

CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS APPROACH IN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS (ILLUSTRATED BY THE EXAMPLE OF TSU)

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Introduction

The current trend in developing models of public organisation management moves toward combining the concepts of New Public Management and good governance. It is believed that these concepts are complementary, and they indicate the direction of action taken by today's public organisations (Flieger, 2012, p. 67). This is why improving management standards has become an important dimension of building relations between the public organisation and society (Dobrowolski et al., 2016, p. 79), and in particular public authorities' implementation of modern management concepts based on the process approach, including the quality management system compliant with the requirements of the ISO 9001:2015 Standard. Therefore, a question can be asked about how new process management concepts support the concept of good governance, including the idea of social participation? Thus formulated research problem implies detailed research questions: What are the conditions for the implementation of process approach in public organisations? How is the idea of social participation in the process approach understood? Which main aspects of good governance, including participatory management, can be supported in the process of implementing process management using the ISO 9001 Standard in public organisations such as cities and communes?

The objective of this article is the presentation of the approach to social participation, its role and importance in the context of implementing the process approach (as exemplified by the ISO 9001 Standard) in public organisation on the example of territorial self-government units (TSUs). The article was prepared on the basis of an analysis of the literature and normalisation documents¹. Conclusions were formulated based on deductive reasoning.

¹ In view of the fact that the ISO 9001 Norm was amended in 2015 and so far, no commune or city in Poland implemented its modified version, the article cannot provide practical examples with an analysis of conditions and outcomes of the implementation.

Social participation in TSUs

Through the years, on the rising tide of New Public Management, numerous concepts and methods of public affairs management emerged, inspired by the concept of public enterprises (Osborne, 1993). It was assumed that in public organisations, different in their essential nature, these methods will bring the same success as in business. Opponents of NPM emphasised that differences between relationships in the public and the private sector are so vast that transferring management methods from one to the other without their proper adjustment to the specifics of the new sector is almost impossible (Cf. Klickert, 1997, p. 733). The main indicated limitations in the model of rational management in public organisations are as follows: limited approach to people, not taking into account organisation's learning and knowledge management mechanisms, and not combining theory with practice (Denhardt, 2011, p. 157). The previous management model based on the NPM concept, existing mainly in the area of the Anglo-Saxon culture, turned out to be too strongly market-oriented, and basing public management exclusively on economic indicators, omitting social needs, exhausted the formula of the model (Denhardt, 2011, p. 145; Maruszak, 2012, p. 270; Raczkowski, 2015, p. 30). It proved to be imperfect and ill-fitting to the rapidly developing modern civic society (see Castells, 2012).

Civic society is characterised by the fact that its members voluntarily and consciously participate in public activity, understood as a kind of public-private partnership of the self-government and residents, which serves taking action for local development. Such a definition of the partnership stems from legal, social, financial and technical premises (Dobrowolski et al., 2016, p. 75), related to globalisation and democratisation processes (Radzik-Maruszak 2012, p. 42), as well as ICT development (Castells, 2012).

The criticism of New Public Management and the analysis of possible solution scenarios for the observed problems contributed to the development of a management theory called 'governance,' which takes into consideration society's participation in management processes, and therefore the application of concepts based on social participation (see Denhardt, 2011, p. 194). Social participation is typical for the mobilisation model of governance, where the emphasis is put primarily on acting with local communities, and only then – for them (Radzik-Maruszak 2012, p. 61).

The notion of "social participation" means citizen's participation in managing the affairs of the community to which they belong (Hausner 1999, p. 41). In the broad sense, social participation is the foundation of a civic society, and in a narrower sense – the term defines a public-legal partnership of the self-government of the commune or municipality and its residents, which serves

taking action for local development (Hausner, 1999, p. 41). Social participation in public decision-making processes on the one hand constitutes a civic right, and on the other hand – an obligation of public authorities, particularly self-government (Dobrowolski et al. 2016, p. 76). Buczkowski emphasises that currently the principle of subsidiarity involves a more participatory model of society, enabling individuals and social groups to negotiate the shape of the social life organisation, and rules that govern its development (Buczkowski, 2001, p. 21).

