

# AGENDA

12 April 2022 | Virtual

Informal Workshop

**Dispelling Myths about Participatory Budgeting across Levels of Government**

# Agenda

 Tuesday 12 April 2022  13:00-15:00 CET (Paris time)  Zoom meeting:

13:00

## Opening session

WELCOME **Jón Blondal** – Head of Division, Public Management and Budget Division, OECD Public Governance Directorate

## Session A: Comparing approaches to Participatory Budgeting (PB)

13:05-13:50

### Presentations

MODERATOR **Sean Dougherty** – Senior Advisor, OECD Network on Fiscal Relations across Levels of Government

DISCUSSANT **Paul Smoke** – Professor of Public Finance and Planning, New York University

13:10

SPEAKER **Jaroslaw Kantorowicz** (Leiden University). The Dutch and Polish experiences with PB

13:20

SPEAKER **Sun-Moon Jung** (Dongguk University). PB and efficiency: evidence from Korea

13:30

SPEAKER **Marcia Godwin** (University of La Verne). Revisiting PB in the United States

13:40

SPEAKER **Yves Sintomer** (Université Paris 8). Participatory Budgeting across European countries

13:50-14:05

OPEN DISCUSSION

## Session B – Participation in the budget process through direct democracy

14:05-14:35

### Presentations

MODERATOR **Lisa von Trapp** – Lead, OECD Working Party of Parliamentary Budget Officials & Independent Fiscal Institutions

14:05

SPEAKER **Mark Mahabir** (Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer). The Canadian Parliament's pre-budget consultations

14:15

SPEAKER **Lars P. Feld** (University of Freiburg). Fiscal aspects of Swiss federal direct democracy

14:25

SPEAKER **Ernesto Ganuza** (CSIC). The paradox of participation. What are the risks of PB?

14:35-14.50

OPEN DISCUSSION

14.50-15.00

### Wrap-up / Closing

14:50

**Junghun Kim** – Chair (Korea), OECD Network on Fiscal Relations Korea

# Dispelling Myths about Participatory Budgeting across Levels of Government

## ■ Background

Distribution of political power across different actors is one of the main objectives of decentralisation as well as federalism since such distribution allows for more inclusive decision-making processes and policy outcomes that are closer to local preferences (*OECD Fiscal Federalism 2022*). In a context of declining trust and growing dissatisfaction with democratic institutions, there is a renewed interest in engaging with citizens as partners. Targeted approaches, such as participatory budgeting (PB), aspire to give a voice to politically excluded community members. However, do such “democratic innovations” succeed, or are they often captured by special interests?

PB initiatives can include questions of how to raise revenues (e.g. referendum on the Stockholm congestion charge) as well as how to set priorities for spending and the distribution of public funds among levels of government (e.g. Alberta referendum on fiscal equalisation). While either the executive or a legislative body can engage in a dialogue with citizens to filter and reconcile different views, finding the right institutional context and clear responsibilities for implementation are necessary to ensure PB do not in fact undermine the democratic process.

To date, participatory budgeting has primarily taken place at local levels, the closest level of government to citizens. However, there are a few PB initiatives aiming at the regional level (e.g. New York State and Poitou-Charentes for education) and even national levels (e.g. Portugal). This informal workshop will analyse this phenomenon, gathering examples, and potential lessons on PB from a multilevel governance perspective, ranging from deliberative participation to the Swiss “direct democracy” model. It will cover what moves institutions to foster participation through PB, who takes part in these kind of democratic innovation processes and how PB initiatives may succeed.

## ■ This Workshop

With this background, the purpose of the workshop is to better understand country experiences with participatory budgeting and related approaches to making fiscal policy-making more inclusive across levels of government.

## ■ Key questions

**Speakers and discussion will aim to address the following questions:**

1. *What is the typical scale and focus of Participatory Budgeting, and can or should its impact be strengthened?*
2. *Who participates in PB initiatives and why? Does it strengthen the democratic process, or the contrary?*
3. *Are there related approaches, e.g., through legislatures or referenda, that could be more effective?*

