Environment and the Community: The case of the Participatory Budgeting of Cascais

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ABSTRACT

Participatory Budgeting is a process through which the community can participate in decision-making processes and is in great expansion. Since 1972, with the Stockholm conference, there had been growing global environmental awareness on the part of institutions and policy makers.

In this way, this dissertation aims to contribute to a better understanding of the relations and perceptions of people with environmental issues, at a municipal level, using the Participatory Budget as a tool for analysis.

The participatory process was studied from 2011 to 2016, in the City of Cascais, through the application of a methodology that involved, in a first stage, the selection of the proposed projects in the environment area. In two visions: minimalist and broad. The following stages involved their analysis per year, according to frequency, amount, average amount, number of votes and the parish.

It was concluded that of the proposed projects in the environment area there was an incidence in those that were associated with the green spaces for the practice of sports and leisure, highlighting the high concern of the citizens for the themes of the environment, in the years of 2011 and 2012. The Participation Budget of Cascais has been increasing in number of people, which is verified both by the increase in the number of projects submitted and by the budget amount and number of votes, concluding that this is a good tool for active citizenship.

Keywords: Environment, Community, Participatory Budgeting, Cascais

INTRODUCTION

The first environmental organizations and laws emerged in the 19th century, as a response to the environmental effects of the industrial revolution. Subsequently, the internationalization of environmental issues appears in the 20th century, mainly with the Stockholm Conference.

Thus, the initial steps taken to alert the negative signs that were already taking place in the various environmental dimensions justified the occurrence of the following main milestones in relation to environmental policies:

- 1972- United Nations Conference on the Human Environment
- 1985- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer
- 1987- Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
- 1987- Brundtland / Our Common Future Report
- 1992 - United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
- 1997- Kyoto Protocol
- 2002- Johannesburg Summit
- 2012- United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
- 2015- Paris Agreement

These important events in the history of environmental policies that focused on several themes such as finite resources, the ozone layer, global warming and climate change, were important in promoting an environmental awareness at a global level by the institutions and politicians.

Thus, it is intended to contribute to a better understanding of the relations and perceptions of people with environmental concerns, at a municipal level, using the Participatory Budget as a tool.

For this it was used the following method:

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Selection of the proposed projects, according two views:

 • Minimalist vision: we selected only the projects that are related to the following categories: relation with public green spaces and relationship with nature;

• Extended vision: the environment was considered in a broader way, and thus were also selected projects with interventions in the public space as well as those that promote leisure and sports in public areas.

Analysis of the following variables: frequency and number of votes.

1. ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY

This chapter describes how the Environment relates to some of the most relevant dimensions of collective life such as Education, Sustainable Mobility, Leisure and Recreation and Planning.

1.1 Environmental Education

The concept of Environmental Education has been changed several times over the last decades, giving rise to several reflections and debates, with a view to improving strategies and ideas. There are many definitions of Environmental Education, but they all focus on the principle of human awareness about the environment of which it is an integral part (Schmidt, Nave & Guerra, 2006).

Since the 1960s of the last century that there is a permanent state of international alert to environmental issues (Santos, 2013). In 1965, the term 'environmental studies' is used in the Conference in Education of the University of Keele in the United Kingdom. (Jimenez & Third, 2009). Following the Stockholm Conference, Unesco promoted in 1975, in Yugoslavia, an International Meeting on Environmental Education where it was released the International Program of Environmental Education.

Regarding Environmental Education, the National Congress on Environmental Education and Training was highlighted in 1987, whose objective was to outline an international strategy for action in environmental education for the 1990s (Bull, 1999). In 1992, Agenda 21, a document resulting from the Rio Conference, states in chapter 36 that environmental education plays an important role in sustainable development, highlighting the importance of a new socio-environmental responsibility standard (APA; Barbieri &

Da Silva, 2011), And pointing out that this change can be done in two ways: formal and non-formal.

In 2005, UNESCO began the "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DEDS) 2005-2014", a period in which it seeked to mobilize educational resources to promote a sustainable future (UNESCO, 2017, UN 2017).

The concept of public participation in decision-making processes and access to justice in environmental matters is also present in several points of The Future We Want Final Declaration resulting from the work of the Rio 20 International Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 (APA). At the end of 2014 a conference was held in Japan, with the theme "Learning today for a sustainable future", where a balance of the DEDS decade was concluded, completing the EDS period 2005-2014, and beginning the Program of Global Action for Education for Sustainable Development (APA).

