existing differences between the various participatory budgeting waves in France and argues despite new formal rules, that the current wave doesn't build upon on previous experiences. Therefore, this paper shows a new trend in "selective listening" (Sintomer et al. 2008) or "cherry-picking" (Smith 2009) although PB appears to be a robust democratic innovation. Is participatory budgeting clearly resistant to attempts to select proposals that fit into the political agenda of city councils? Like Avritzer (2017), this paper could sustain the claim that French participatory budgeting cases show how "in many cases innovation can play the role of co-optation and disempowerment".

1. Methods

Many works/authors have been studying how PB has been adapted within a specific country like Spain (NAVARRO YÁÑEZ, 2004 ; Ganuza et Francès, 2012), Brazil (Spada, 2014) or more recently Estonia (Krenkova, 2017). Some studies focus on different patterns in place such as the diffusion due to a specific party and other look at social or economical variables. In looking at processes by which this policy transfer in France has been adopted, this paper analyses 107 active cases of PB in 2018 based on web mining (Google alerts) and found occurrences in a French newspaper database (Europresse).

Based on this selection, regulations and website functionalities (if online process) were analysed for 61 cases considered as active only if the collecting phase was happening in 2017. Future cases weren't not considered because their procedural rules are not known yet.

2. Participatory budgeting in theory

Leonardo Avritzer (2003, 2017) has described in his works based on Brazilian cases and other experiences in Latin America four essential characteristics: delegation of sovereignty by elected mayors to assemblies, combination of different participatory traditions, principle of self-regulation and inversion of priorities.

Yves Sintomer, Anja Röcke and Carsten Herzberg (p.20, 2016) used for their seminal work about cases in Europe 5 distinct criteria:

- (1) Discussion of financial/budgetary processes
- (2) The city level has to be involved
- (3) It has to be a repeated process over years
- (4) Public deliberation in specific meetings/forums
- (5) Some accountability on the works delivered

Essential differences exist between these definitions, Avritzer only taking into account processes where citizens could decide about the rules of the institution. The principle is self-regulation is far from being anecdotal and could be a key step for a negotiation between social movements and local authorities: without open platform for the organised civil society, any democratization effect on local authorities is being reduced.

In order to select many examples, this study hasn't used any of these criteria, because it targets all participatory processes that are self-labelled "participatory budgeting", following Porto de Oliveira's strategy (2017).

The procedural rules are decided by the French city councils and use the following steps:

1. Defining rules for public participation
2. Collecting proposals from citizens
3. Reviewing cost and feasibility for each proposal
4. Organising vote
5. Implementing winning proposals

3. Three waves of participatory budgeting in France

First cases of participatory budgeting were not created after the last local elections (2014) in France, when "in a determined context followers emerge who rally around the same path", following the leadership of an innovator (Porto de Oliveira 2017).

The first wave appeared after World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, where personal networks were linked to the French Communist Party and a small NGO called "Démocratiser Radicalement la Démocratie." These French networks were essential in order to translate documents and train people based on the principles seen in Porto Alegre. Local implementers' speeches were as radical as in Porto Alegre, as has been documented by Nez and Talpin (2010). A dozen cases were active before 2008 in cities such as Saint-Denis, Pont-au-Claix, Monsang-sur-Orge. These cases were linked to cities where the Communist Party had been elected for decades. Nez and Talpin explain how those processes are framed in a way that prevents marginalised groups from any further political engagement affiliation, despite the very fact that these groups are the target groups in political discourse from the elected officials. Electoral support was not massively gained in a context where the Communist Party influence was fading away, due to change in demographics and a global ideological crisis after 1989.

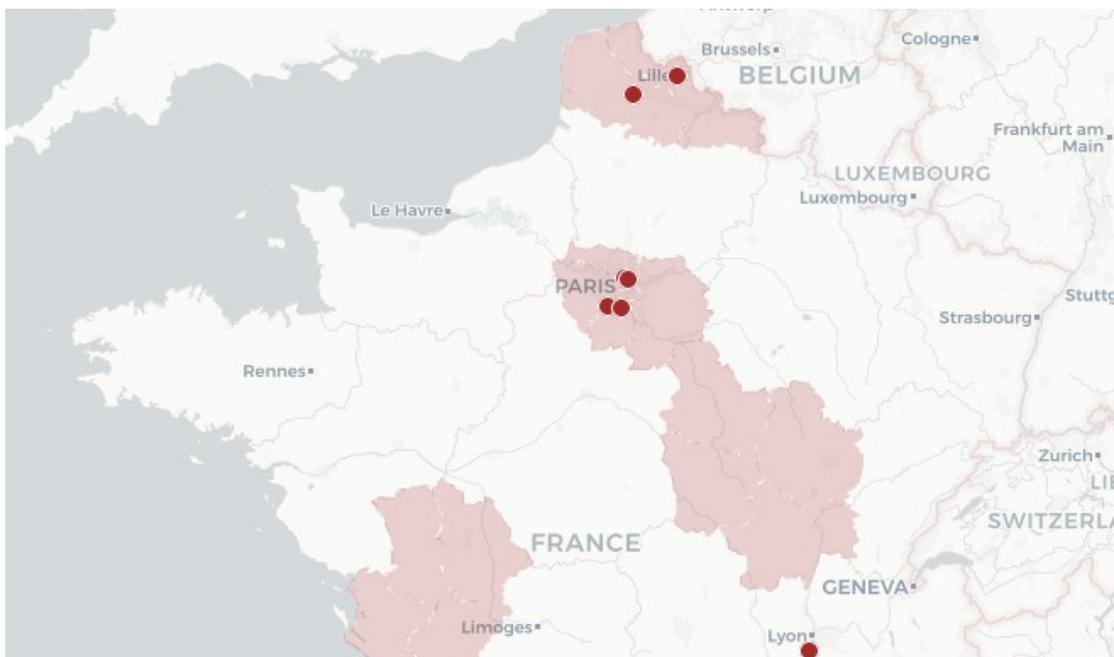
The literature is not clear about how much money was spent through PB during the first wave. At the city level, its political impact was quite limited : Sintomer's team only listed a dozen of cases. They pointed out similarities between these experiences and they seem to share the same framework they called "proximity democracy".