The expression of social participation is the activity in the process of creating subsequent civic groups and NGOs cooperating with public organisations, which is particularly visible at the level of the commune and the city. Classic tools of social participation such as elections, referendums, social consultations, administrative procedures, and direct actions, are considered its essential tools. Including residents in the process of making decisions important from the perspective of local communities constitutes nowadays one of the mechanisms of encouraging participation in cities and communes in Poland. The multiplicity and diversity of actors participating in the process of local development determines the need to coordinate their actions, but also building partner relations that can enable obtaining synergy – enter the concept of *network governance* (Denhardt, 2011, p. 194).

Currently, there are multiple models of social participation functioning both in practice and in theory of public management. One of them is a “participation ladder” (Arnstein 1969). According to this approach, development of participation is evolutionary in its character. In this respect, the minimum standard of action for democratic authorities is the execution of the right to access public information (or more broadly – the process of informing). The next step is consulting, namely expanding the relationship with citizens to include information exchange in the process of consultations (expecting feedback from citizens). Further deepening of the relationship means creating with (organised and unorganised) citizens multi-directional, interactive, and lasting (permanent) network relations with their direct inclusion into the public decision-making process. It means that on the level of relations that go beyond informing, the purpose of engaging citizens is to obtain feedback, necessary for public management². The next challenge is active participation, or acknowledging citizen’s right to discuss and generate independent options of public policies. Analysing the current state of participation processes in Poland, it must be stated that in most cases territorial self-government units (TSUs), prefer the participation on the second level of the relationship, i.e. consulting (see Olech, Sobiesiak-Penszko, 2012; Krajewska, 2014).

² In the paper *Engaging Citizens in Policy-making*, OECD Public Management Policy Brief No. 10 July 2001, OECD indicated that active participation constitutes the new frontier for member states.

To conclude this thread, a question can be posed whether and how the idea of social participation, so important in current public management, can be developed through a modern approach to the management of public organisations, such as process management.

Process approach in public organisations

The process approach was launched in the 20th century in manufacturing companies (Davenport, 2008, p. XV). Supported by the development of computer systems and automation as well as changes in work organisation (self-control, flattening structures, increase in employees' knowledge) (Grajewski, 2003, p. 7), it led to a departure from classic concepts of management, and became the basis for creating modern methods and models of organisation management in the process approach (e.g. Statistical process control, Total Quality Management, Business Process Reengineering, ISO 9001, Lean Management, Six Sigma, Lean Six Sigma). Process management is based on the TQM philosophy of constant improvement, and it includes rules and techniques of operational management, i.e. Lean and Six Sigma, and combines them with the capabilities of IT for the optimal translation of an organisation's strategic goals to business processes (Dumas et al., 2013, p.7).

On the tide of NPM, the process approach started to be used also in public organisations in order to improve management effectiveness and performance (Izdebski 2007, pp. 12-13), flexibility of operations through the adoption of customer's perspective in undertaken actions and launching pro-quality and pro-effectivity initiatives (Flieger, 2012, p. 36). However, the constituting principles, conditions, and the characteristics of activity are the sources of discrepancies in the approach to process management between business and public organisations. Areas of discrepancy are presented in Table 1.