The issue of Environmental Education can be analyzed in three ways: environmental education, environmental education, and environmental education, which, although different, have some points in common - Knowledge, Understanding and Attitudes (Santos, 2013)

Environmental Education can not be understood as a completed plan, but rather as a process in constant evolution and improvement, for which it is fundamental the involvement of every community, from the common citizen to the political leaders.

1.2 Active Citizenship and Sustainable Mobility

Excessive use of private cars and all transport through fossil fuels causes considerable damage to the environment (Isaksson et al., 2017). In view of this problem, the concept of sustainable mobility began to emerge, defined as a "set of processes and actions geared towards the movement of people and goods, with a reasonable economic cost and at the same time minimizing negative effects on the environment and People's quality of life, in view of the principle of meeting current needs without compromising future generations "(Inova & Marcelino, 2012).

Sustainable mobility planning, a concept of strategic planning promoted by the European Commission, considers the involvement of citizens and stakeholders in the process of developing the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) as one of the key elements. EU

directives and international conventions (Arsenio, Martens & Di Ciommo, 2016).

For example, it refers to the CH4LLENGE project - Adressing Key Challenges of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plannig, involving nine European cities and eight partner organizations between 2013 and 2016, which aimed to encourage the development of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan - SUMP) in European cities. The results of the project revealed that most cities involve stakeholders in Mobility, however, some stakeholders are mainly involved in identifying and solving transportation and mobility problems, and only in a few cases are involved in the stages of mobility. Planning (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker, 2014).

In the context of mobility, it is important to refer to levels of citizen participation, from non-participation to involvement in decision-making and debate in different ways, including participation in websites and blogs, conferences and debates, group insertion of discussion, among others, being that these forms vary according to the European country and the cities in question.

Participation through websites, blogs, platforms and social networks is called Participation 2.0 and is important in that it attracts a wide range of target audiences with different ideas and opinions and has shown to be very useful in sharing ideas among citizens, in particular on issues of sustainable mobility, from a more practical perspective such as vehicle monetization and sharing (Zavaglia, 2016). At a more organized but not mandatory level of participation, citizens can be heard when representatives of organizations to which they belong are invited to be part of Focal Groups and / or Focal Mega Groups, with the objective of discussing several Issues and possible solutions associated with the sustainability of mobility (Ibeas et al., 2011).

In Europe, despite the involvement of decision makers and the participation of citizens, depending on the country and the cities, considerable participation of citizens has been observed in the last two decades. However, in some Eastern European countries the participation process is very limited due to technical issues. Planning is developed only by experts, and citizens, rather than being proactively involved in processes, are only seen as an informational object of what was planned (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker, 2014).

In addition to the points outlined above, it is important to involve various stakeholders, such as vulnerable groups (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker, 2014) in mobility, so that it can provide "the opportunity for society to participate with all its members" (Farrington, 2005).

For this to happen, it is essential that a guiding principle exists in the implemented policies, to see the issues in a transversal way, trying to cross the political and social borders. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, due to political conflicts and contradictions, where previously defined goals, measures and instruments are called into question, making the process of implementing sustainable mobility less efficient (Isaksson, Antonson, & Eriksson, 2017).

1.3 Environment and Health

Social and environmental contexts increasingly determine the health of populations. Although cities can be seen as spaces for culture, education and development, urban lifestyles and the environmental conditions of these areas have negative health impacts, namely high levels of stress and a tendency towards a sedentary lifestyle (Bosh & Nieuwenhuijsen ,2016). The urban environment is characterized by high levels of air pollution, noise, very dense areas and a relative lack of green and open spaces (Bosh & Nieuwenhuijsen, 2016).

In the 1970s and 1980s a set of global and European policy initiatives shifted the way people looked at health issues. In 1984, for the first time, the term Healthy City (Silva, 2014) was born and in order to meet this change of mentality, the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities program emerged. This program began in 1987 with 11 pilot cities, which rapidly grew to 35. The cities worked directly with WHO and together they formed the European Network of Healthy Cities of WHO, and the program now has more than 1500 cities (Lafond, J, 2016). The European Network of Healthy Cities of WHO has gone through several phases, organized in time periods and characterized by different objectives and goals, always aiming at continuous improvement and each phase seen as a means of inspiration, learning and accumulation of experience on how to improve Health and well-being.