Röcke (2014) explains that French PB were not the results of bottom-up initiatives and are very similar to “Neighbourhood councils” (p.70). These councils were compulsory for cities above 80 000 habitants and created by officials from City councils (officers or politicians) and they were merely consultative instruments, letting space for “selective listening” or cherry-picking.

Sintomer et al, (2016) describe other permanent features such as these PB were mainly neighbourhood focused (p.219) allowed funding for micro-local projects (p.97), offered limited independence for civil society (p. 57) and were constrained by poor deliberative quality. At the local level, these experiments were strategically used by politicians to revive their relationship with their constituency and Röcke (2014, p.72) described how the lack of clear regulations meant that “local politicians (whose power position is that of ‘local kings’) dominate the meetings in that they chair the discussions and resume their results.”

Most of these experiences ended before 2010, although Grigny near Lyon and Divion near Lille were still active between 2010 and 2014 until executives lost in local elections. Only Firminy (near Lyon) and Jarny (near Metz) were active after the 2014 elections and continue until now.

A second wave after 2005 aimed to diffuse participatory democracy to high schools led by the Poitou-Charente region (Mazeaud, 2011, 2012). 10 millions of euros were dedicated to regional high schools and secondary institutions for specific training (Établissement Régional d'Enseignement Adapté) and every high school enabled the school community (teachers, students, cleaners,...) to decide how to spend 100 000 euros based on two public meetings. The regional council hired professionals for facilitation during the whole year. Röcke (2014) argues that “the organisers of the participatory school budget independently determine its rules, cherry-picking proposals from participants” (p.118).



From 2010 to 2015, other regions led similar experiments but on a smaller scale such as Nord-Pas-de-Calais (O'Miel et Mongy, 2014), Bourgogne and Paris region (Ile-de-France). Only a small portion of high schools were involved and the regional councils were not providing any support for deliberative events.

This wave in high-schools also disappeared after the 2015 regional elections, due to major political shifts.

During the 2014 political campaign, Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo, inspired by other cases like Lisbon and New York, decided to implement participatory budgeting after re-election. Many national newspapers broadly covered this pledge. During other campaigns elsewhere, local leaders from the Socialist Party decided to make identical pledges, when previously it was a policy only supported by the Green and the Communist Parties for municipal elections. When local coalitions had to merge their political manifesto between the first and second round of the election, participatory budgeting was pushed in cities such as Metz, Rennes and Grenoble.

In less than 4 years, there were in 2017 more than 4 millions people able to have a say about local budgets through participatory budgeting in 61 cases : beside city councils, PB also exists at the university level, in social housing, at different infra-national levels and a national climate strategy discussed as participatory budgeting.

The spread of PB has been realised in two clusters, one in Northern France and the other one in Île-de-France (Paris regional district). A third of these cases involve the already established consultative neighbourhood committees which play some formal role during the process. This means that most cases are not built upon former participatory processes. Nearly 50 new cases are about to start in 2018 and are not taken into account in this paper.

Every case starting after 2014 has happened in a territory that did not have PB during the 1st or 2nd wave. Paris had an early experiment between 2005-2009 in a specific district, but the link between the district experiment and the city-wide experience starting in 2014 is not clearly documented. The phase for collecting proposals is much broader than a decade ago, as the early experiment was only dedicated to local pavement infrastructure ("voirie"). If there is a link to former cases, that would be the only exception.

Because these cases are not related to previous waves, it could easily be imagined that they wouldn't follow any path dependence. 10 years ago, Sintomer's team was labelling french PB as typical of "proximity democracy". If the lack of precise rules and the omnipresence of elected officials were prominent in the first generation of PB in France, most of these processes are now more formal and we might wonder whether "selective listening" or cherry-picking typical from that time are still occurring as budgets get bigger. For example, Parisians are voting for a €100,000,000 budget each year and Paris City Council claims to have created the biggest PB in the world. Still, cases are

only discussing less than 1% of local budgets when Paris, Jarny and Firminy are allocating less than 2% of overall budget through PB.

