

# Participatory Approaches in Urban Development in Vienna and Austria

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## A. BACKGROUND

The aim of the research is to understand how city planning and policy can work in a participatory manner while integrating private companies, city planners and citizen into decision-making processes. This integration is called “co-production” and the project is dealing with various methods of co-production such as collecting knowledge from the citizen through so-called “association wheel” or involving various stakeholders with different interests and developing compromise solutions with the help of so-called “multi-stakeholder multi-criteria decision analysis”.

Therefore, the aim of the background study is to understand:

1. If such co-creation process already exists in the city planning of the municipality of Vienna and to describe the methods of co-creation, namely, how feedback from citizen on contested city planning issues is collected and how the decisions on further urban development are developed
2. What are the different views on participation and co-creation from various political parties, what is the dominant discourse for each of the parties
3. What are the perceptions of drivers and barriers for implementation of participation and co-creation method in the city planning
4. What are the existing participation and co-creation best practices

The theoretical basis of this work lays in the communitarian approach which deals with the different ways how society and individuum are connected. Another theory which forms the basis of this research is the cultural theory and discourse analysis. The discourse analysis is a theoretical approach in social sciences, which allows understanding of views and perceptions of different stakeholders' groups. The theoretical background of this research is rooted in cultural theory, which is also known as the Theory of Plural Rationalities. According to this theory there are four discourses or worldviews such as hierarchical/authoritarian, egalitarian, individualistic and fatalistic discourses. Each of these discourses has specific elements such as views and perceptions. These worldviews are a partial representation of a reality in which more complex dimensionality of behaviour exists. The main aim of discourse analysis is to understand power relations and structures in society as well as the views, visions and risk perceptions of stakeholder groups. For example, hierarchists and individualists both regard technology as beneficial but for different reasons: individualists - because of its potential opportunity for individual economic exploitation, and hierarchists – because of social progress and economic growth. Therefore, it is important to capture social interactions and background of rules which frame individual behaviour.

The empirical data for this research were collected through in-depth qualitative experts' interviews. The interviews were developed around four identified topics and included no prepared semi-open questions in order to fully explore the opinions of stakeholders. The discussions were recorded. The interviews were conducted with representatives of various stakeholders' groups in the city planning process of the municipality of Vienna. The stakeholders were also identified according to the.ir belonging to various political parties to ensure that all parties and all views were included. Further on, data from interviews were analysed following discourse analysis framework and cultural theory

## **B. DETERMINING FACTORS FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN AUSTRIA**

### **B.1 DEMOGRAPHY**

### **B.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **B.3 URBANIZATION**

In general, Austria is characterized by a low pace of urbanization. According to the World Bank, the percentage of the total population living in urban areas changed only marginally from 65% in 1980 to currently 66%. The capital city Vienna stands out as the only metropolis with currently 1.8 million inhabitants, while the second largest city Graz only has 280,000 inhabitants. However, the demographic developments indicate that urbanization will increase in the future. The strongest population growth is expected to be in Vienna and its surrounding area as well as in and around the major provincial capitals, whereas peripheral and structurally weak rural areas will face population decline (IIBW, 2016a).

After decades of stagnation and loss of population, Vienna`s strategical position in Europe changed with the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and Austria`s accession to the European Union in 1995, leading to growth, including to a suddenly increased demand for housing. Today, Vienna is the second largest city in German speaking countries and the fifth largest in the EU. For a short period it was one of the fastest-growing cities in the EU. But demographic dynamics has smoothened.

## C. URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN VIENNA AND OTHER AUSTRIAN CITIES

### C.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Austria is a Federal State. It assigns major responsibilities to the provinces and municipalities. The competencies in spatial planning are strongly split between the federal state, the federal provinces and the municipalities concerning legislation and enforcement. In Austria, no general planning law exists on the federal level. The nine provinces (*Länder*) enact their own spatial planning laws and they are responsible for planning at the provincial and regional levels. On the local level, the implementation of spatial planning lies within the autonomous competence of the municipal authorities. Vienna is in a unique position as it maintains the status both of a federal province and a municipality divided into 23 districts. Thus, Vienna has considerably wider powers, especially concerning planning, than other Austrian municipalities.

The main planning instruments on the local levels are the local development plan (*Örtliches Entwicklungskonzept*, for Vienna *STEP – Urban Development Plan*), the land-use plan (*Flächenwidmungsplan*) and the building regulation plan (*Bebauungsplan*). The local development plan lays down the long-term objectives of the development of a municipality, usually for a 10-years horizon. The land use plan determines the permissible use of land, down to the individual lot-level, and divides the municipality's territory into zones designated for specific purposes, e.g. building land, green land and main traffic areas. The building regulation plan includes figures about the utilization of the site, the maximum height of a building, the construction typology (closed, open, terraced houses) and a variety of further possible specifications for their design. In comparison with the local development plan the land use plan as well as the building regulation plan are legally binding to site owners. Furthermore, all these plans must comply with the province's spatial planning law and the existing state and regional plans. The provincial government acts as a supervising authority.