In addition to these cities, there were many others interested, but they surpassed the support WHO could offer. Faced with this lack of responsiveness, national networks of healthy cities began to spontaneously arise. Thus, in 1988 six national networks of this type

of cities had been set up and the first European meeting of national network coordinators was held.

It is thus noticeable that we have been looking at individual and community health in a broader context, where it is necessary to apply transdisciplinary strategies, relying on areas that go beyond medicine and health sciences and practices, such as Environmental, conservation and socio-ecological sciences (Bosch & Nieuwenhuijsen, 2016), which recognize the importance of including recreational green spaces as health promoting environments (Lafond, J, 2016).; Silva, 2014). Odum (1971) considers that the presence of the natural ecosystem within cities contributes to public health and enhances the quality of life of citizens, since, in addition to the social, economic and ecological benefits, green infrastructure is also favorable Recreation and the practice of outdoor sports (Bull, 2013). Berg (2017) mentions as advantages: the regulation of stress; The improvement of psychological states such as mood, self-esteem, vitality and attention; And increased health promotion behaviors such as exercise and social contacts.

The "green exercise" was recently (in 2016) released as a general concept that "implies a synergistic benefit to the health of being active in the presence of nature."

Green spaces can also be allied to financial benefits. A recent study concluded that investment in green infrastructure in cities could not only be ecologically and socially desirable but also economically advantageous. Investments in urban natural spaces can increase the economic competitiveness of a city, where aesthetic and beautiful places and quality of life are important in attracting and maintaining a skilled workforce. Such investments can also create pleasant and attractive spaces, being useful for local tourism (Berg, 2017).

1.4 Environment in Planning

As previously seen, well-being and quality of life are notions that increasingly concern the community, which can be improved through planning, defined by a "process of idealization, creation and development of solutions aimed at improving, Revitalize or create certain aspects in a given urban area or region, with the main objective of providing the inhabitants with an improvement in the quality of life" (Tays & Gândara, 2013).

Planning uses territorial management instruments to harmonize the right to the environment and the right to well-being and quality of life (DL no. 80/2015, May 14), and the National Policy Program (PNPOT), the instrument that has national coverage and that is above all other plans, regional and municipal. The PNPOT determines the most important decisions to be taken in the management of the Portuguese territory and is a tool for cooperation with similar plans in the European Union related to Spatial Planning, of which the following themes stand out because they are of an environmental nature, resources Natural resources and risk management, transport, energy and climate change.

In addition to PNPOT, there are also two essential elements that mark the planning today: the National Ecological Reserve (REN) and the Natura Network.

REN has its origin in Decree-Law no. 321/83, of July 5, which includes "areas indispensable to the ecological stability of the environment and the rational use of natural resources, in view of the correct planning of the territory."

The evolution of the legal framework in terms of land-use planning led to a new revision of REN's legal regime, materialized by Decree-Law no. 166/2008 of 22 August. The current government approved the Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 81/2012, of October 3, which defines the strategic guidelines of national and regional scope for the delimitation of REN at municipal level, thus ensuring the full implementation of the regime Established by Decree-Law no. 166/2008, of August 22, as amended, regarding the delimitations of REN at municipal level (DL no. 239/2012, November 2). REN is a "biophysical structure that integrates all the areas that are protected by ecological value and sensitivity or by exposure and susceptibility to natural hazards."

The Natura 2000 network is an ecological network for the European Union's Community area resulting from the implementation of Directive 79/409 / EEC - Birds Directive - and Directive 92/43 / EEC - Habitats Directive - which aims to ensure long-term conservation. The most endangered species and habitats in Europe, helping to halt the loss of biodiversity. It is the main instrument for nature conservation in the European Union.

REN and the Natura Network are legal instruments, important because they are components of the Ecological Structure (EE): Special Protection Areas;

And Special Areas of Conservation. The EE definition should be based on the recognition of the fundamental ecological systems by creating a territorial ecological system in which the built structure (road infrastructure, housing, equipment, industry) is implemented in a balanced way, following location regulations that take into account the values with the objective of promoting biodiversity and the sustainable use of the territory. Thus, only with a good integration of natural occurrences and constructed elements, where the permanent structures of the landscape are considered as fundamental systems of support to human communities can one contribute to a better management of the sometimes antagonistic pressures and interests on the Contributing to local sustainability and a better balance between the rights and duties of citizens and the State (Ferreira, 2010).