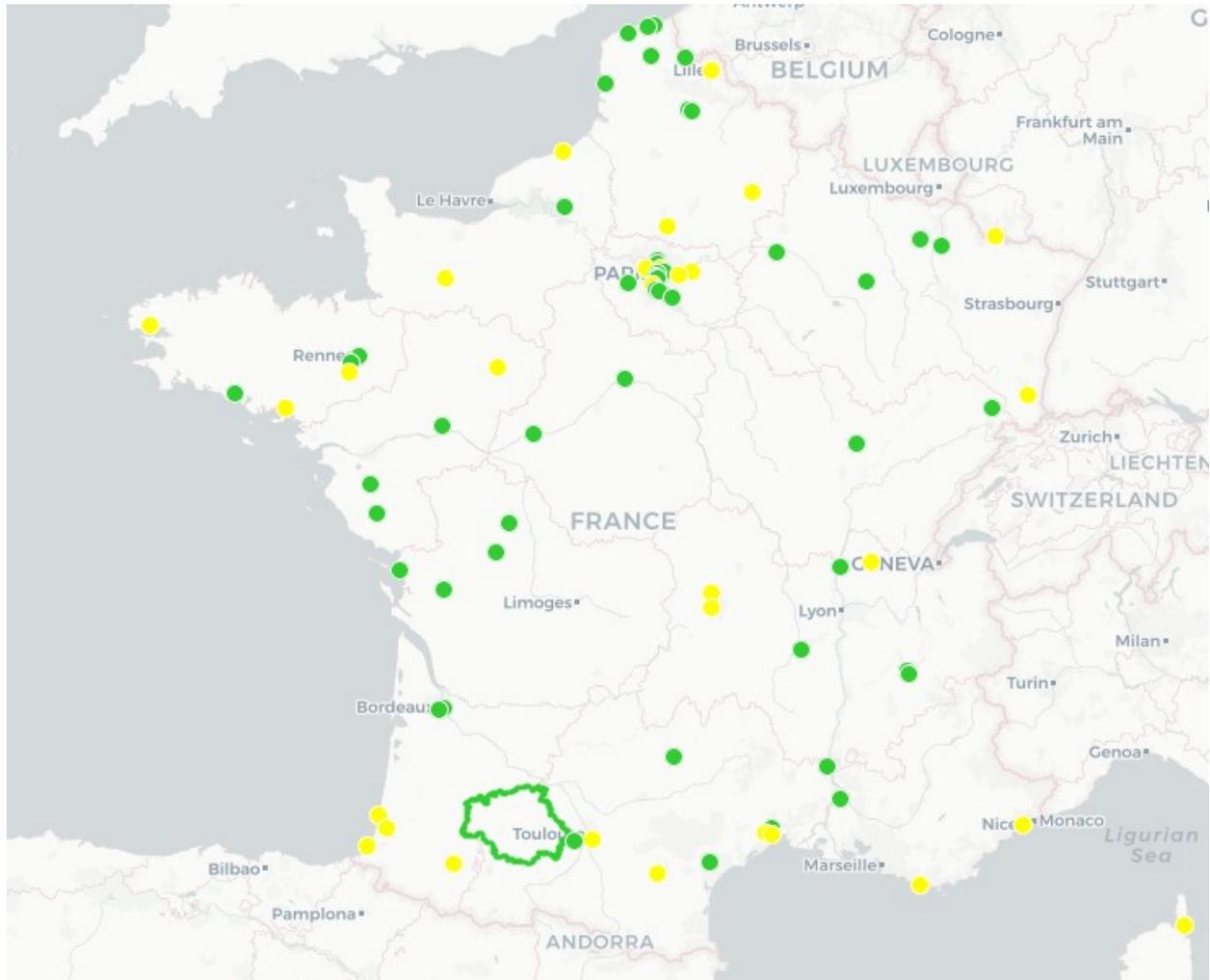


Illustration 3: Active cases after 2014 are in green with two clusters (more than 4 cases) in northern France and around Paris. New cases about to start

If most cases were implemented in small-sized cities during the first wave, the current wave is much more diverse: 57% of cities above 100 000 inhabitants are organizing PB. Smaller cities have much less PB cases in proportion to the number of existing cities.

Population	Number of cities	Number of PB
+ 100 000	42	24
40 000 – 100 000	142	15
- 40 000	35742	63

Table 1: Proportion of PB cases implemented by city councils related to population size (including future cases)

Stronger interest amongst larger cities could be explained by the current amalgamation of cities in metropolitan areas, with a new law creating new metropolitan local authorities. With this new law, metropolitan central cities transfer part of their administrative duties and prerogatives to this new entity and mayors could feel a gap between citizens' expectations for the former powerful actors to the real governing authorities. Participatory budgeting might be a way to connect with citizens' needs even if the administrative capacity is under pressure because of amalgamation.

The question driving the rest of this paper is the extent to which this most recent wave of PB differs from former practices. Are they still related to proximity democracy featuring no formal rules and low deliberation? Could any regional pattern or pattern depending on the population size could be distinguished?

4. A third wave of participatory budgeting based on low deliberation and low transparency

Different features show that current cases in France do not share critical characteristics with proximity democracy. Most cases have published public regulations online, which means a greater procedural clarity.

When the first wave was only allowing district-level proposals, there is a clear change because 76% cases allow voting at the city-level while only 24% allow only district-level proposals.

