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Community Participation in Decision Making Processes in Urban Planning: The Case of Kaunas

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ABSTRACT



Participation in decision-making processes foreshadows enabling citizens, communities, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties to influence the formulation of policies and laws affecting them. The purpose of this study is not only to review Lithuanian legal documents but also to analyse recent processes in Kaunas city planning. Kaunas city is undergoing various urban processes, which do not always meet the needs of the community. This study presents an analysis of the forms of community involvement in the urban planning processes and survey data on the effectiveness of community involvement. The methodology requires using a sociological survey with representatives of the city community and a comparative analysis between legal obligations and actual urbanization process.

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1. Introduction

Public participation has become an important topic of governance in the 20th century Arnstein in 1969 described public participation as follows: "The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you". In her article, the author describes the influence of society in government decision-making as a ladder, where at the bottom of the ladder are Manipulation (first step) and Therapy (second step), at the topmost - (seventh step) are Delegated Power and (eighth step) Citizen

Control (Arnstein, 1969). Today, planning theorists and practitioners actively advocate public participation in spatial planning. Accordingly, Marcus Lane observed that government has been replaced by governance (Marcus, 2005). Activity, due to public participation, is driven by theoretical

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