Table 5.1 Process management in a business organisation and public organisation – areas of discrepancy

Areas of discrepancy	Business organisation	Public organisation
Customer and ways to meet their needs	Customer's desires are the priority. Customer satisfaction is crucial. The customer is involved in the processes to a minimal and indispensable extent (does not participate in subsequent stages, is the recipient of the end product).	The condition of quality assessment is not customer satisfaction, but primarily compliance with law and promptness. The priority is meeting customer needs through equal and universal access to public services – the so-called public interest. The necessity of customer participation in subsequent stages of the process execution due to the lack of databases integration.
Control	Ownership control	Public and political control

Authorities	Election of authorities determined by the owner, often based on economic performance. No terms of office for authorities.	Democratic choice of authorities determined by law (districts, communes). Element of the election struggle. Terms of office for authorities.
Services and processes. Organisational structure	Relationships between expenditures, process, and results are known and predictable. Complex approach to all elements of the process. Emphasis on processes. Process structure. Clearly indicated owners of the processes.	Complexity of services and processes, smaller scope of control over outlays, process and results, strong emphasis on performance, participation of multiple public offices and specialised employees in the realisation of the same process, strong formalisation of actions.
Measures of processes and results/effects	The ease of determining performance measures. Performance indicators: quantitative (mainly financial), and qualitative. Systematic monitoring of processes as a basis for improvement.	Difficulty in the measurement of processes and results due to its complex and multi-dimensional character. Main quality and non-financial indicators. The necessity to monitor and control selected processes stems from the provisions of law – it is not the basis for improvement.
Social structure	Employees create a relatively uniform group that carries out the mission and strategy of the enterprise.	Employees organise themselves in informal interest groups on the level of departments.
Stakeholders of the organisation	Entities in the environment with whom the enterprise has relations, often building business networks based on market and/or bureaucratic coordination.	Participation of multiple entities in the management process (contracting services, outsourcing, participatory management, partnerships and network governance). Significant dependence from the legal environment.
Objectives of actions	Clearly stated, stable and unchanging strategic objectives connected with quality objectives, cascaded to operational objectives at the level of processes and employment positions. Monitoring strategic and operational objectives in connection with the improvement of organisational processes.	Ambiguity and diversity of action objectives – objectives are multidimensional, economic profitability is not a boundary condition in decision-making and process assessment in public organisations, necessity to integrate objectives with the objectives of management control. The long horizon of strategic goals execution, their realisation made difficult by political influences and authorities' terms of office.
Attitude to costs	The reduction of costs as an autotelic value based on a deep understanding of the processes executed in the organisation.	Automatic approach, not supported by a deep analysis of the core of processes. Simple cost-reducing operations. Cost policy based on immediate objectives and group interests.
The relationship between the number of customers and employees	The loss of customers is equal to bankruptcy and loss of work.	The lack of a direct link between the reduction of customer numbers and the reduction of jobs in public offices. No threat of the possibility of declaring bankruptcy.

Source: own work based on (Anders-Morawska, Rudolf, 2015, p. 52; Lisiecka, 2009, p. 31; Bugdol, 2014, p. 60; Bugdol 2012, p. 68; Flieger, 2012, p. 37).

Despite the indicated discrepancies, the process approach is successively implemented in public organisation both in an operational and strategic dimension. Attempts are made to develop original and reference models of process management (e.g. EAP; Bugdol, 2015b, p. 48). In the operational dimension, mostly tools and IT systems are used, as well as e-government solutions that

require the implementation of the process approach (Bugdol, 2011, p. 128; Krukowski, 2011, p. 1). Both the literature and practice allow indicating numerous legal, psychological, technical, and organisational barriers to the implementation of e-services (Bugdol, 2015a), that may also result from the discrepancies presented in Table 1.

In the strategic perspective, a popular tool for implementing organisational and social changes in the process approach in public organisations is the ISO 9001 Standard, specifying requirements for the quality management system (Bugdol, 2011, p. 123; Batko, p. 93; Flieger, 2012, p. 100). The need for a better adjustment of the standard to the character of service organisations and challenges of the modern economy and society became the reason for its revision in 2015. Fundamental changes concern the introduction of such elements as: specifying the context within which the organisation operates, managing opportunities and risks, managing change, managing knowledge, more flexibility in the approach to documentation and reinforcing the process approach. The revision of the Standard also sets new challenges for public organisations in terms of its implementation in the context of new management models based on the paradigm of governance and the concept of social participation.