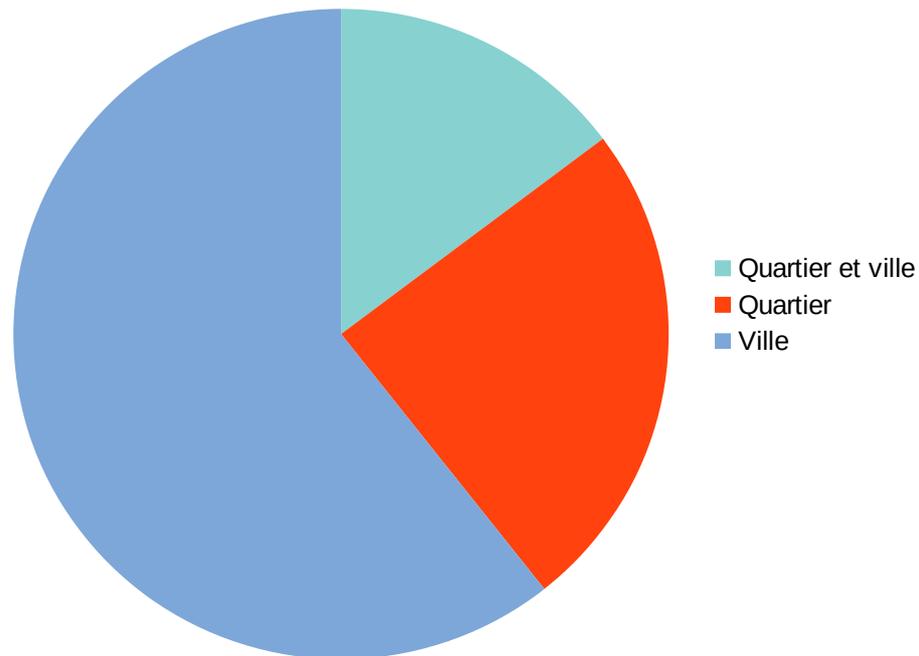


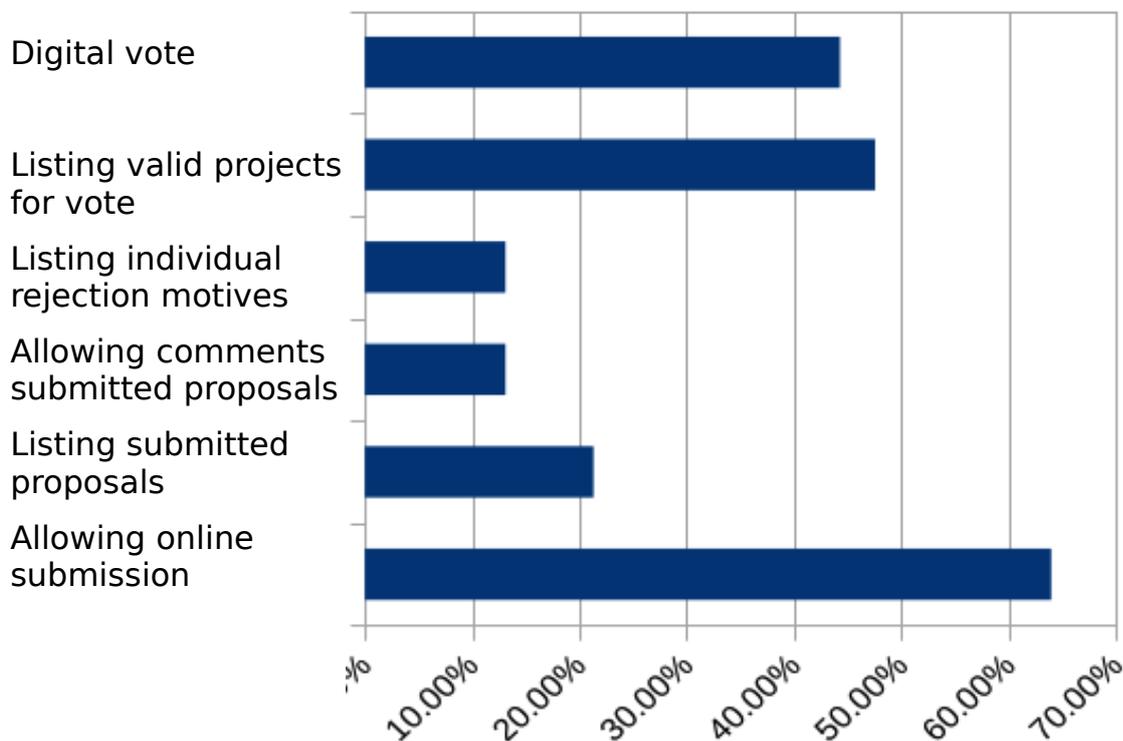
Illustration 4: Projects could be city-wide in 76% while only 24% allow only district level proposals

Only 33% are related to institutional neighbourhood committees (compulsory by public law for cities above 80 000 inhabitants), which means most cases from the current wave don't rely on already established participatory institutions.

Only 31% involve compulsory face-to-face meetings, which also indicates digital tools are getting part of the mainstream procedural definition. But deliberation appears to be very weak, even for online PB. Only 13% cases allow citizens to comment on proposals, whether in order to express support or concerns. Considering the absence of online and offline debates, French cases are not deliberative. Many PBs are claiming at improving social capital ("préserver le lien social"), but it's not always clear how website design or the way public meetings are organized are really bonding between citizenry.

The first wave made little use of digital platforms. Nowadays, more and more digital tools are made available for city councils to use, especially for the second phase (collecting proposals) and for the voting phase. Most cases allow online submission (63.93%), whether through a specific platform or a simple form to email. Digital voting happens in 44% of cases and fraud is not controlled. Only 6 cases ask for ID check in order to prevent multiple votes.

If city councils provide a list valid projects for vote for 47.54%, most of cases do not publish online the individual reasons why a proposal could be rejected (13.11% only do). This paper will explain why this unsatisfactory justification is essential in a further section.



The lack of transparency goes beyond the technical review when few cities really explain motives of rejections. Website provide poor information about implementation rate. Only 6 cases with online single proposal monitoring. Face-to-face meetings are not organized in order to allow any citizen oversight. This is very different from monitoring mechanisms in Brazil based in « *controle social* » like for example the duty of *comissão de obras* in Porto Alegre to audit how works are delivered.

There is not a strategy to link participatory budgeting to a broader budgetary discussion. The proportion of overall budget discussed through PB is less than then 2% are really discussed through PB. Most cities are below 1% which fits into the narrative of marginal power given to participatory device, far from being an “exclusive conveyor belt” as Baiocchi and Ganuza described for Porto Alegre (2014: 36).

Even if current trend relies on online platforms, PB is far from being linked to some open government strategy: less than 10% of cases are implementing both PB and open data for finances. Indeed, only 5 cities have published their budget using open data standard, while 37% local authorities are at least providing some basic financial data. French PBs are not about raising awareness about finance constraints or making budgets more transparent.