Contract based spatial planning (*Vertragsraumordnung*) is seen as a suitable means for contributing to a sustainable development. In consultation with private landowners and developers, such contracts govern burden-sharing between municipalities and the private beneficiaries of legally binding land-use plans, usually in return of land value increase caused by zoning. Hence, change of zoning from e.g. agricultural use to building land results not only in windfall gains to the land owner, but also benefits to the public, as parts of the land may be dedicated to social housing at discounted land price or social or technical infrastructure may be financed by the land owner.

### C.2 MAIN TOOLS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN VIENNA

#### a) MUNICIPAL HOUSING FUND (WOHNFONDS WIEN)

An important tool for sustainable urban development in Vienna is the municipal *Housing Fund (Wohnfonds Wien)*. One of its core tasks is stockpiling of building land for social housing. The fund purchases in large quantities green land, accompanies the process of zoning according to urban development specifications and provides building land to landlords for the realization of affordable housing, basically at own costs.

#### b) DEVELOPERS' COMPETITIONS

Vienna has introduced in 1995 the innovative instrument of developers' competitions (*Bauträgerwettbewerbe*) for large-scale housing developments addressing public subsidies (which used to be the majority of multi-apartment new construction). The procedure is to identify project teams offering optimized

realization concepts and aims at combining both the possibility of municipal regulation and the advantages of competition. An interdisciplinary expert jury assesses and evaluates the project entries according to a quality scheme consisting of (1) architectural quality, (2) economy, (3) ecology and (4) social sustainability. Smaller housing projects may also be submitted by all developers to the Land Advisory Board (*Grundstücksbeirat*). The content and data submitted in the competition entry of the victorious project team are binding commitments that must be adhered to in project realization. The emergent projects are characterized by high quality standards, e.g. concerning energy efficiency; often higher than in commercial new construction.

#### c) COOPERATIVE PLANNING PROCESSES

In further developing the format of Developers' Competitions the new format of Cooperative Planning Processes have been introduced, firstly in the urban development project "Neu Leopoldau" (see D.4d)) in 2013-2015. It is a two-stage process, with a developers competition on a conceptional level in the first stage, which ends with one housing developer (plus a team of architects, landscape planner, social planner etc.) per building plot. In the second stage the teams of each building plot cooperate for joint urbanistic targets, such as integrated green space, mobility concepts, social infrastructure etc.

#### d) URBAN DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS (STÄDTEBAULICHE VERTRÄGE)

Cities and municipalities in Austria make increasing use of urban development contracts. In 2014, the amendment of the Vienna Building Code brought innovations regarding strategic measures for urban developments. Through development agreements (*Städtebauliche Verträge*) standards relating to social, technical and transportation infrastructure (e.g.: educational and health facilities, recreation areas, mobility concepts) are determined. Thus, the City of Vienna actively uses private-law agreements between the public sector and private developers in relationship to zoning measures and building regulations to influence urban planning projects. In these development agreements not only standards regarding infrastructure can be defined, but also a quota for social housing units can be set.

#### e) IBA – INTERNATIONAL BUILDING EXHIBITION 2018-2022

Following the format of International Building Exhibitions conducted in the past in Germany and Northern Countries, Vienna has initiated IBA with the guiding principle "New Social Housing" ([www.iba-wien.at](http://www.iba-wien.at)). Even though endowed with only modest budgets, the initiative seems effective, with plenty of events and a number of outstanding urban development projects, following ambitious planning standards, amongst them parts of "Seestadt Aspern" (see ##), "Biotope City", "Neu Leopoldau" (see D.4d)), experimental housing projects and several redevelopment projects in inner city areas.

#### f) MOBILITY TARGETS

Due to availability of public transport, a compact settlement structure and limited parking possibilities the motorization rate in Vienna is far below the national average. Today 39% of all transport is made by public transport. Cycling is continuously on the rise, albeit starting from a much lower level, it accounts for only slightly more than 6% of total transport. The share of walking remains stable at a remarkable 28%. The goal pursued according to the Urban Development Plan 2025 (STEP) is a decrease of motorized private transport in the city to 20% by 2025, to 15% by 2030, and to markedly less than 15% by 2050. To achieve these ambitious targets the Urban Development Plan includes an extension of the public transportation network, better availability and quality of cycling infrastructure and further promotion of private-law agreements relating to mobility issues (e.g. mobility cards, bike sharing and car sharing systems).

g) INCLUSIONARY TARGETS

Promoting a social mix in neighborhoods and preventing ghettoization has always been a priority of urban governance. In Vienna, municipal housing and affordable housing conducted by Limited Profit Housing Associations (LPHA) are scattered across the city. Compared to other cities the segregation in Vienna has remained relatively low. The local government sees the long-standing tradition of social housing construction as safeguards of good social mix. Social housing makes up 42% of the total housing stock and about 60% of all Vienna households live in social housing apartments, thus the city government remains in control of a large part of housing in the city. There are income limits to determine who can apply for social housing. However, the income ceiling de facto allows about 80% of households to access social housing in Vienna. The logic behind this comparatively high level of income ceilings is social mix. Furthermore, the income restrictions only apply when tenants first move in. Residents are never required to move out, even if household income levels increase in the following years.