Social participation in the process approach illustrated with the example of the ISO 9001 Standard

The idea, concept and principles of process management and social participation, a category related to good governance, has grown from various sciences and disciplines, which fundamentally differentiates their perspective in relation to public organisations. Process management fits within the domain of organisation and management studies, and it focuses on the organisation in micro scale, while good governance is derived from public administration studies (Izdebski, 2007, p. 11), and it is a domain of public management which goes beyond the framework of a single organisation and its connection to the environment, it expands its field of interests to the entire national economy and the entire state (Sudoł 2013, p.203). Social participation is a term connected with the concept of good governance, so it refers to external stakeholders of the organisation (citizens and various forms of representation of their interests and needs, including formalised and informal communities, non-profit organisations, entrepreneurs, media, and various levels of public institutions), as well as the way of building relationships with them by informing, consulting and governing a self-government unit (understood as an open organisation). It is proposed that the terms “governance” and “participatory management” should be used interchangeably (Sześciło, 2014, p.53) to denote methods of public management.

Meanwhile, the concept of process approach defined in the ISO 9001 Standard specifies the approach to public organisation as an entity distinct from its environment legally, economically, technically, socially, and organisationally. From this point of view, the notion of social participation is defined in the context of employee participation, and the objective of participatory management (management through participation) is the increase in subordinates' activity and fulfilment of their higher-order needs (self-actualisation, esteem, social belonging), in the course of their participation in making decisions in the organisation (Bieniok, 2001, p. 207), while this kind of participation is not the subject of the present paper³. Therefore, in the ISO 9001 Standard, the term "social participation" is not used directly with reference to its external stakeholders, but its core is expressed by definitions, quality management principles, and requirements of the standard in the following areas:

- Determining the context of organisation.
- Defining relevant interested parties.
- Analysis of customers' needs and requirements.
- Assessment of services quality.
- Analysis of risks and opportunities.
- Management of knowledge.
- Management of change.
- Improving the organisation in relation to its objectives and context

Below, the main conclusions of the analysis of the ISO 9001:2015 Standard requirements are presented.

Determining the context of an organisation

The revision of the standard introduced a significant group of requirements concerning the obligation for managers to determine the so-called context of the organisation. Organisational context is defined as the combination of internal and external factors that can influence the organisation's approach to setting and achieving its objectives (clause 3.2.2, ISO 9001). The organisation should determine internal and external factors that can – positively or adversely – impact the meaning of its existence and capability to achieve the intended objectives and performance results. The point of the organisation's existence can be expressed through its vision, mission, policies, and objectives. The external factors can include e.g. cultural, social, political, legal, financial, technological, economic,

³ Such an assumption constitutes a certain deliberate simplification used to achieve clarity of the present study. Employees of the municipal and communal office as well as other territorial units are also citizens, residents, and leaders of local organisations, hence the previously unexamined area of relations and connections between employee participation and social participation.

and competitive conditions on the international, national, regional, or local level. Internal factors usually include values, culture, knowledge and effects of the organisation's operations, and internal requirements concerning performance results. Understanding the context of the organisation is a process. This is why these factors should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis (both on the level of processes and the entire organisation). It can be executed through audits and management reviews. Through the use of social participation tools, i.e. informing, consulting, and governance, residents can be included, and directly and indirectly impact the determination of key elements of the quality management system, such as mission, vision, scope of the quality management system, processes, policy, quality objectives, risks, and chances of their execution in the city or the commune. Including local community can be of critical importance in the process of defining and understanding public organisations.

