

07 GREEN PARTICIPATORY BUDGET

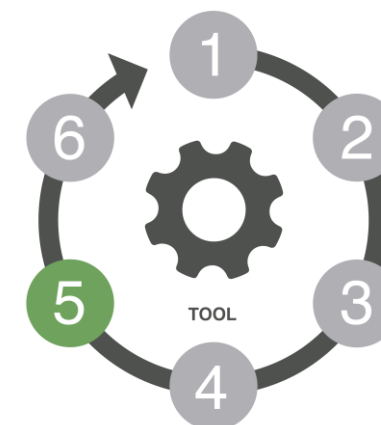
A green participatory budget is a process whereby citizens are given a direct say into how public budgets are allocated and spent for addressing climate change. So far, most Participatory Budgets have been implemented at the city or even neighbourhood level, though there are also examples at the regional and national level.

Participatory budgeting can be applied both as a tool and as a methodology. It is considered a tool because it provides a structure for citizens to directly participate in the decision-making process around how public funds are allocated and spent. It can also be considered a methodology because it involves a specific perspective and approach to governance and public engagement, including aspects such as transparency, inclusivity, and deliberation.

HOW DOES IT WORK

Through a green participatory budget, you will empower community members to take the leadership in proposing and voting for what the community believe should receive public funding. The process involves a series of facilitated meetings and consultations, online and in-person, where citizens and stakeholders discuss, submit and vote on climate projects.

A key to success is transparent communication and a complaints treatment process and the set-up of a model that works for your specific community. Another fundamental step is the establishment of a technical working group, ensuring that the final selected projects are feasible and realistic.



TIPS

In Lisbon, for example, in-person engagement is used for discussion and debate, whereas voting and proposal submission takes place online.

REFERENCES

[What is participatory budgeting?](#) (Scotland government)

The [Participatory Budgeting Theory of Change](#) is a tool that can help you understand how PB can lead to desired changes for people, communities, and governments.

[Dispelling Myths about Participatory Budgeting](#) (OECD)



Time



It depends on the size of the budget allocated to the Green Participatory Budget, the number of participants and the complexity of the projects. Typically, it can take several months.



Skills



Previous experience and knowledge are preferable from a wide range of disciplines (e.g., communication, outreach and engagement, environmental sustainability, urban economics and finance, policy and governance, project management). If you do not possess these skills in-house, you will most likely need to seek out expertise and establish partnerships with external organisations or individuals in your local ecosystem.



Resources



To implement a green participatory budget, you will need to invest substantial economic resources, as well as time. The funding you decide to put into it can vary widely. Another fundamental input is strong political willingness.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS / OUTCOMES

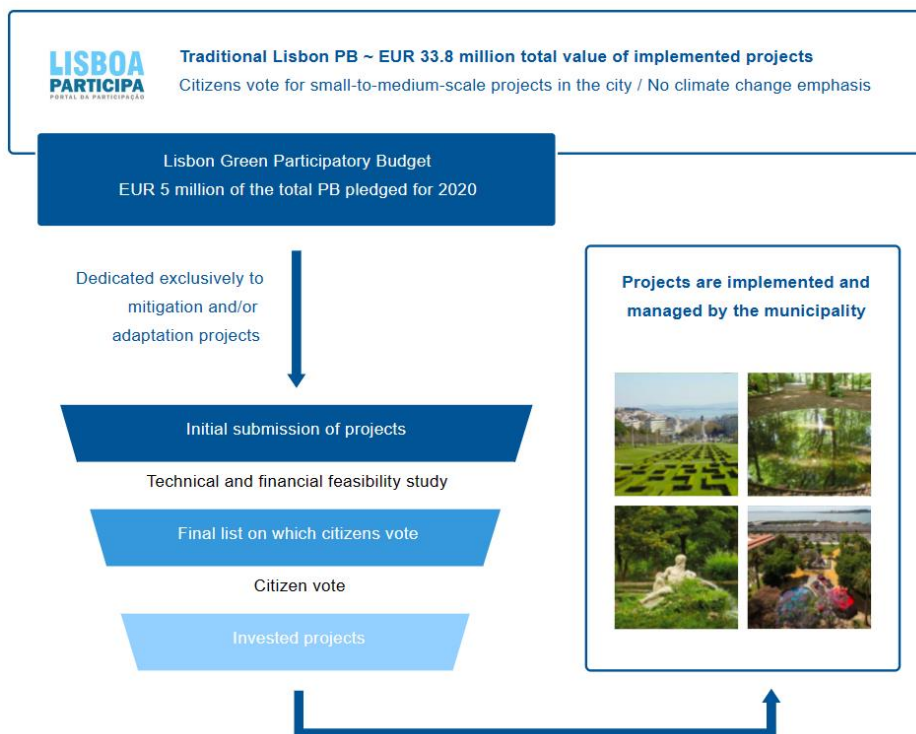
- ★ Helping close the gap between institutions and citizens towards a just transition by incorporating citizens’ priorities in the projects chosen and implemented.
- ★ Increased institutional trust, transparency, and efficiency.
- ★ Increased societal awareness of climate change.
- ★ Increased citizens’ satisfaction with municipal/regional policies.
- ★ Shift in local attitudes towards sustainability.

POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS AND BARRIERS

- Depending on the size and scope of your green participatory budget, you may need specialised profiles, e.g., project manager, expert in participatory processes, urban economist, communication and/or outreach coordinator, evaluation specialist.
- Gathering quality information about the effectiveness of the proposed solutions may be challenging.
- Monitoring and assessing the positive impacts from the adopted solutions requires proper resources and long-term commitment.

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

- ★ [LISBON](#): 15% of funds from Lisbon’s already existing platform for participatory budgeting (over EUR 33 million) is dedicated solely for climate change adaptation and mitigation projects (about EUR 5 million). So far, citizens have decided to [fund projects](#) such as cycling lanes, tree planting for street heat reduction, or water capture and storage.



[Hidden Garden](#) is the story of most ever voted project of the participatory budget of Lisbon, an initiative for preserving an endangered green area and turning it into a public space.

- ★ [BOLOGNA -participatory budget 2023](#): from 26 May to 30 June it is possible to vote for the favourite project, among the 43 proposed by the citizens of Bologna. All the projects have been designed to meet the objectives of the “Bologna Missione Clima”, which commits the city to achieving climate neutrality by 2030.

The project of each neighbourhood that gets the most votes will be financed and implemented, thanks to an investment from the Municipality of 500.000 euros per neighbourhood, with a total of 3 million euros for six winning projects. Citizens residing in the municipality of Bologna who have turned sixteen can vote, as well as non-residents who carry out their work, study or volunteer activity in the municipality and foreigners and stateless persons residing in the municipality of Bologna or who carry out their work, study, or volunteer activity.