## D. PARTICIPATION IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, people have the right to participate in decision-making which affects their life (Zillman, 2002). There had been no clear evidence about efficacy of participatory processes. In the past, project developers frequently used this understanding of acceptance to assess the efficacy of the participatory process and therefore provide stronger arguments in favor of the project.

There are multiple ways to design and run a participatory process, but no clear rules to guide stakeholders in choosing the most effective strategies. However, the need of local stakeholders' participation is being increasingly recognized, as expert knowledge can also be limited, particularly in relation to local knowledge on the ground.

In order to understand the outcomes of participatory process, it is necessary to evaluate the process itself. But it is easier to evaluate how effective the entire process is, rather than the efficiency of single measures.

Nowadays, the discussion about participation include the Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) definitions but also the usefulness of the so-called “decide-announce-defend” (DAD) model, when results developed by “educated experts”, project developers or government are simply communicated to the public. Evidence shows that DAD model often leads to social conflicts, delays and even cancellations of the project (Wolfsink, 2010). The integration of views of lay people and public values, and not only from “educated experts”, can lead to enhanced legitimacy of decision-making process and trust (Renn, 2008).

According to Webler and Tuler (2000), there is a need to understand concerns and views of different stakeholders for the sake of participatory governance of urban development. It is also important to consider the views of lay people and public values, and not only those of “educated experts”. This can lead to enhanced legitimacy of decision-making process and trust (Renn, 2008) thus potentially avoiding delays in deployment of urban development projects.

### D.1 POLICY BACKGROUND

To avoid an unsustainable transition and urban scattering, compact, mixed-used settlement structures with high urban quality is seen as central paradigm of planning.

Participation in urban development projects has been recognized as an essential component of decision-making. In 2008, recommendations regarding „Standards of Public Participation” were adopted by the Austrian Council of Ministers. However, participatory processes are not equally pronounced in all cities and communities. In Vienna, the Urban Renewal Offices (*Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung*) and the Neighborhood Management Offices (*Stadtteilmanagement*) create the framework for close inter-connections between urban planning processes and people. Originally, the work of the Urban Renewal Offices was mainly concentrated on technical support and consultancy for urban renewal. Today, the Urban Renewal Offices increasingly became the coordinator and organizer of public participation. The Urban Renewal Offices serve as a two-sided communication channels, offering information and advice in matters regarding housing issues, neighborhood improvement, infrastructure and urban renewal to residents and local stakeholders, while at the same time creating platforms for participation in local decision-making and thus offering a more direct transmission of local problems to political decision-making processes. In 2011,

Neighborhood Management Offices were established for new urban development areas to engage future residents in the local development. These organizations have transformed the centralized-hierarchical structure of public administration into a more horizontal system. To balance the articulated interests of the population involved and of local enterprises with the overall requirements of the city, a Master Plan for Participatory Urban Development, which defines procedural principles along concrete examples of planning situations, has been developed##.

## **D.2 KEY DOCUMENTS ON PARTICIPATION IN VIENNA'S URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

An outstanding feature of participatory urban development in Vienna is its strategic anchorage, being politically positioned in a number of binding documents (STEP 2025, Framework Strategy 2050). Participation is organized in 3 steps: Information – Consultation – Cocreation. With the first and second step big efforts could be achieved, ending in guidelines, a masterplan participation, a handbook on participation. New approaches were developed and exemplified in pilot projects, including vast communication (Interview Hertzsch).

### D.2.1 PARTICIPATORY APPROACH IN THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEP 2025

The Vienna City administration was commissioned by the Vienna City Council to develop the strategic urban plan for further development of Vienna which will balance interests of governmental, social and economic stakeholders. According to this plan Vienna should become and remain liveable, sustainable, affordable and prosperous city. The plan unites together such goals as innovation, high quality urban growth and preservation of resources. The plan also brings together instruments and policies for realization of various tasks such as economic growth, social equity, local development and climate protection.

Diversity is the major focus of the plan. It aims to bring together diversity and heterogeneity of various forms of living, working and free time activities as well as various concepts of life, understandings of gender roles, values as well as economic, religious, language and cultural backgrounds. The plan also should identify guidelines to balance various needs such as the needs for new dwellings, buras or schools etc.

Participatory governance is a key element of the plan. The focus is on co-creation of strategies at the local level and bringing various stakeholders into decision-making process such as public institutions, private enterprises, property owners, investors, civil society and individual residents. The participation of public is a central element of the plan. The participatory process included several consultations. Also, inhabitants and stakeholders from the neighboring to Vienna communities were involved. The consultations took place around 8 key topics: building of city, space for urban growth, centres and underused areas, business, science and research hub, metropolitan region, green and urban, diversified mobility 2025 and social infrastructure.

The plan represents guidelines for policymakers and administrators and gives strategic direction for municipal companies. It serves as a basis for all future decisions and resolutions related to the special development of the city. Each of eight major areas of the plan will be further elaborated in technical documents such as technical concepts on specific aspects, overall urban development concepts and master plans, land-use and development plans. The plan provides also guidelines for cooperation between responsible departments at the city administration, districts and a number of private and public stakeholders.