1.5 Environmental Associativism

Environmental non-governmental organizations are defined as "associations with legal personality and constituted under the terms of the general law that are not for profit, for themselves or for their associates, and aim exclusively at the defense and enhancement of the environment or of natural and constructed heritage, as well as the conservation of nature. "(DL no. 35/1998, July 18). Aimed to preventing environmental degradation and promoting sustainable development, they work with communities, governments and private sectors to try to make these agents aware and sensitive to environmental issues (APA).

In Portugal, these associations are very important as a tool for population participation. Non-governmental environmental organizations play a fundamental and relevant role in promoting, protecting, sensitizing and enhancing the environment by developing an action of public interest. In 1987, the Law of environmental associations was approved, in which the Portuguese legal system presumes a legal framework for intervention and support to environmental associations. Eleven years later, in 1998, the ENGO Law was published, which includes the definition of a nongovernmental organization of the environment (ENGO) in the legal system, which replaces the previous concept of association of environmental protection, responding to developments in international law and giving a renewed effectiveness to the action of associations in their communities.

Since then, the average number of associates has been increasing and ENGO's have been active on the protection of biodiversity and landscape.

2. PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Participatory budgeting is a process of decision making, in which citizens decide and negotiate the public budget (Shah, 2007) and has as a basis:

• open participation of citizens, without discrimination attributed to community organizations;

• articulation between representative and direct democracy, which gives participants a fundamental role in defining the rules of the process;

• definition of public investment priorities processed according to technical, financial and other criteria related to the needs felt by the people (Dias, 2008).

In this way, it is a process that oppositely to the traditional participation, gives citizens the opportunity to meet with politicians in order to give their contribution and opinion regarding the share of public investment (Sintomer, Herzberg, & Allegretti, 2013).

OP has been spreading territorially, being present in all the continents. In Europe, the first experience of implementing a participatory budgeting took place in France, Spain and Italy (Tsurkan, Sotskova, Aksinina, & Maria, 2016). In Portugal the PB originated in the municipality of Palmela in 2002 and quickly spread to other cities, such as Lisbon, which was one of the first OPs in Portugal, to differentiate itself from the prevailing consultative model, trying to effectively give decision-making power to Citizens.

3. CASE STUDY: CASCAIS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Cascais is a municipality with 97,40km² of area and 206479 habitants (INE, 2011), subdivided into four parishes: Alcabideche, Carcavelos and Parede, Cascais and Estoril and São Domingos de Rana. It is bordered to the north by the municipality of Sintra, to the east by Oeiras and to the south and west by the Atlantic Ocean.

The municipality of Cascais has been recognized with several awards for its active role in the areas of environment and sustainability.. In recent years, Cascais has also been strengthening citizen participation, by inviting citizens to take part in public sessions in regards to Mobility ("mobicascais," 2017), although, the most fundamental tool in this strategy has been the Participatory Budgeting (PB. Through this method, since 2011, the City Council has intended to

encourage informed and responsible participation of its citizens in local government processes, to ensure that municipal decisions reflect the true needs and aspirations of its citizens.The municipality provides at least 1,5 million euros per year, for projects proposed by the inhabitants, and this value has been increasing since 2011. The maximum amount to be allocated on each initiative should not exceed 300 000€, to increase the total number of submitted projects. **(**CM Cascais, 2017).

The process of the PB of Cascais usually follows several stages, starting with the   submition of proposals, at the sessions of participation, until the presentation of the final results; passing through two critical stages, the technical analysis and the vote of the projects:

- Process preparation;
- Collection of proposals: Sessions of participation;
- Technical analysis;
- Complaint Phase;
- Voting of Projects;
- Results presentation.

The process has changed since the first PB in 2011, and these changes will have implications for reading and interpreting the results of the present case study.

The evaluation of the PB was performed in each of the years, using the following procedure:

Step 1: Sellection of the environemntal projects for each year, regarding both a minimalist perspetive and a more inclusive one;

Step 2: Aplying the following steps:

- Total number of projects
- Total budget(€)
- Average budget per project
- Number of votes
- Average number of votes per project

Step3: Analysis of the distribution of prohjects in the minicupality area, by number of inhabitants in each parish

Step4: Global evalutation (both environmental and others) in the period of 2011 and 2016.