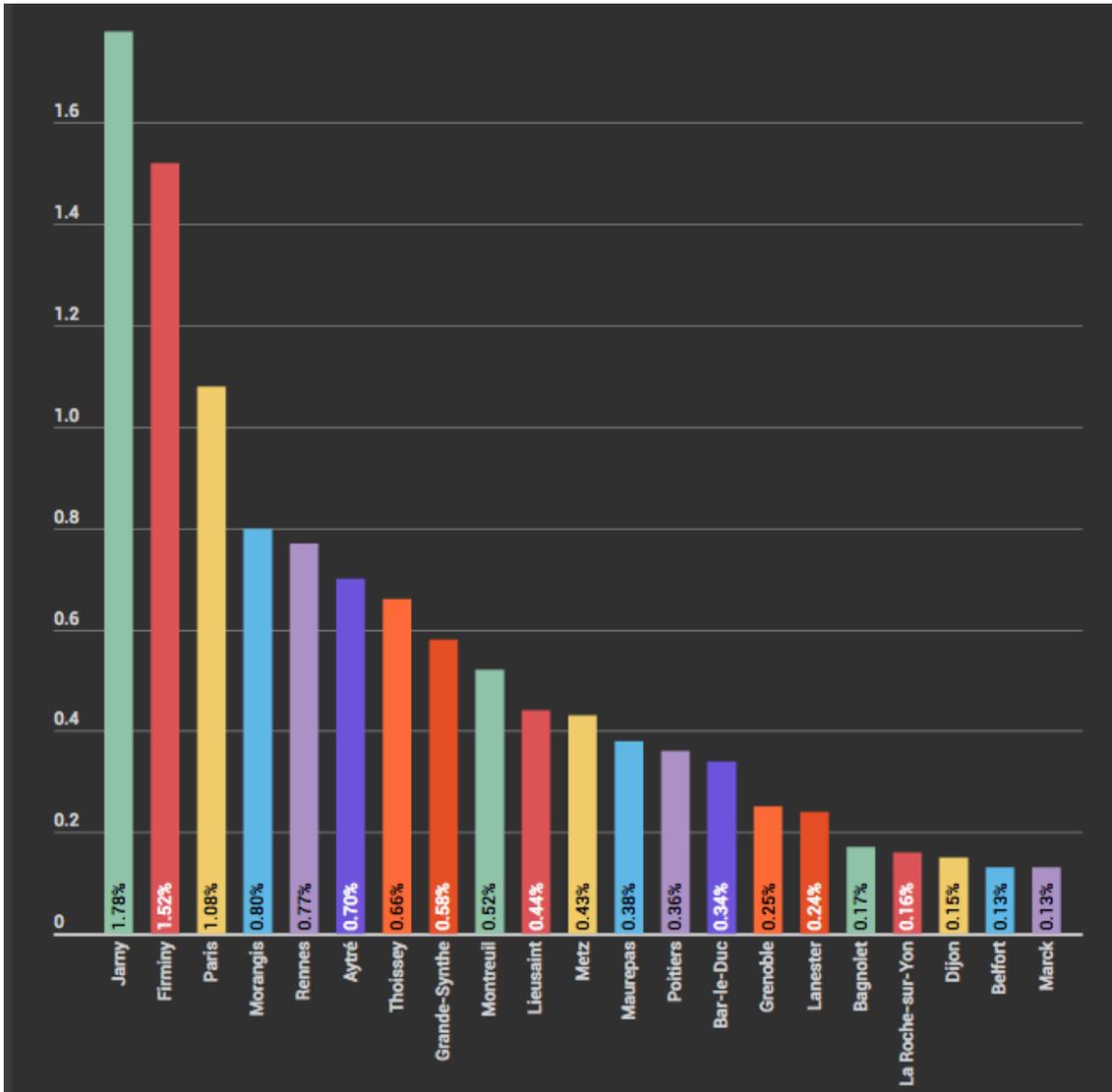


Illustration 5: Proportion of budget allocated to PB from overall budget

5. Is Paris a catalyst for policy transfer?

The map could display 2 geographic clusters (4 cases in the same area) around Paris and around Lille (even if Lille was not implementing it before 2018).

This paper used social network analysis in order to classify procedural models of cases in 2017 in order to relate French cases to institutional design features:

- compulsory face-to-face meetings
- association to existing participatory institutions such as neighbourhood committee

- online possibility to submit proposals
- compulsory face-to-face meetings
- online listing all proposals before technical review
- website listing all valid proposals after technical review
- possibility to comment proposals online
- online explanation for individual rejection
- possibility to comment rejection motives online
- official selection made elected officials
- city-level (vote for city-wide proposals)
- only online vote
- mixing online and ballot paper
- controlling identification of unique voter
- vote for district-level proposals
- ranking voting method
- open data (open data for budget issues)
- basic information for overall city budget
- Online regular update about proposals implementation

Then I used Gephi (Force Atlas 2, 0.9.2) in order to create a bipartite graph linking cases to procedural features for active cases in 2015, in 2016 and in 2017.

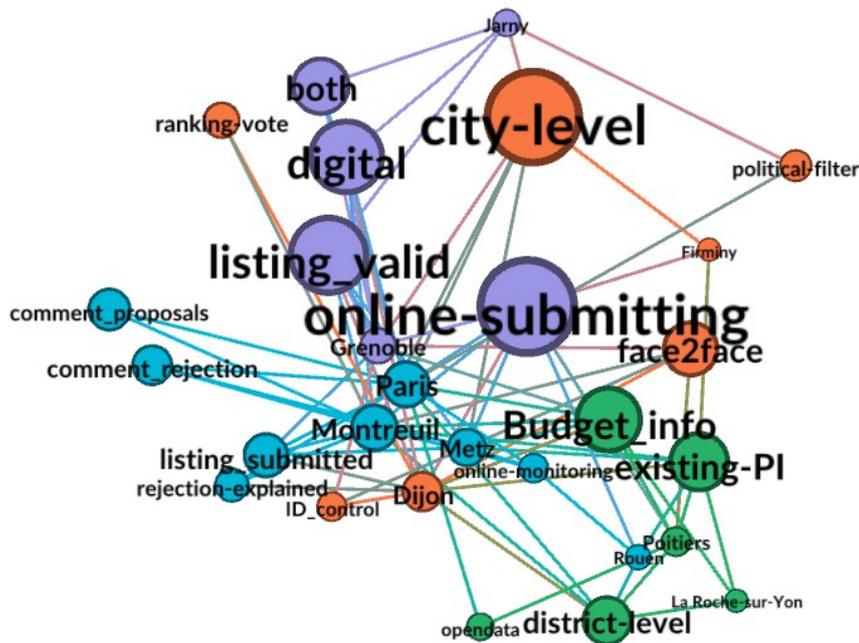
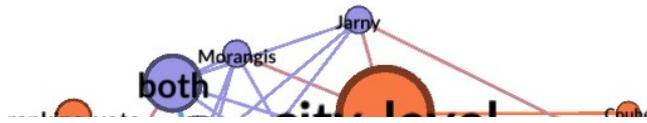


Illustration 6: Procedural models of cases in 2015

In 2015, during the first year of Paris implementation, Paris is very near Montreuil, Metz and Grenoble. This means Paris share most of procedural features. Other former cases such as Jarny or Firminy are not located in the same region, because they function in different ways (most of the PB outputs are not publicized for example).

