

PORTO ALEGRE'S PARTICIPATORY BUDGET PROFILE, EVALUATION, AND PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTIONS

Fedozzi L, Furtado A, Bassani V, Macedo C, Parenza C, Cruz M. "*Orçamento Participativo de Porto Alegre / Perfil, avaliação e percepções do público participante*". Porto Alegre: Ed. Hartmann; 2013. 136p.

English short version,
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It is with great honor that Porto Alegre's Municipal Office presents this work to its citizens and to all whom, worldwide, are interested in the Participatory Budget process.

Basically, the Participatory Budget (PB) is a dynamic process, through which the community has a part on the "right to the city" / "right to plan". By means of its representatives; people contribute to the debate concerning the allocation of public resources to be executed in works and services by the municipal administration. The Participatory Budget starts with general meetings, followed by a sequence of regional ones. At these meetings, citizens choose budget priorities and elect their representatives to form the board of PB.

The importance of this participatory process goes beyond its innovative proposal of joint open debate between government and citizens. It is also an important arena for social inclusion. Research on its historical development offers an understanding and insight on the potentials and constraints of this mode of participatory democracy within contemporary public management.

After 25 years of practice, the PB process requires permanent evaluations. The present work aims to contribute (within the limits of a quantitative and mostly descriptive analysis) to a better understanding of the process. The book is not meant to encompass a comprehensive assessment of PB's trajectory. However; the understanding of the participants' profiles and their perceptions about PB, constitutes an important aid to a deeper general balance, which is essential to the process qualification.

¹ Arquiteta, Me. Prefeitura Municipal de Porto Alegre.

www.lattes.cnpq.br

<http://buscatextual.cnpq.br/buscatextual/visualizacv.do?id=K4738289J6>

CHAPTER I

PARTICIPANTS PROFILES AND FREQUENCY IN MEETINGS

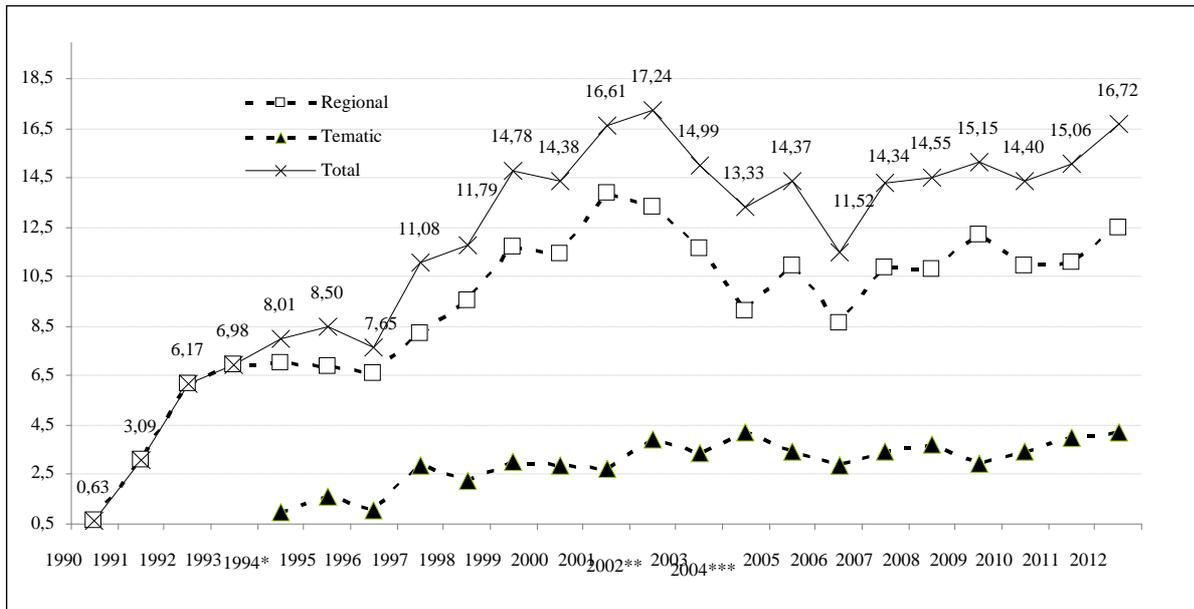
The first chapter presents the socio-economic profile of participants in the PB process, as noted in meetings (1993 to 2012). In summary:

- 1 From 2002 to 2007 - decline of the number of participants in meetings.²
- 2 Female advantage, increased in numbers over time;
- 3 Single people advantage, followed by married ones;
- 4 Low level of youth participation;
- 5 Majority have basic school level (numbers declining over time); followed by medium school level (increasing over time); university level are barely represented;
- 6 Majority white people, followed by persons of afro descent (increasing over time);
- 7 There are a growing participation of low income people (up to 2 minimum wages) and a decrease of medium or high income people;
- 8 1/3 of participants were unemployed; 1/3 working at least 14-40 hours/week;
- 9 More employed people over self-employed or autonomous ones;
- 10 33% were born in Porto Alegre; 20% have lived in the city for more than 35 years

² A continuous growth of participant's number was verified up to 2002, reaching 17.241 people. It could be said, among other causes, that the decline was due to a lack of confidence in the method, as an effective tool to achieve community demands. This feeling was mainly influenced by a temporary financial crisis, which accounts for the non-implementation of investment plans at that time. From 2007 on, there was a participant's growth resurgence.

PB's participants by meeting type, 1990 - 2012 (in 1.000 people)

Figure 1 (original version)



Source: PMPA.

Note: Participants' number according to meetings with higher quorum, on 1st or 2nd round.

* Starting of thematic meetings. ** PB cycle change too one round. *** PB to municipal workers, this year only, with 4.652 participants (not added to civil society numbers).

PB's participants by gender, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2012, and Census 2000 e 2010

Table 2 (original version)

Sex	Year								Census*	
	1993	1995	1998	2000	2002	2005	2009	2012	2000	2010
Female	46,7	46,8	51,4	57,3	56,4	52,8	54,7	61,1	54,6	54,7
Male	46,6	52,2	48,4	41,5	43,3	47,2	44,8	38,9	45,4	45,3
Uninformed	5,7	1,0	0,2	1,3	0,4	-	0,5	0,0	0,0	0,0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

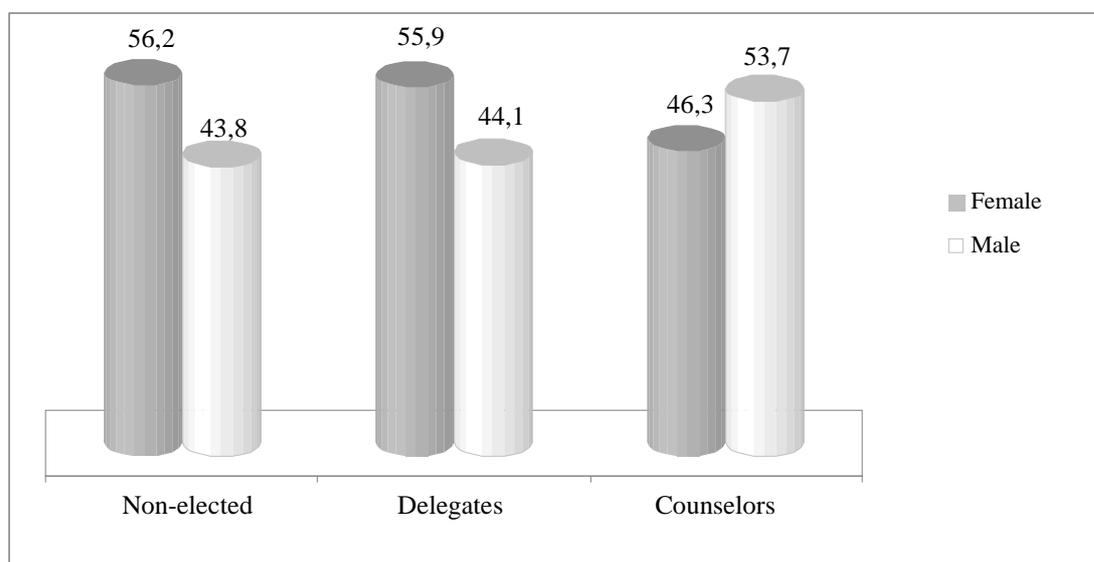
Source: Nuñez e Fedozzi (1993); Fase, PMPA, Cidade e Abers (1995); Cidade (1999, 2002, 2003); Fedozzi (2005); Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009); SMCPGL(2012); IBGE - Census.