Defining relevant stakeholders

A part of the process of understanding the context of an organisation is also the identification of relevant interested parties. The standard requires the public organisation to identify interested parties relevant to the quality management system, as well as their requirements and to review this information (ISO 9000, p. 6). Interested parties are those that create considerable risk to the sustainable development of the organisation when their needs and expectations are not met, which can constitute a source of risk (clause 2.2.4, ISO 9001). Whether a particular requirement of an interested party is relevant for an organisation's quality management system, remains at its discretion (ISO 9001, p. 31). The organisation should manage relations with interested parties for the purpose of optimising their impact on the effects of its actions. Residents and their representatives as well as non-public organisations cooperating with the municipal and communal offices in the realisation of their tasks, can be included into the category of relevant interested parties. Unanimity of the purpose and direction of action as well as social participation enables connecting the requirements of the interested parties, the development strategy of the public organisation, processes, and resources.

Analysis of customers' needs and requirements, and the quality assessment of services

According to the ISO 9000:2015 Standard, the fundamental objective of quality management is meeting the requirements of customers and stakeholders of the organisation, and making effort to exceed their expectations. In the approach based on NPM and the governance paradigm, the customer – resident

or their representative, or another organisation – becomes the entity in relations with the public office and has the opportunity to influence the quality of services. Therefore, social participation can occur at the stage of designing public services (e.g. examining needs and requirements), co-creating/co-producing public services (Sześciło, 2015, p. 14) e.g. joint creation of service provision standards and the assessment of their quality (satisfaction surveys and other measures of process effectiveness and performance, i.e. time, costs, compliance). The measure of public organisations' success is gaining and maintaining the trust of its customers and other interested parties. It is possible by involving customers and other entities in the process of making decisions about the type and forms of providing services. Each aspect of the interaction with customers constitutes a chance to create greater value for them. As the Standard emphasises, understanding current and future needs of customers and other interested parties contributes to a public organisation's lasting success.

Risk-based approach

Risk-based approach ensures identifying, considering, and overseeing risk in the course of designing and functioning of a quality management system in a public organisation, as well as specifying the ways to handle risk. Risk is defined in the ISO 9000 Standard as the effect of uncertainty (ISO 9000, p. 26)⁴. In the context of ISO 9001, risk refers to uncertainty of achieving the main objective of the standard, i.e. ensuring that the public organisation is capable of constant provision of products and services in accordance with customer requirements, and strives to increase customer satisfaction. Risk is most often regarded in the negative sense, whereas risk-based approach can also help to identify opportunities for a public organisation. The notion of "opportunities" is connected with exceeding expectations and set objectives.⁵ From the perspective of social participation, the main source of risks and opportunities identification is the analysis of the context of the organisation, monitoring processes from the perspective of the impact on compliance and capability to increase customer satisfaction as well as corrective actions. According to the requirements of the Standard, risks and opportunities should be planned, there should be specific procedures

⁴ The norm draws attention to the following dimensions of uncertainty: uncertainty causes deviation from expectations – positive or negative; uncertainty is as well a state, also partial, of the lack of information related to the understanding or knowledge about an event, its outcome or probability. The norm emphasises that risk is often determined in relation to potential events and its outcomes or combinations thereof. Risk is also often expressed as a combination of an event's outcome and related changes in the probability of its occurrence. ISO 9000: 2015, clause 3.7.9, p. 26

⁵ Opportunities may arise as a result of a situation that favours the achievement of intended objectives, such as: a set of circumstances that enable the organisation to acquire new customers, develop new products and services, reduce waste or improve productivity, an open new markets (0.3.3). ISO 9001:2015 sec. 0.0.3 Risk-based approach, p. 8

in place to handle and monitor them, and the effectiveness of actions with regard to risk and opportunities should be taken into account during management reviews. Therefore, in the management quality system model, risk is built into the entire management system, it is present in all processes and actions.

Knowledge management

The reviewed standard takes into account the need to specify and manage knowledge maintained by the public organisation, in order to ensure the functioning of processes and achieving the compliance of products and services (ISO 9001, p. 32). The basis of the organisation's knowledge is experience. The organisation's knowledge can be based on internal sources (e.g. intellectual property, knowledge gained from experience, from mistakes and successful projects, lost opportunities, the improvement of processes, products and services), and external sources (e.g. standards, conferences, seminars, knowledge acquired from customers and external providers, also through various forms of social participation). When considering the changing needs and trends, the public organisation should consider its current state of knowledge and determine how to acquire all necessary additional knowledge and required update or gain access to it.