The next following year, when about 20 new cases were added, none were located next to Paris, which means Paris was not inspirational for crafting regulations beside a lot of media attention.



Using Gephi detection of communities based on nodes and edges, 4 types of participatory budgeting could be distinguished (Modularity: 0,239):

- proximity democracy in green (i.e. Bar le Duc which organizes the vote only at district-level)
- city-level process with face-to-face meeting in orange (i.e. Grande-Synthe)
- IT-mixed processes in purple (for example Avignon)
- more online deliberative PB with a greater level of transparency in blue (for example Montreuil, Metz or Paris)

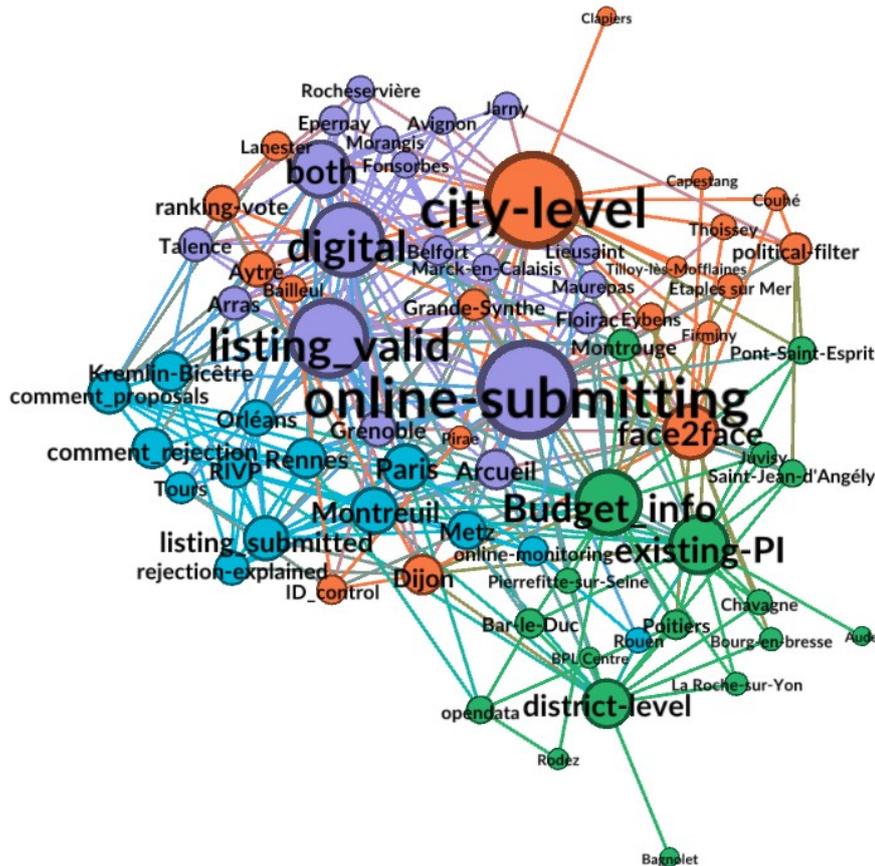


Illustration 8: Procedural models of cases in 2017 in a bipartite graph (using Gephi, Force Atlas 2, 0.9.2) in order to relate french cases to institutional design features :

- .online-submitting (online possibility to submit proposals)
- .city-level (vote for city-wide proposals)
- .listing_submitted (online listing all proposals before technical review)
- .listing_valid (website listing all valid proposals after technical review)
- .comment_proposals (possibility to comment proposals online)
- .comment_rejection (possibility to comment rejection motives online)
- .rejection-explained (online explanation for individual rejection)
- .digital (only online vote)
- .both (mixing online and ballot paper)
- .ID-control (controlling identification of unique voter)
- .budget_info (information for overall city budget)
- .existing-PI (link to existing participatory institutions such as neighbourhood committee),
- .district-level (vote for district-level proposals)
- .face2face (compulsory face-to-face meetings)
- .open data (open data for budget issues)
- .online-monitoring (regular update about proposals implementation)
- .political-filter (official selection made elected officials)
- .ranking vote (ranking voting method)

If Paris saw new cases around itself since 2015, their procedural rules are different from the capital. Most PB looking like Paris are cities above 100 000 cities.

This table shows also that, in contradiction to Estonia (Krenjova and Raudla, 2017), diffusion of PB is not directly linked to the first big local authority despite of lots of media attention, because other cities are implementing PB in different ways, even in the same region (Ile-de-France). Paris model of online deliberation is not specific to the region. If 6,38% of online deliberation cases are happening in Ile-de-France (Paris region), the same region has developed two other models (Proximity and city-level).

The third wave shows a true formalisation of regulations. Objective criteria are found in regulations and they define what is the scope of proposals citizens could propose in order to make this proposal adequate to be formally put to the vote. I've found 22 types of technical criteria, and the 10 most commonly found in regulations are:

- The proposal should look for "public interest" (32 cases) or "*l'intérêt général*" (in french)
- The proposal should be bithin city jurisdiction (30)
- The proposal should be capital expenditure (26)
- The proposal should have a limited impact on operating budget (25)
- The proposal should respect a cost limit per proposal (23)
- The proposal should have an exhaustive description (the form should be completely filled in) (19)

- The proposal should avoid specific policies areas that are excluded (15)
- The proposal should be lawful and not discriminate against anyone (15)
- The proposal should be delivered within a specific time frame (15)
- The proposal should be localised on city territory (14)

Paris only bases its technical review on the four most used criteria. Only 7 cities are using so few criteria (and Metz is the only city from the same similar procedural type). From the 33 cases where criteria were found, whereas 14 cities use between 5 and 10 criteria, 12 cities use more than 10 criteria in their technical review.