## D.2.2 SMART CITY VIENNA - FRAMEWORK STRATEGY 2050 (RAHMENSTRATEGIE 2050)

<https://www.wien.gv.at/stadtentwicklung/projekte/smartcity/rahmenstrategie.html>

The political document, which was decided in June 2019, includes participatory processes as defined target of urban development, and milestones of implementation (Interview Hertzsch).

## D.2.3 MASTERPLAN PARTICIPATIVE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (*MASTERPLAN PARTIZIPATIVE STADTENTWICKLUNG*)

The Masterplan for participative urban development was established in frames of work on STEPS 2025. Its major goal is to improve communication between inhabitants, city authorities and policy-makers.

The plan should also provide clear and transparent information about opportunities for participation for various groups of stakeholders and inhabitants. Public participation was foreseen for the following cases:

- Planning of large-scale houses (300 units, larger than 30.000 m<sup>2</sup>)
- Construction of high raise building
- When infrastructure is planned in the middle of cultural or natural landscape

The innovative character of the masterplan in comparison to the similarly existing documents is that it also provides a systemic approach to informal participation and identifies the earliest possible time for participation. The plan includes both, formal and informal, participation. Information participation means consultation with inhabitants and all interested stakeholders. It has, however, a consultative character when people can provide their feedback.

The participation took form in frames of three dialogue afternoons and one evening event. There was also an opportunity to participate in the planning workshops, in the information events, surveys and personal discussions with responsible for realization of the projects stakeholders. Priority is on personal communication rather on distribution of written information. Altogether all participation methods could be divided into three groups:

- Exchange of information including personal discussion where inhabitants receive all information and could provide feedback
- Moderated discussions at the thematic roundtables with the goal to bring together stakeholders from various groups
- Qualitative surveys with open questions to collect knowledge on the ground as well as risk perceptions connected with the planned projects

The young people and future inhabitants were selected as a special target group. Further on, the plan was presented to public personally by the vice mayor Mrs. Vassilakou and anyone had an opportunity to provide a feedback via email.

Participation about spatial development of an urban center had advantages not only because it allowed to avoid conflicts and to intergrade views of various groups of stakeholders but because it also provided an opportunity to future inhabitants to have a vision of their neighborhood.

Participation in the master plan is identified through three pillars: invite, participate and create feedback according to methodology developed by Königswieser, 2008. The detailed information about forms of

participation and for which infrastructure projects is included in the master plan. The plan also identifies key stakeholders' groups. The plan also includes the necessary capacities at the local governance level to provide sufficient information to inhabitants.

#### D.2.4 HANDBOOK ON PARTICIPATION (PRAXISHANDBUCH PARTIZIPATION)

Targetting at entire city administration.

### **D.3 CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS OF PARTICIPATORY PROCEDURES**

- It is aimed to initiate and improve discourse, not only between those who develop projects and residents, but also inside public administration. Participation is always a multi-stakeholder process (Interview Hertzsch).
- A politically staffed steering committee was initiated, chaired by Deputy Mayor Birgit Hebein (Green Party, successor of Maria Vassilakou), and including several relevant departments of city administration (Interview Hertzsch).
- A „Forum Participation“ was established, consisting of several departments of city administration and local administrations (Bezirke). An intra-administrative “Participation Road Show” was started.
- Participative budgeting is developed.
- A current focus is standardisation of feedbacks of residents.
- *Werkstatt Wien* has organized plenty of workshops on urban development targeting at kids and young adults (Interview Bork). The Kid's Museum ZOOM has organized several exhibitions on urban development.

### **D.4 OUTSTANDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

#### a) RESTRUCTURING OF MARIAHILFER STRASSE

Mariahilfer Strasse is a main shopping street in one of the central districts, but it also was an important traffic corridor. After the Green Party has entered the local Government in 2010, restructuring of Mariahilfer Straße and turning it to a pedestrian zone became one of its main prestigious projects. Project development was accompanied with an intensive participatory process. At a rather late stage of project realization, 2014, the political opposition enforced a public opinion poll which ended with only a slight majority for restructuring. Meanwhile the “new” Mariahilfer Strasse is widely accepted.

This success is mainly attributed to persistence of Deputy Mayor Vassilakou (Green Party). The public opinion poll was a big risk, particularly as it was not part of the original agenda. It proved to be important to bring those to vote who anyway were pro the new concept. The opponents were more willing to vote. It was important to intensively communicate, both with those pro and contra the project. It was difficult to communicate the reasons for the intended changes. In public opinion it remained a political project of the Green Party. Public relations did not work sufficiently. Reaction to mobilization of opponents was not quick enough. Media were not sufficiently fed with information (Interview Bork). The process was deficient, not the result. Regarding public transport it looked like the city administration would not know what to do (Interview Oxonitsch).