3. RESULTS

Using the previously mentioned methodology, both generic projects and environment projects (minimalist and extended visions) were categorized in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 – Number of projects by category, from 2011 to 2015.

	Extended vision				
	Minimalist Vision				
	Green Spaces	Nature	Public space	Sport	Leisure
2011	8	4	14	1	11
2012	8	0	9	2	14
2013	4	0	5	0	9
2014	4	1	5	2	6
2015	6	0	10	3	10
2016	3	0	1	1	4

Table 2 - Total number of non-environmental projects and projects, from 2011 to 2016

	Nº of Total Projects	Non-Environmental Projects
2011	30	3
2012	31	8
2013	26	13
2014	30	20
2015	40	22
2016	37	31

When analyzing the two visions associated to the environment, it was verified that in the minimalist view, the category "green spaces" was the one that presented the highest number of projects throughout the analyzed period, in all the years. In the extended view, the "Leisure" category was the most prominent, since in the years 2012 to 2016 it was the one that presented the maximum value, and in the year 2015, the category "Public space" presented an equal value . However, with the exception of 2015, these visions have been losing importance in relation to the total number of projects. In 2011, the number of projects in the minimalist vision was 11 (36.7%) and in the extended vision 27 (90.0%) for a total of 30 projects, while in 2016 the number of projects in the visions was much lower, 6 (16.2%) and 1 (2.7%) projects. For the minimalist and extended visions, respectively (Figure 1). By observing the number of votes (Figure 2), it can be seen that in the period between 2011 and 2016, the total number of votes increased. In the case of environmental projects in the extended view, there is an irregular decrease in projects. Regarding the minimalist vision, there is a decrease in the number of votes from 2015 to 2016, reaching a maximum number of votes of 5195 in 2015 and a minimum of 302 in 2016.
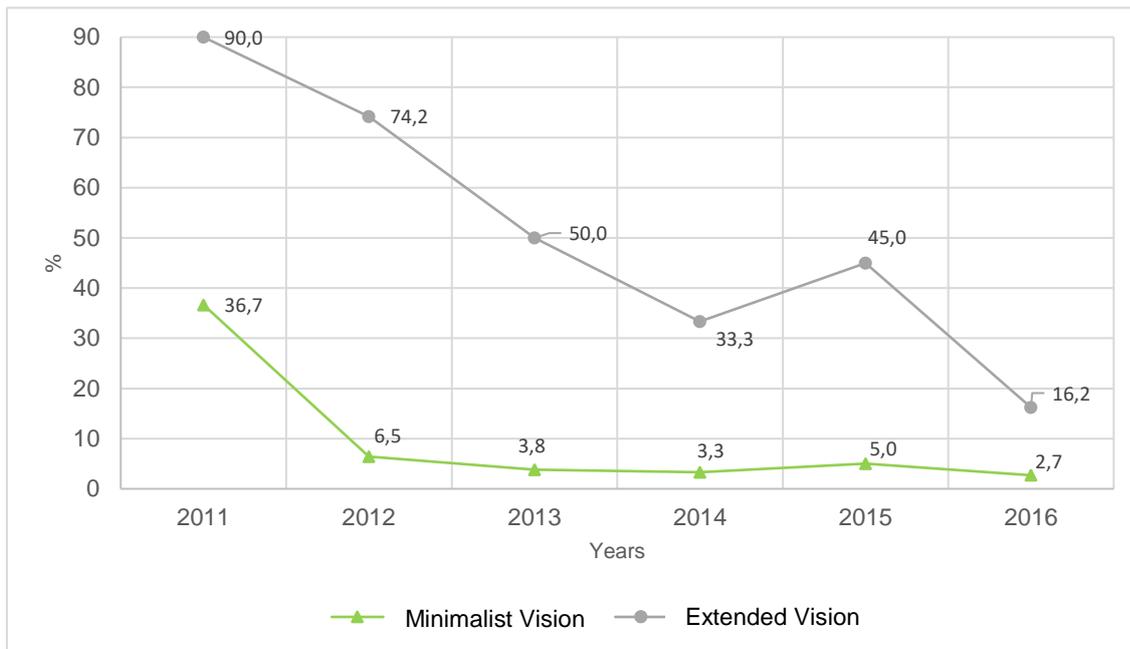
Figure 1 - Relative frequency of the number of projects in the extended and minimalist visions between 2011 and 2016
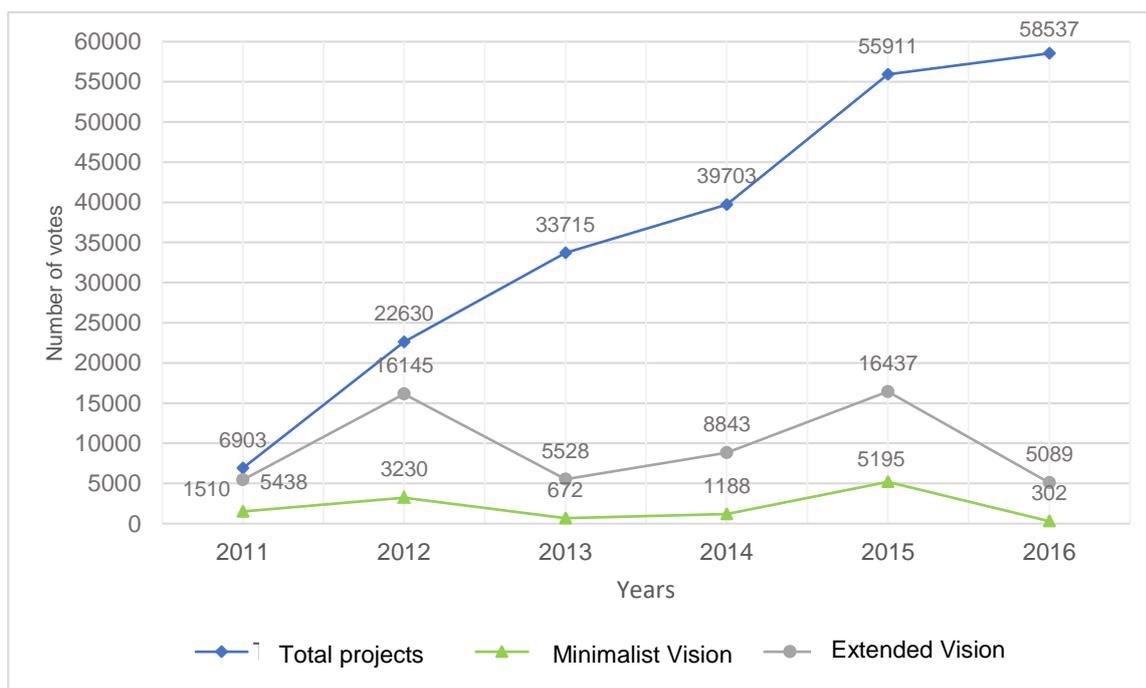