6. Potential for cherrypicking:

French cases were often described as weak and leaving a space for “selective listening” (Sintomer et al, 2016). From the list of widely used criteria for the technical review, at least 2 criteria are problematic because they allow room for discretionary selection. Defining why a proposal doesn't fit common good is nothing but a political stance. Calculating what is a “limited” operating budget is also very difficult.

Latest research about Spanish cases suggests that cherry-picking is happening in much participatory processes. Font, Smith, Galais & Alarcón (2017) show how a "challenging proposal" has a 40% chance of being rejected and only 26% of being fully implemented. A “non-challenging proposal" has a 42% chance of being fully implemented, and only 24% of being rejected.

Font et al (2017) manage to show how PB proposals are more likely in Spain to be implemented comparing to other participatory processes, because PB offers two advantages: a specific budget is dedicated before the implementation and the authors stress the potential impact of citizen monitoring : “the design of participatory budgeting often includes institutionalised citizen oversight: selected participants have a role in overseeing the implementation process by local government. Arguably officials are less likely to cherry-pick proposals when they are being watched.” (p.16)

But their research only focus on proposals selected after the “end” of the participatory process, which is mainly the voting phase for participatory budgeting.

I'd like to suggest cherry-picking could also happen during negotiations between citizens and administrative staff when proposals are being reviewed in order to assess their feasibility based on objective criteria. There are at least 3 variations of cherry-picking in current French PBs: informal moulding, evaporation and lack of accountability.

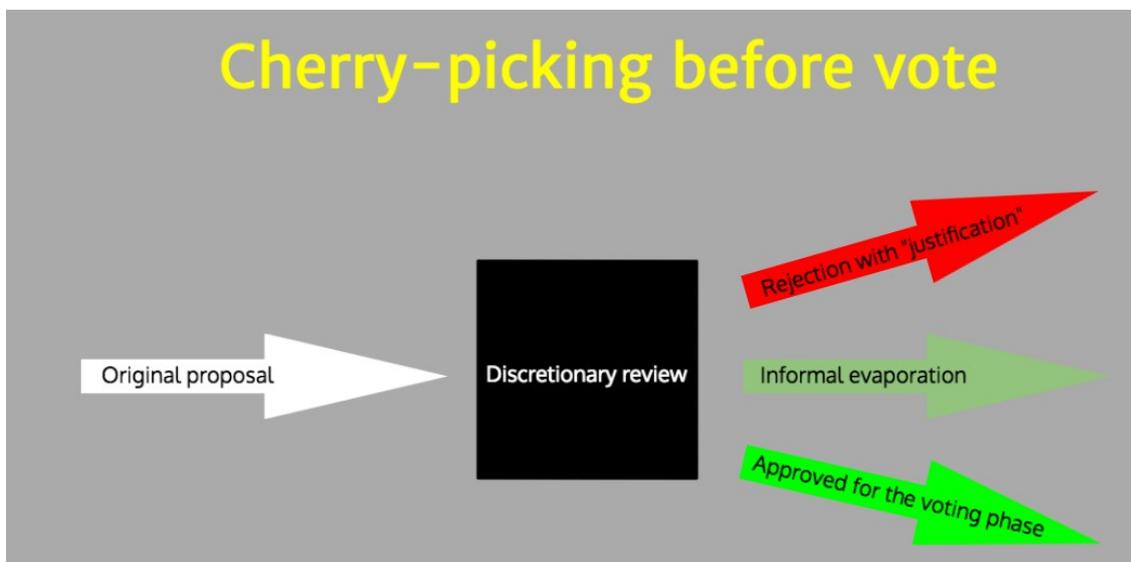


Illustration 9: 3 fates could be described after discretionary review :

In the next table is analysed how many proposals were submitted to PB, how many proposals were selected for the voting phase and how many proposals were selected through the voting procedure.

Table 10: Number of proposals submitted to PB before technical review and after review standing before voting phase in 7 different cities

In some cities such as Paris, 81% of proposals are declared unfit for the vote. In other cities, such as Avignon, only 50% are rejected before the vote. This shows how essential is to understand what is happening in the black box of discretionary review.

Further discussion could happen between city staff and citizens in order to make the proposal “tick the boxes” or there is no contact with citizens and only proposals fitting staff expectations are expected. One assumption could be that a process which sees 90% initial proposals being funded would give more satisfaction than a process where only 20% are validated during the discretionary review.

The discretionary review of proposals is based on objective criteria. Criteria are usually mentioned in regulations such as “the proposal should be completed within 2 years” or “the proposal should not discriminate against anyone” or “the proposal should not lead to large operational expenditure”. The appreciation of these objective criteria are not precise for each proposal and city staff could for example reject a proposal in a district because of one of the criteria while the same staff could approve a similar proposal in a different district. That’s a kind of informal moulding but formal moulding could also happen when city officials are allowed to veto proposals.

Proposals are evaporating through the process, but they could follow a different track: proposals could be arbitrarily merged by city officials, or they could be

merged through deliberation in public forums. Merging two similar proposals could allow city staff to pick from each proposal which features to implement.