* People by gender, 16 years old and up.

PB's participants by representative condition and gender, 2009

Figure 4 (original version)

(%)



Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

PB's participants by age, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2012, and Census 2000 e 2010

Table 3 (original version)

(%)

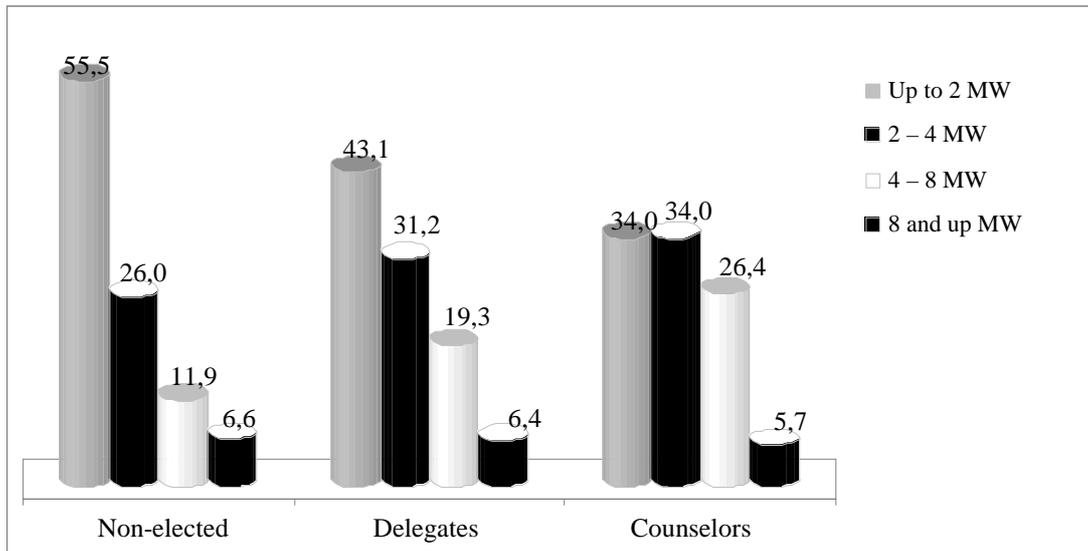
Age	Ano							Census	
	1995	1998	2000	2002	2005	2009	2012	2000	2010
16 - 25	15,8	17,3	17,6	19,5	19,0	18,5	12,8	24,3	20,0
26 - 33	19,1	15,1	16,4	17,4	15,0	17,3	14,8	15,9	17,9
34 - 41	23,0	22,7	20,4	19,9	16,7	16,8	16,3	16,8	13,9
42 - 49	18,8	19,4	18,6	18,6	21,7	19,8	17,2	14,6	13,7
50 or +	22,4	25,2	25,9	24,5	19,0	27,6	38,5	28,4	34,4
50 - 60	-	-	-	-	-	18,8	24,1	13,8	16,9
60 and up	-	-	-	-	8,6	8,8	14,5	14,7	17,5
Uninformed	0,9	0,3	1,1	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,4	-	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Nuñez e Fedozzi (1993); Fase, PMPA, Cidade e Abers (1995); Cidade (1999, 2002, 2003); Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009); SMCPL(2012); IBGE – Census.

PB's participants, according to income range and representation, 2009

Figure 6 (original version)

(%).