Finally, it was helpful to visualize the future development in an exhibition and with renderings, as many people are afraid of change and can hardly read plans. People have to be reached on an emotional level (Interview Bork).

b) DEVELOPMENT AREA “NORDBAHNHOF”

The central area with a size of more than 85 ha used to be a train station. In a development process from the 1990s to 2025 some 10,000 apartments for roughly 25,000 inhabitants will be built, extensive non-residential developments, several schools etc. Half of the area has been realized so far on the basis of general principles from 1994, following a rather conservative urban development approach (perimeter block development, park). A urban development competition in 2014 brought an entirely new approach with reduced roads and building areas, highrise buildings and a second park in the centre. This new orientation was accompanied with an intensive participatory process, which is regarded as good practice (Interview Bork).

An existing warehouse was transformed into “Nordbahnhof” with an outpost of Architekturzentrum Wien (architectural museum), including an event hall with frequent events on different topics concerning the development of the area, but also other issues. The participatory process is moderated by “PlanSinn” ([www.plansinn.at](http://www.plansinn.at)). The temporary use of the premises is currently in discussion. The municipality has meanwhile reduced its engagement.

c) SEESTADT ASPERNd) NEU LEOPOLDAU

The urban development area ([www.neuleopoldau.at](http://www.neuleopoldau.at)) is part of the International Building Exhibition (IBA 2018-2022, see C.2e). It is in the northern outskirts of Vienna, but connected with an attractive new subway (U1). On 13.5 ha some 1,400 apartments and extensive non-residential use is to be developed. On this project the new approach of Cooperative Planning Processes was introduced in 2013-2015 (see C.2c)), including a participatory process with the sitting neighbouring population. Developers' competition have been completed. The first buildings will be completed shortly.

e) DONAUFLD / AN DER SCHANZE

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f) BERESGASSE

- Only information events

g) COLLABORATIVE HOUSING

The Collaborative Housing (“Baugruppen”) has been developed in the 1990s with the most prominent project “Sargfabrik” (“Coffin Factory”). After a period of less activities, “Baugruppen” have developed to integrative parts of urban development projects since the early 2010s. Innovative projects have been realized in “Nordbahnhof” (see D.4b) and “Seestadt Aspern”.

“Baugruppen” are realized with a maximum of participation of future residents. An advantage concerning participation is early commitment of future tenants. Different models are executed: groups organized and subsidized as home (which allows subsidies for common parts of the building, excludes allocation of apartments to others than members of the group, and allows allocation without income limits); rental housing executed by LPHA; owner-occupied self-organized housing.

“Baugruppen” are seen as nucleus of neighbourhood development processes. For this reason, it seems legitimate that they receive comparably high subsidies.

#### h) LOCAL COORDINATION OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (GEBIETSBETREUUNG)

Already in the 1980s, a system of local coordination of urban development (Gebietsbetreuung) was introduced, basically targeting at urban renewal processes. In several cases, those service providers became important players in participatory processes to integrate new urban developments with existing neighbourhoods, e.g. in Hauptbahnhof/Sonnwendviertel.

They have the advantage to provide infrastructure on site, including expert contacts. In this way they work as a first place to go for concerns of citizens regarding urban development. In some districts, they closely cooperate with local administration, in others they don't.

#### i) PROJECTS WITH MIXED OR NEGATIVE OUTCOME

- “Heumarkt”: development project in the heart of the World Heritage Site Vienna. The Green Party launched a poll on its members. Even though it had a negative result, the responsible decision makers tried to enforce the project.
- Residential developments at Otto-Wagner-Spital, Steinhofgründe: In a lengthy process, opponents succeeded to create fear for preservation of protected monuments. The intended residential development was finally downsized.
- Galezinstraße in Ottakring: citizens' initiative against the project with 6,000 signatory residents.
- Projekt Wildgarten – Wohnen am Rosenhügel – Gartenstadt 2.0.

## E. GOING FOR BETTER URBAN DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

There is no “Vienna Model” of participatory urban development, but ongoing innovation in this field (Interview Bork), see D.2 and D.3.

### a) WHY PARTICIPATION IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT?

All interview partners were asked for the “raison d'être” of participatory processes in urban development.

- Vienna has a long-lasting non-participatory history (Emperor Joseph II.: “All for the people, but nothing through the people”). There is a widespread paternalistic perception that administration has to handle things (Interview Madreiter/Hertzsch). Current emphasis in development of planning tools is to successively breakup this Josephine bondage to authorities. A main driver is advancing ethnic diversity of society. The traditionally strong administration in Vienna turns from a disadvantage to an advantage for implementation of participatory processes (Interview Hertzsch).
- A main reason is that going without is no option any longer. Democratic self-conception requires involvement of the population in urban development. It is a double negation: Policy makers do it because they cannot afford not to do it. Today, urban development cannot be enforced with marketing means alone. But neither the one nor the other is free from any bias.
- In terms of political economy, added value can be achieved, if such processes are implemented authentically. If successfully implemented, participation may support political decisions. But participatory processes may also impair urban development policy, as they allow opponents to form up early (Interview Chorherr).
- Hidden knowledge of future or neighbouring residents regarding the project site is often quoted, but should not be overvalued. The knowledge of neighbouring residents is often valuable regarding connectivity of areas, infrastructure or customary density. Informal footpaths, places to meet or places where children play, should be detected with care and considered in planning. As a matter of fact, urban planners and architects sometimes don't understand the “genius loci” of a project site as well as they should. In such cases, the voice of involved residents may help. Too strong consideration of interests of neighbours even can make projects worse.
- Participatory processes help to create identification of residents in new neighbourhoods. This has a tremendous positive impact, in terms of creation of civil society, social inclusion, evolving cultural life, better health, prevention of devastation and finally higher incomes and lower public costs.
- It seems astonishing, how coincidental outcomes of participatory processes are. Urban development projects with best possible framework conditions failed, whereas others which seemed hopeless succeeded at the end. Participation includes political risks, which cannot be eliminated (Interview Chorherr).
- Urban development is not only what developers build, but also what civil society achieves (Interview Madreiter).
- The Aarhus-Convention (1998) allows for civic participation at any Environmental Impact Assessment. This increasingly concerns also urban development projects. Civic participation increasingly gets professionalized. As an effect, more and more procedures are driven by people who are not personally involved (Interview Ottenschläger).