Change management

The standard also contains requirements concerning introducing changes at the system level and the operational level. After specifying processes, the organisation should identify risks and opportunities connected with these processes, as well as the necessity to introduce changes. The need to introduce changes may stem from e.g. feedback from customers, residents, and other organisations obtained with the help of various tools of social participation, customer complaints, feedback from public office employees, innovation, identified risks and opportunities, results of an internal audit, results of a management review, and identified non-compliances. These changes can be connected with any element of the process, i.e. inputs, resources, people, actions, supervision, measurements, outputs, etc.

Public organisation improvement

Improvement is defined as the action taken to enhance performance (clause 3.3.1, ISO 9000), while continual improvement is a set of recurring actions that are carried out in order to enhance performance (clause 3.3.2, ISO 9000). Clause 10.1 of the ISO 9001:2015 Standard specifies that a public organisation should determine and select opportunities for improvement and initiate all necessary

actions to meet customer requirements and enhance customer satisfaction. Such actions should include:

- improving products and services to meet customer requirements, and taking into account future needs and expectations, e.g. through the social participation process;
- correcting, preventing or limiting unwanted outcomes of initiated actions and processes;
- improving the functioning and efficiency of the quality management system.

Improvement can include correction, corrective actions, continual improvement, crucial changes, innovation and reorganisation. Improving the quality system is based on the PDCA cycle.

In conclusion, it should be noted that in the ISO 9001 Standard, social participation manifests itself in multiple dimensions. The process of social participation can be executed through external relations (citizens and organisations as an element of the TSU operational context). Social participation can also be executed at the strategic level (context of the organisation), and operational level (service quality assessment, setting shared standards of services). It can take the form of a vertical (concerning the relationship between the public organisation and citizens and organisations, e.g. informing, co-deciding, and consulting), and horizontal participation (which manifests itself in cooperation to achieve the shared objective, building cooperation networks – network governance). The conclusion which can be drawn from the analysis conducted above is that the idea of a system based on the process approach specified in the ISO 9001 Standard enables the transposition and inclusion of society and other stakeholders of a public organisation in the governance process, according to the idea of social participation. Participation of residents and other organisations is the condition of meeting requirements specified in the Standard with regard to: the context of the organisation, including identification of relevant interested parties, analysis of customer needs and requirements, services quality assessment, analysis of risks and opportunities, change management, knowledge management, and improvement of the organisation in relation to complex objectives.

Summary

The process management system compliant with the requirements of the ISO 9001 Standard, if it is implemented correctly and takes into account organisational and technical, as well as social and cultural aspects of a public organisation's actions, supports the concept of good governance, including the idea of social participation. The 2015 revision of the standard made it more fitting to the

context of activities of a public organisation such as a city or a commune. It includes elements indicated as lacking in new concepts of public organisation management by researchers (cf. Denhardt 2011, p. 157), and it can effectively support TSUs in the realisation of fundamental postulates (Wiatrak 2005, p. 41) in terms of an effective execution of the social participation process through:

- clear orientation on residents and supporting their own objectives and tasks,
- simple and understandable values, action objectives, and tasks,
- ability to learn occurring changes and adapt to the changing circumstances,
- communicating with residents to acquire their approval for actions taken by the commune,
- exerting motivating influence on residents' behaviour, according to the adopted strategy,
- broader consideration of the role of people as well as social, psychological, technical, and organisational factors of the work environment,

The standard is a result of several dozen years of international experience in building efficient and effective management systems in various organisations, including public ones, therefore it enables fulfilling the postulate of combining theory with practice (cf. Denhardt 2011, p. 157). The area outlined in this paper requires further in-depth studies, both in its theoretical and practical dimension.

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