Examples of informal selection by using criteria that are not known from published regulations. Paris uses for example 4 official criteria: proposals should be related to Paris city council jurisdiction, they should target common good and mostly related to capital expenditure. But when a sample of rejected proposals is analysed, other justifications are being used:

Proposal	Justification	Comment	URL
Sentier dans les arbres	« Votre projet a reçu un avis technique défavorable des services de la Direction des Espaces Verts et de l'Environnement de la Ville de Paris. En effet, le site du Bois de Vincennes est classé, votre projet ne peut donc y être mis en œuvre. »	If adventure park is not feasible within this park, why something very similar exists at the other side of the park?	https://budgetparticipatif.paris.fr/bp/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?page=idee&campagne=D&idee=246
Bagagerie 2ème arrondissement	« Votre projet a reçu un avis technique défavorable des services de la Direction de l'Action Sociale, de l'Enfance et de la Santé de la Ville de Paris. En effet, le lieu identifié ne dispose pas d'espace suffisant pour installer une bagagerie. »	It depends on how many boxes are needed for this "cloakroom" for homeless	https://budgetparticipatif.paris.fr/bp/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?page=idee&campagne=D&idee=2406
Réaménagement et Végétalisation de la Place Saint-Fargeau	« Plusieurs projets lauréats des éditions précédentes du Budget participatif vont être mis en œuvre par la municipalité dans le 20ème arrondissement. C'est ainsi le cas du projet "Végétons le 20ème", qui propose	The city council claims this 2017 proposal is already addressed by a 2016 proposal, called "Végétons le 20e". But that proposal, merging in reality 9 other projects doesn't initially target Saint-Fargeau square which is specifically mentioned in the 2017 proposal.	https://budgetparticipatif.paris.fr/bp/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?page=idee&campagne=D&idee=7

<p>de végétaliser l'espace public de l'arrondissement en installant sur les trottoirs et aux pieds des arbres du mobilier et du matériel de jardinage. Vous pouvez suivre l'avancement de ce projet via la plateforme budgetparticipatif.paris.fr. »</p>		
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The last case is referring to a proposal made in 2017. The city council of Paris claims the project cannot be undertaken because other similar proposals were to be implemented after a successful vote in 2016. But the 2017 proposal is not located nearby the 2016 proposals. Another point illustrating this informal evaporation is related to the budget of the proposals in 2016. At least one of the proposals is planned to cost 50 000 euros before the technical review. This proposal is merged with 8 other proposals. The final estimation made by the City Council for the cost for the merged proposal is 25 000 euros, without any explanation.



Then the third variation of cherry-picking in french cases is related to low level of accountability. Justification is very rarely provided by city councils when they reject proposals during the technical review. Only 13% of cases are explicitly describing the motives for proposal rejection. Paris examples shows that even when they do so, there is some credibility gap between justification for rejection and facts about other similar proposals that were allowed. There are not any case in France when citizens could appeal city decisions, which is different from other european countries (such as Portugal).

7. Conclusion: French cases and current definitions

This paper doesn't present an optimistic conclusion of the potential of actual french PBs. Engaging citizens in a local debate about spendings could have walked on two legs, such as transparency and priority-setting. These early results should be deepened in order to understand how local authorities are currently framing public participation about spending. The current wave of PB doesn't help to foster accountability and appears unlikely to increase citizenry trust. This participatory institution is not aiming at democratising bureaucracy and suggests some similarity with Avritzer's claim about "*insulation of PB within the administration by the political system*" (p.73, 2017).

The new generation of participatory budgeting in France, which started after local elections in 2014, are less and less related to "proximity democracy" (Sintomer et al, 2008 ; Rocke, 2014). The processes are being more clear about their rules, even if there is still room for "selective listening" in most cases before the voting phase based on a great rate of rejection before voting phase and poor justification about why projects are rejected.

Few are using deliberative methods and most of them address small urban needs, while most of capital expenses are decided through traditional decision-making. Eventually, there is no clear link between PB and open budgets, which means french PB in France are not aiming at politicizing budget debates. This would confirm the key argument of Avritzer (2017): "*most of the political system is closed to political innovation or accepts only token or symbolic aspects of important political innovations such as participatory budgeting*" (p.25).

	1 st wave	3 rd wave
Creation	Top-down	Top-down
Power-sharing	Consultative	Decisive
Deliberation	Low	Low
Geographical scope of projects	Micro-level	City-level
Procedures	Weak clarity	Clear regulations
Cherry-picking	High	High
Justification	Weak	Weak

While Rocke (p.21, 2014) could argue there are "master frames with larger geographic scope (macro)" shaping how participation is being organized in specific countries, this paper shows a contrasted picture within a country. Despite lots of media attention about Paris, diffusion of PB within France is not directly linked to the first big local authority: other French cities are implementing PB in different ways, even in the same region (Ile-de-France).

Former academic definitions can't provide any strong link to current PB cases in France, which is challenging. Are such device really travelling from Brazil to Europe? This paper indicates how PB is not such a robust "democratic innovation" but merely window-dressing.

From these 61 cases, none really fit into main characteristics proposed by Avritzer and Sintomer.

Delegation of sovereignty (Avritzer)	Yes
Combination of different participatory traditions (Avritzer)	Yes
Principle of self-regulation (Avritzer)	No
Inversion of priorities (Avritzer)	Unknown
Discussion of financial/budgetary processes (Sintomer)	Yes
The city level has to be involved (Sintomer)	Yes
It has to be a repeated process over years (Sintomer)	Yes
Public deliberation in specific meetings/forums (Sintomer)	Weak
Some accountability on the works delivered (Sintomer)	Few

8. Limits and future steps:

Further investigations based on interviews could confirm how policy learning could form some clusters.

Further research could assess if PB might be as effective in realising proposals as other forms of participatory processes. This paper suggests that discretionary review filters proposals based on "technical criteria" but also could select politically unchallenging proposals. From these 4 families, it is too early to define if different types of French PB are more likely to increase space for cherry-picking.

Another part of this research will investigate how cherry-picking could happen during the technical review of proposals and after the vote during implementation. Font et al (2017) call for research able to "explore the diversity of forms of partial implementation" (p.17), so there is a need to follow

the proposals implementation and provide a clearer analysis of the scope of projects that could succeed in participatory budgeting in France and other countries.

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