Source: Fedozzi(UFRGS) e ObservaPOA (2009).

CHAPTER II

HOW PARTICIPANTS EVALUATE PB

Chapter two presents the community view on the effectiveness of their own participation in several areas, such as power over investments, management, and municipal commitment to PB. Another important point of evaluation was the extent and knowledge of participants in being verbally active in meetings and the extent to which they understand the rules.

In more recent evaluations; results (2009) were not as positive; in comparison to previous years. Points of criticism were found in several areas including; decision making power; full access to information; municipal feedback over investment plans, and trust relationship between Representatives and Citizen Participants.

The level of criticism is higher among those participants with medium (and higher) education levels, and among elected representatives, such as counselors and delegates. Those who had not participated in previous meetings tend to be less skeptical about the level of decision making power. There is a higher positive expectation among new PB's participants. Political ideology had also influenced their perceptions in years (2005-2008).

In general, participants are not used to speaking in meetings, and are not familiar with PB's rules (2009). Exceptions are for those with higher school level and with more participation experience. Older people are generally more used to speaking out and actively participate during meetings.

Conclusions lead to the necessity of actions that could diminish asymmetries (since they impose unequal participation opportunities), as well as broaden knowledge of PB's rules, improve outreach to newcomers, non-elected and those with low education levels.

Participants decision power on PB, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005 , 2009

Table 10 (original version)

(%)

In your opinion, do people actually decide about works and services, in PB?	Year					
	1995	1998	2000	2002	2005	2009
Always / almost always	60,3	57,2	63,4	69,0	57,0	53,2
Always	33,0	30,2	29,4	29,1	27,1	21,7
Almost always	27,3	27,0	34,0	39,9	29,9	31,5
Sometimes	23,8	23,9	13,3	15,3	33,0	32,4
Never	0,6	2,8	1,9	1,6	2,9	3,8
Do not know	8,2	10,7	14,8	13,9	6,8	8,7
Uninformed	7,1	5,4	6,5	0,2	-	1,9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fase, Cidade, CRC/PMPA e Abers, R. (1995); Cidade (1999, 2002, 2003); Fedozzi (2005); Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPoa (2009).

Participants decision power on PB, according to education level, 2009

Table 11 (original version)

(%)

In your opinion, do people actually decide about works and services, in PB?	Education level			Total
	Basic	Medium	High	
Always / almost always	55,7	53,5	51,7	54,3
Always	27,5	18,9	14,1	22,2
Almost always	28,2	34,6	37,6	32,1
Sometimes	29,4	34,6	40,3	33,0
Never	3,9	4,4	3,4	4,0
Do not know	11,0	7,6	4,7	8,7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

Knowledge on PB's rules, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009

Table 19 (original version)

(%)

Do you know PB's rules?	Year				
	1998	2000	2002	2005	2009
All	-	-	-	-	5,2
The majority	10,7	18,4	15,6	25,8	14,1
Just some / few	58,5	43,8	41,6	44,8	48,3
Just some	39,1	25,3	18,8	26,6	26,2
Few	19,4	18,5	22,8	18,2	22,1
Do not know	28	33,3	42,6	28,2	30,4
Uninformed	2,8	4,5	-	1,1	2,1
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Cidade (1999, 2002, 2003); Fedozzi (2005); Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

Knowledge on PB's rules, according to participation time, 2009

Table 20 (original version)

(%)

Do you know PB's rules?	Participation time				Total
	Beginner	2 – 4 years	5 – 7 years	Veteran	
All	1,5	4,2	10,9	19,1	9,1
The majority	11,1	19,4	26,6	36,4	23,6
Just some	37,8	40	35,9	33,5	36,9
Few	29,6	26,7	18,8	8,1	20,5
Do not know	20	9,7	7,8	2,9	9,9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

PB's talking practice in meetings, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2009

Table 23 (original version)

(%)