### b) LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION

- As a matter of fact, participatory processes should be implemented prior to planning decisions and not thereafter (Interview Bork). This is not about every planning decision, but those qualified for public participation. The question, which planning decision qualifies for participatory processes, is difficult,

as it depends on maturity of democratic practice, courage and capabilities of policy makers, the nature of the urban development project and the stage of implementation.

- There is unanimous opinion that plebiscite urban planning would not work. Starting point must be a clear political will and innovative planning. Participatory processes are quite limited in creating new contents. But they are very valuable in adding additional values and to decide between equal options.
- It seems reasonable to establish participatory processes not for all aspects of urban development. For conflicting topics, e.g. traffic, it seems reasonable to decide top-down (Interview Hertzsch).
- It is often not the constructive residents, who take part in participatory processes, but mostly those who have lots of time and/or those who strongly oppose new developments. As a result, the average age of participants is high. It is difficult to attract young residents to take part (Interview Chorherr).
- It is important to communicate clearly, whether only information is given, whether the opinion of residents is requested or whether residents are involved in decision making. It requires a clear political will, in how far changes in plans will be accepted (Interview Chorherr).
- Even though, participatory processes may apply at any stage of urban development. But tools have to be adequate. On an urban scale it may be about what general targets of development of the urban agglomeration should be settled, or regarding values of urban development. But the direction of discussion has to be provided by the authority (Interview Bork). On a neighbourhood level participation may be about organization of open space or traffic. On the level of an individual building site, participation may go far beyond and include architecture and the individual apartment.

#### c) OPPOSITION OF SITTING RESIDENTS OF NEIGHBOURING AREAS

- Sitting residents in neighbouring areas are usually quite active in participatory processes. Their interests are legitimate, but only a part of positions which have to be involved. Mostly they are not very constructive and focus on the one goal to have least possible new developments. There are common interests which are in conflict with interests of neighbours (Interview Chorherr).
- Sitting residents in neighbouring areas tend to be against new urban developments. People engage, if their environment is in threat. This very often concerns additional car traffic and parking, inconveniences from the construction site and dust, but often enough also rather egoistic issues such as an open view or unused green space.
- An interesting example are new garages. The bigger the circle to involve neighbouring residents, the better acceptance you have (Interview Oxonitsch).
- Addressing them requires a constructive approach. It is important to understand their real concern. In many cases it is about issues of real relevance for the entire neighbourhood, e.g. traffic or lacking infrastructure. Neighbouring residents may be convinced with additional supply of shopping facilities, public transport, schools or kindergartens.
- The idea behind the planned urban development needs to be communicated with simple, clear and tangible stories. It should be communicated at an early stage, which aspects of the development are open for changes and which ones are not (e.g. abortion of the development process). Opposition can be weakened if it is made evident that egoistic interests won't be enforceable (Interview Bork).

#### d) ADDRESSING FUTURE RESIDENTS

- Urban planning is a fundamentally high-threshold process. There are no immediate results to be seen, but only after a couple of years. This makes it difficult to keep participating people on board. Most successful are processes with more immediate results, e.g. concerning public space, neighbourhood issues, etc. (Interview Hertzsch).

- To create a positive momentum for new development projects it is a promising strategy to activate future tenants and those who believe in change. Together with those well-disposed people, a positive spirit and public attention may evolve.
- In nine years of practice no functional model could be found how to effectively involve future residents in urban development processes (Interview Chorherr).
- People are interested to participate, if they have interests. Those interests mostly concern attractive affordable apartments for their own use.
- But it is difficult to address future residents, mainly because of the lengthy urban development process. Most households are in search for accommodation in short or medium term.
- In the interviews it was discussed, whether those people, who engage in the participatory process, could benefit in allocation of an apartment once it is completed (priorisation in waiting lists). Such a measure seems difficult to administer, but worth to try.
- Future tenants may be attracted with temporary use of land and premises, e.g. for urban gardening or cultural activities.
- Once green space planning is completed, future tenants may be invited to plant their individual trees (attended by experts).
- Sitting residents of neighbouring areas are often in an age that they are interested in accommodation for their kids. Priorisation in waiting lists for apartments may be an important tool to create acceptance for new developments.