Figure 2 - Number of Total Votes and for the two visions of the environment between 2011 and 2016

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4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the decrease in the analyzed period, which may be the of events mentioned ahead, the interest of citizens in environment is noted, especially in the first years of the PB, 2011 and 2012, with a total percentage of projects in the area of Environment. However, the number of environmental projects decreased during the period studied. This can be justified by the numerous changes made to the PB regulation, in particular in the form of construction of the proposals, as well as the voting mode and high environmental practice and awareness that already exists in the municipality. Cascais has various parks, gardens and protected areas and also has a project of community gardens, structures developed with the aim of improving the quality of life of citizens and promote the environmental quality. Thus, these factors may explain the number of projects associated with the minimalist vision, which is strongly related to the protection of nature and green spaces. In the city there are also numerous parks for children and a good network of bicycle paths, these being the areas associated with projects that were included in the category of "leisure", in the extended version. Thus, if the municipality has already by its autonomy offers these structures to the citizens, by which they may not see as priorities.

Regarding to the process of Participatory Budgeting, verified in this case study, it is concluded that this is a good process of citizen participation in the affairs of the municipality, to the extent that mobilizes people to participate in decision-making processes. However, this still has some limitations with regard to the transparency of technical analysis and the lack of control in the voting process.

In this way, it is concluded that the Participative Budget of Cascais has had increasingly higher adhesion to the people, what is happening both by increasing the number of projects submitted, as by the amount and number of votes, between 2011 and 2016. In relation to projects in the area of environment there was this trend, being that it does not mean, necessarily, that the environment is not a concern of citizens.

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