Are you used to speaking in PB's meetings?	Ano				
	1998	2000	2002	2005	2009
Always	5,9	10	12,2	10,5	8,6
Almost always	6,8	18,3	14,2	7,2	5,7
Sometimes	18,7	15,8	21,8	22,3	18,2
Never	62,8	49,8	51,8	57,3	67
Uninformed	5,8	6,1	-	2,7	0,6
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Cidade (1999, 2002, 2003), Fedozzi (2005); Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

Satisfaction with municipal administration's feedback , 1995, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2009

Table 27 (original version)

(%)

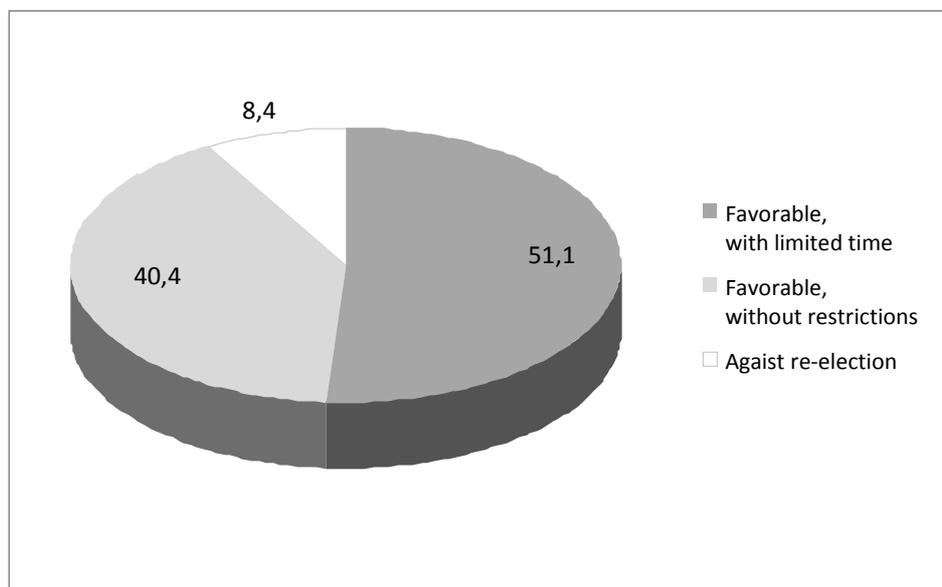
Are you satisfied with Municipal BP's feedback?	1995	1998	2000	2002	2009
Always / almost always	80,7	59,6	63,8	60,9	40,1
Always	51,8	34,5	28,9	26,1	15,1
Almost always	28,9	25,1	34,9	34,8	25
Sometimes / never	4,1	26,1	18,3	24	39,1
Sometimes	-	23,5	16,1	20,5	28,3
Never	4,1	2,6	2,2	3,5	10,8
Do not know	8,4	10,8	11,1	15,1	16,8
Uninformed	6,8	3,6	6,6	0,1	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fase, PMPA, Cidade e Abers (1995); Cidade (1999, 2002, 2003); Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

Participants opinion about Counselors re-election, 2009

Figure 8 (original version)

(%)



Fonte: Fedozzi e Observapoa (2009)

CHAPTER III

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY USE:

PROFILE OF INTERNET USERS, INTERNET USE ON PB, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PORTO ALEGRE'S OBSERVATORY IN PARTICIPATION.

Chapter three deals with innovative themes that aim to qualify PB process, namely to improve the outcome and popularization of computer research. Up to this point; the process does not rely on internet use for defining priorities. It will be helpful to conduct research on the willingness of participants to use new technologies in the PB process. It also addresses people's knowledge of Porto Alegre's observatory – *ObservaPoa*.

It may not be surprising that those who access internet are young people, with higher income and high education levels. Nevertheless, the use by older people, with lower income and education is also significant.

Internet access is already part of everyday life to some participants. This practice should be taken not only as attractive to newcomers, but as a qualified participation tool: a data source, a monitoring tool, and another way to promote transparency.