#### e) AVOIDING ESCALATION AND FAILURE IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- Sometimes urban development projects fail because of public opposition. This is often, but not always, because of deficient participatory processes.
- There is no simple receipt to avoid failure. A lesson to learn from urban development in Vienna is uncertainty regarding outcomes of participatory processes. A substantial number of projects have failed despite ambitious and accurate participatory processes. In many cases it is difficult to identify the reason. Often it is the influence and persistence of single residents, who succeed to mobilize entire neighbourhoods.
- Conflicts very often appear in the context of traffic: future car traffic, on-site traffic during construction, parking.
- There are strategies available to rescue projects in threat of failure: At an early stage of discord, process transparency seems to be the appropriate reaction. If a conflict is afire, dialogue is key (e.g. open councils with external moderation). In the case of escalation of a conflict, direct confrontation should be avoided. At the end of the day, committed political decisions are necessary to create clarity. This can be supported by political coalitions and stable majorities.
- Opponents to development projects sometimes use questionable methods. In Vienna, several projects were impaired or delayed because of habitats of protected animals (gophers and others). Mass media is very open to take up such topics.

#### f) KEY TOOLS IN PARTICIPATORY URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- Urban development consists of several stages within a long period of time. Therefore, elements of participatory urban development vary a lot. It seems that there exists no “ideal” model.
- It is advantageous, if one institution is responsible for participatory processes from the very beginning to the final step. It should cover different competences: urban planning, schools, green space, residents etc. This could be a unit within municipality or a consultant. Taking the big number of involved parties and the scope of competences, this is difficult to achieve (Interview Chorherr).

- The job profile of process attendants is very demanding. It requires high executive capacities. Public administration still has to learn to better communicate with such facilitators (Interview Hertzsch).
- Participatory processes cannot work with any size of group. 25 persons seem to be the maximum. If more, you risk pseudo-democratic results. For processes with more participants, it may require a system of representatives.
- Success factors of participatory projects differ case to case. It is necessary to illustrate the tremendous complexity of urban development (Interview Chorherr).
- It is necessary to form coalitions of the well-disposed and not to allow to get down with the opponents (Interview Madreiter).
- Dialogue is key. It includes a variety of formats. In early stages of urban development, good experience was achieved with idea workshops with population (e.g. “Nonkonform” in many rural municipalities). Good experience brought “Info-Boxes”, staffed with knowledgeable people, who were able to answer also those questions, “which are below the Radar”, e.g. smelly garbage bins. Inoperable are confronting formats with e.g. 1 panel and 400 seats in rows (Interview Chorherr). Conflicts appear, where communication ends and alibi-actions take place (Interview Hertzsch).
- Web-based tools are inevitable, but very demanding, as they require quick response to any request (Interview Oxonitsch).
- Many participants ask for structure and defined processes. But this is not essential. More important is to create a mood to participate (“... teach them desire for the wide endless sea” ... Saint-Exupéry), to open opportunities. This can flower out creative power. Of course, people need support in the case of critical situations (Interview Hertzsch).
- It is not that much about new tools. There are plenty in place (community work, social work, street work, activities of housing developers, social media etc.). It is about to merge them in an integrative approach (Interview Hertzsch).
- A particular challenge is transparency. It is difficult to explain to residents, why some questions cannot be answered at a distinct stage of development yet, e.g. utilization of ground floors or design of facades (Interview Chorherr). Nevertheless, it is necessary to communicate. Nothing is worse than viral phantasies of opponents. Process transparency means that participants know what happens with their contributions (Interview Hertzsch).
- Highest credibility have statements which confirm existing opinions. It is difficult to change a mind set. The best formats of participatory processes are spaces of dialogue, info-boxes, media for visualization of future developments. People trust neighbours more than persons “from outside”. Support from an influential local stakeholder can be a most efficient multiplier. Politicians and experts are effective if they are on place and ready to communicate (Interview Bork).
- Marketing tools are inevitable, as long as they serve activation of population and as they are not misused to conceal downside risks.
- Participatory processes have gained very good media coverage. Even high-circulation newspapers (Krone, Heute) report about this topic. Today they are willing to cover them in editorial articles. In this way it became possible to reach broad levels of the population (Interview Oxonitsch). Local newspapers may also be quite effective, as they are present at any public space.
- Early information is important, not to run after this or that action group (Interview Oxonitsch).
- Identification of effective multipliers may be very helpful. In network analysis, tabacconists, barbers, medics, barkeepers have been identified as important players (Interview Oxonitsch).
- It is helpful to visualize the future development, e.g. with exhibitions, renderings, videos, as many people are afraid of change and most have difficulties to read plans. People have to be reached on an emotional level (Interview Bork).