Democratic practices rely on easy access to updated information. The *ObservaPoa* has great potential to help participants in the decision making processes within public politics. Besides being conceived as separate tools, both channels can be improved to work in a complementary way. This will be of great value to PB's legitimacy as a participatory institution.

Participants' opinion about internet use, as a way to broaden participation, 2009

Table 31 (original version)

Internet use, as a way to broaden participation	%
Agree	70,0
Totally agree	42,9
Partially agree	27,1
Indifferent	2,6
Disagree	23,7
Partially disagree	5,0
Totally disagree	18,7

Participants' opinion about internet use, by representative status, 2009

Table 32 (original version)

(%)

Internet use on PB	Role		
	Non-elected	Delegates	Counselors
Agree	70,1	61,1	50,9
Totally agree	42,2	24,1	30,2
Partially agree	27,9	37,0	20,8
Indifferent	3,1	3,7	1,9
Disagree	26,8	35,2	47,2
Partially disagree	5,1	6,5	9,4
Totally disagree	21,7	28,7	37,7

Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

CHAPTER IV

CITIZENSHIP AND POLITICAL CULTURE AMONG PB PARTICIPANTS

Chapter four presents; for the first time in historical series research; some elements of political culture dimension. Though recognizing the limits of mere quantitative analysis to build knowledge on the theme, it gave important inputs to stimulate the debate on PB limits and results, taking into account culture, practices, and values.

The analysis involved data on associations, political engagements, participation motivation and opinion about the democratic process. Those characteristics were compared with the time of participation, representation role (counselors or delegates), education level and family income.

The most significant change on political culture is the decrease of associative bonds. This contradicts the historical belief that PB could have a positive effect on associations. Even though it happened at the beginning, associative bonding between participants decreased. Moreover, the socio economic differences reveal unequal opportunities in participation. As already seen; associative bonds are one of the pre-requisites to representative functions.

In order to understand the cause of the decrease, a greater depth of research should be undertaken. For now, there remain some hints: increase of less formal survey

tools and less reliance on conscious participation and structural changes on mobilization and engagement, using informal nets instead of established organizations.

Higher levels of participation are related to a more developed political culture. Unequal social conditions (income and education level), as well as representative performances (counselors and delegates), also played a part as political culture indicator.

The rate of democratic engagement in PB's participants is higher if it is compared to the rate of Porto Alegre, Brazil, and Latin America's voters. But a more accurate statistical analysis shows significant differences among the profile of the participants. Those who are favorable to democracy and against any constraints of rights have the following characteristics:

- They participate for longer periods of time (8 years and up);
- Have collective and decentralized motivations;
- Are Representatives;
- Have associative bonds;
- Medium to high education level;
- Household income over 2 minimum wages.

In general terms, there remains some important differences in democratic engagement, related to exogenous factors (income, education level, associations), and endogenous variables (time of participation, opportunities, representation performance). This shows not only asymmetries that distinguish participants (knowledge on PB's rules, practice of speaking in meetings, etc.), but also asymmetries in building democratic values and citizenship culture.

Data analysis indicate that the subjective meanings of PB engagement are primarily linked to a demand motivation (aiming towards community benefits, such as infrastructure and public politics), and, secondarily to a sense of participation as expression of democracy, based on citizens' rights.

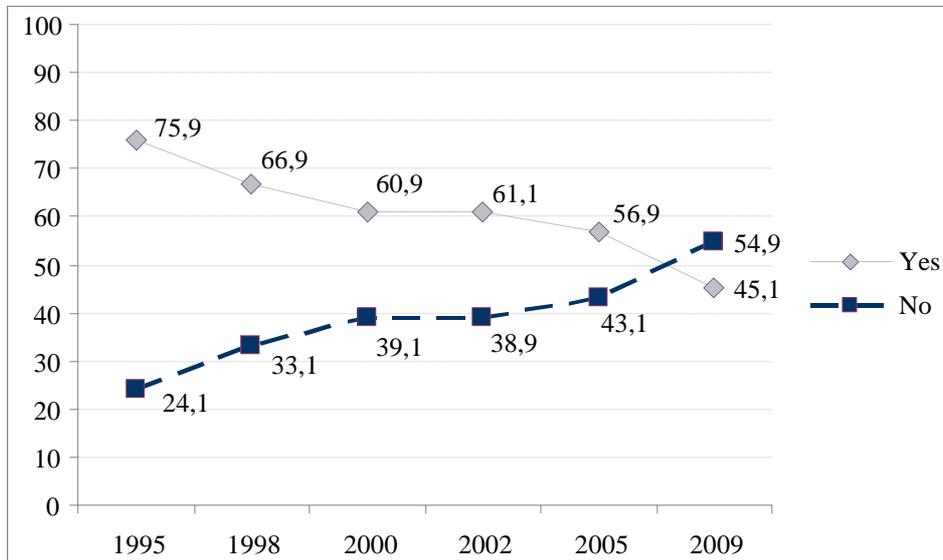
In summary, the most important data to be highlighted is as follows: participation over time is not sufficient to change asymmetries in perceptions, practices, and

construction of new values. These factors are all fundamental to a democratic political culture and one of the objectives envisioned in the genesis and history of PB.³

PB's participants engagement in associations or social movements, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009

Figure 16 (original version)

(%)

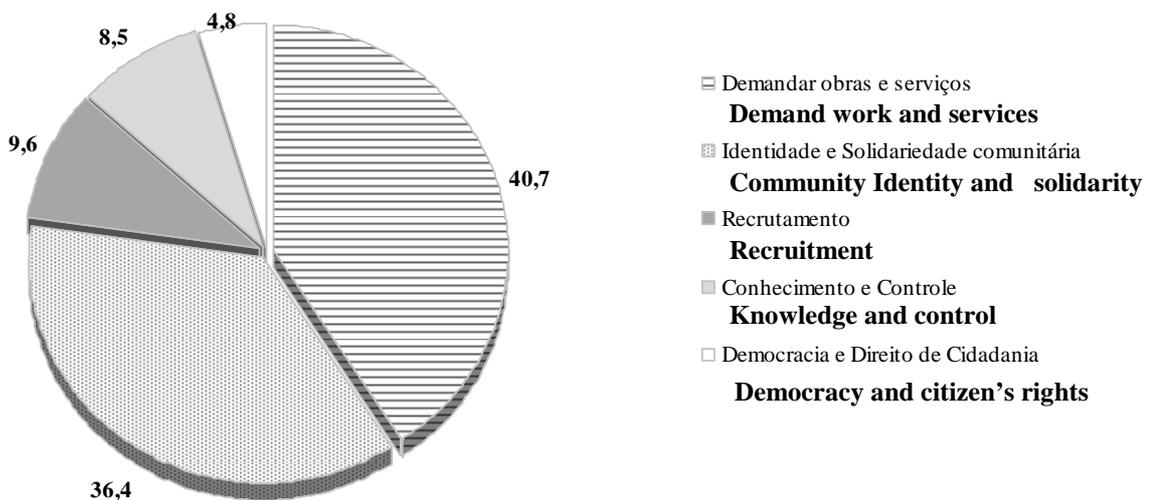


Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

Participation's motifs in meetings, 2009

Figure 20 (original version)

(%)



Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

³ The conclusion is consistent with results of previous academic researches, based on similar methodology.

Participants' opinion about democracy, by participation time, 2009

Table 39 (original version)

(%)

Considering democracy:	Participation time					Total
	1st time	Beginner	2 - 4 years	5 - 7 years	Veteran	
Democracy is a good regime	61,4	64,7	66,9	73,4	77,5	66,5
It does not matter if the regime is a democracy	25,0	22,1	21,1	18,8	15,0	21,7
Do not know/ do not answer	13,6	13,2	12,0	7,8	7,5	11,8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Fedozzi/UFRGS e ObservaPOA (2009).

Portuguese electronic version of the book/ data files of research/ references/ methodology/ can be found on:

www.ObservaPoa.com.br;

www.ufrgs.br/democraciaparticipativa