- Participatory process in urban development differ, if it is a new or an existing neighbourhood. In existing neighbourhoods it is much easier to address those citizens, who at the end have to live with the change. Here it is possible to establish a citizen parliament and to elect representatives, who enter a close cooperation with administration and experts and who are responsible to communicate the results with the population. In previous projects (Yppenplatz) this model worked very well with formats of cooperation existing even after 15 years (Interview Oxonitsch). In new neighbourhoods this approach is hardly applicable, as future residents are hardly identifiable.
- A good level to apply participatory processes is at an early stage of zoning. In Viennese practice the level before publication of planning documents for comments (“Rotdruck” – red paper) is called “Gründruck” (green paper). At this level, changes can be implemented (Interview Pawkovicz).
- On the level of an individual residential building, participatory processes can easily be implemented and financed, if connected to new construction and first time use (financed as part of construction costs). It is much more difficult to finance it during regular use (as part of e.g. maintenance costs). For this reason, it became quite common to provide social attendance for new residents (“Einzugsbegleitung”), organized by sociologists. Main aim of this activity is orientation of the new residents, creation of neighbourhood, prevention of social conflicts, but also participatory configuration of common space.
- Digital tools gain importance in participatory processes. Apps for common activities have been introduced (e.g. “PocketHouse” [www.pockethouse.at](http://www.pockethouse.at)).
- A final stage is often neglected: impact assessment after completion (Interview Bork). Feedback should be provided to the involved population.

#### g) BETTER URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- There is a debate in realization of green space. Is it better to have it ready by the time when people move into a new neighbourhood (for the reason of high environmental quality and ties to the new environment) or to leave it undefined for a while to see, how residents will occupy places (Interview Hertzsch).

#### h) POLITICAL COMMITMENT

- The political will for participatory approaches in urban development is detected inconsistent (Interview Bork)
- A strong political will must stand behind any participatory processes (Interview Bork)
- It takes time and intensive attendance and sufficient resources (Interview Bork).

#### i) POLITICAL POSITIONS TOWARDS PARTICIPATION

Astonishing enough the political positions are rather consistent all over the political spectrum, as far as identified in the interviews for the project. Positions towards participation in urban development seem to depend more on individual mind-sets than on party lines. There is unanimous opinion that plebiscite urban planning is no perspective.

- Social Democratic Party (SPÖ):  
Participation in urban development leads to objectively better projects. It is today inevitable. An ideal model of participation in urban development has not yet been found. Existing models work in some cases, in others they don't. There is no guarantee for success. The right moment to start participatory processes is key: not too early (when the intended development is not yet clear), not too late (when opponents have already formed up). Participatory processes have gained very good media coverage.

Even high-circulation newspapers report about this topic. In this way it became possible to reach broad levels of the population (Interview Oxonitsch).

- Green Party (Grüne):  
Participatory processes should ideally start earliest possible in urban development. But the earlier you start the less you can say. There are common interests which are in conflict with interests of neighbours. Participation does not mean that the single resident can decide, but that he/she is part of a decision process. In a representative democracy, elected politicians take decisions. We are against plebiscite decisions of neighbouring residents. Participatory processes may also impair urban development policy, as they allow opponents to form up early (Interview Chorherr).
- Freedom Party (FPÖ):  
Despite the general emphasis of FPÖ on plebiscites, the interview partner Mr. Pawkovicz does not support this in the case of urban development. But the role of an opposition party requires a focus on misguided developments. FPÖ is positioned pro motorists. This causes some opposition in terms of traffic planning in urban development projects. Participation may create additional value on the level of neighbourhood planning, but in less extent on a small-scale level. People should not get the impression to be entitled to decide, but to be part of a process. Decisions have to be taken by political responsables. Urban planning on a district level works quite well. But execution is suboptimal. City administration does not plan, but mainly reacts. Participation is formally an open process, but in practice only closed groups are involved. There have been several projects which claimed to apply participatory processes, but FPÖ representatives were not invited (e.g. Wildgarten Meidling, "Garden City 2.0"). Participation is improperly applied. There are other projects, e.g. General Körner Kaserne in Linz, where all citizens' group and political parties were addressed and finally an unanimous decision of the new zoning plan was achieved (Interview Pawkovicz).
- People's Party (ÖVP):  
In urban development projects, participatory processes are without alternative. They are necessary to integrate new neighbourhoods into existing settlements. Participatory processes contribute to reduce project risks (Interview Ottenschläger).
- Liberal Party (NEOS):

## F. ANNEX

### F.1 LIST OF INTERVIEWS

- Herbert Bork, „Stadtland“, Expert in participation in urban development, 3 June 2019.
- Christoph Chorherr, Member of Parliament of Vienna (Green Party), former head of Municipal Council for Urban Development (until 2019), 14 June 2019.
- Thomas Madreiter, Planning Director of the Vienna Municipality, Wencke Hertzsch, head of participatory division, 3 July 2019.
- Andreas Ottenschläger, Member of the National Assembly (ÖVP, People's Party), 17 June 2019.
- Christian Oxonitsch, Member of Parliament of Vienna (SPÖ, Socialdemocratic Party), 17 June 2019.
- Alexander Pawkowicz, Member of Parliament of Vienna (FPÖ, Freedom Party), 25 June 2019.
- Lorenz Potocnik, urban planner, Member of City Council of Linz (NEOS, Liberal Party), 4 June 2019.
- Erich Raith, Prof. at Technical University of Vienna, dept. of urban development, 5 June 2019.
- Maria Vasilakou, until 2019 Deputy Mayor of Vienna (Green Party), 24 June 2019.

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### F.3 LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES