

PRIORITY AREAS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC BUDGET COMPETITIONS IN MARIUPOL (2018-2021)

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Abstract. *In 2018, Mariupol joined the Public Budget program, where local residents were invited to propose projects that would improve the city. When funded, these projects received funding from the city budget, a key step towards participatory decision-making in Mariupol.*

The article conducts a comparative study of the participation of Mariupol residents in the implementation of joint public initiatives, that is, which local problems were the projects of Mariupol residents aimed at solving. For this, a system of modern scientific methods of cognition was used for in-depth analysis of the chosen problem. In order to determine the likely directions of implementation of future initiatives, we conducted a survey among project authors who participated in the "Public Budget" competition, analyzed statistical data on the competition platform for 4 years, and based on the received data, made a forecast of the likely directions of future projects.

Finally, the article argues that the key challenges that might arise in the process of planning the reconstruction of Mariupol are the following: trust in local authorities; selection of heritage sites to be restored together with critical infrastructure; protracted war; changes in the population structure of post-war Mariupol and problems with the housing stock.

Research context. *Mariupol is a Ukrainian city of regional importance in the Donetsk region. It is located in the southeast of Ukraine, close to the border with Russia. Mariupol is a climatic and mud resort on the shores of the Sea of Azov. In Soviet times and already after gaining independence, Ukrainian Mariupol was frequented by Russian tourists. This affected the way residents see the city and became the basis for the formation of conflicting political-ideological views.*

At the beginning of 2022, Mariupol had a powerful economic and intellectual potential, the city was the cultural center of the region with a historic central area. The post-2014 development of Mariupol was impressive, it was noted by everyone who visited the city. Especially those who came to the city from the occupied territories of Ukraine. Everything changed on February 24, 2022, after the start of a full-scale invasion of Russia on the territory of Ukraine. Now the city is destroyed. But we are confident in the victory of Ukraine and are already planning the reconstruction of Ukrainian Mariupol.

There has always been a diversity of political views in Mariupol. This manifested itself at the end of 2013, when conflicts of views began in the city, among the residents there were those who supported Euromaidan and those who later went to Anti-Maidan rallies. Already in the spring of 2014, the city was under occupation. Militants of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic captured the city council building. As a result of anti-terrorist measures, the city, which was under occupation for a month, was liberated.

These events defined the future of Mariupol. Currently, more and more Mariupol residents identify with the pro-Ukrainian vector of social development, but there were also those who were waiting for the return of "Soviet life". During this short period, from 2014 to 2022, Mariupol received

many immigrants from the entire Donetsk region who wanted to live in free Ukrainian territory. Life in the city quickly began to recover. At the same time, the development of civil society began, thanks to international organizations and foundations, and people realized what power they have when they unite. The people of Mariupol became interested in democratic tools of influence on local authorities.

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The relevance of the topic. The closest level of public authority to citizens is local government. The fairly low level of participation of Mariupol residents in participatory practices poses a challenge to representatives of the local government and city residents to use this potential during the reconstruction and restoration of the city, thus implementing direct democracy.

Existing research on the topic. There is a substantial literature on participatory urban governance in Ukraine, including public budget programs. The work of Briui A., Stokluska E., Donos L., Ploskyi K., Sotnyk I., Us Y. Agata Briui and Eva Stokluska in their manual for practitioners "Participatory (public) budget step by step. A guide for practitioners" [1] made a description of individual elements of the Public Budget procedure and various methods of their implementation, and also gave examples of specific decisions and their possible consequences or results on the example of Poland. In their manual "Implementation and Improvement of the Public Budget: Practical Recommendations" [2] Leonid Donos and Kostiantyn Ploskyi considered the phenomenon of the Public Budget and studied the experience of four years of implementation of the competition in Ukraine (from 2015 to 2018). Iryna Sotnyk and Yana Us in the article "The Participatory Budget: Experience in Application and Prospects of Improvement in Ukrainian Cities" [3] analyzed the influence of the Public Budget on the development of the city using the example of Sumy. D. Khutkii, K. Avramchenko, M. Izyumskyi, and S. Omelichkin also studied public participation in Ukraine in their work "Assessment of the impact of the participation budget in Ukraine" [4] Dmytro Khutkyi and Krystyna Avramchenko investigated the impact of the Public Budget on the community: the quality of its life, residents and local self-government. In the manual "Road map for the implementation of the participation budget" [5] Mykhailo Izyumskyi and Serhiy Omelichkin made a descriptive part of all stages of the competition and created a visualization of the tool in the form of an "interactive" stand, with the help of which you can holistically imagine the entire road map for its practical application by communities. Despite the fact that there are already studies of the results of the introduction and implementation of the participation budget in Ukrainian communities, both at the level of the entire country and individual local cases, this tool of public participation requires further scientific research, which led to the choice of the topic of the article. Using Mariupol as a case study, furthermore, is especially significant, because the city has been a key example of post-Maidan policy change between 2014 and 2022, and the impact of such inclusive programs has not been fully understood yet.

The purpose of the article is to identify the priority areas of public participation, analyze the collected data, and forecast potential areas of public interest in the implementation of joint social initiatives in post-war Mariupol.

Methodology. The first part of the article presents the results of the analysis of statistical data from the competition platform for 4 years. The data were provided by the SocialBoost organization, which manages the electronic platform "Public Budget", on which voting for projects in the city of Mariupol took place.

The second part of the article presents the results of a survey of the authors of the projects that participated in the competition from 2018 to 2021. The survey was conducted between December 4 and 14, 2022. Online questionnaire method, with respondents using a computer or smartphone. 25 respondents over the age of 18 were interviewed. Such a number of respondents may be due to the consequences of the Russian full-scale invasion, in particular, the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Mariupol residents.

In the third part, a forecast of probable directions of future projects is made. Methods of analysis include the study of descriptive and logical statistics. As I mentioned above, the idea of my research is determined by the desire to understand what were the priority ways of public participation in the implementation of joint initiatives and what they can be during the restoration and reconstruction of the city. Participatory budget is a tool of democracy. One of the most important values that affects the effectiveness of this tool and development prospects is the trust of residents. Public projects are always a signal to the authorities about weak areas in their work. Mariupol local self-government and public activities have been convinced for 4 years that this tool is useful for the community.

Mariupol is a city of transformation. The pace of change motivated and inspired not only the residents of Mariupol, but also residents of all of Ukraine. Every day the city became better, changed and developed, and its residents had the opportunity to participate in this process. And it was the participatory budget that revealed these possibilities the best.

Personally, I acted as the author of 3 district projects and was a co-author of 3 more projects of city significance. Thanks to the support of the people of Mariupol, they all won. We did not manage to implement all the ideas, but I have the experience of implementing 5 projects within the framework of the "Public Budget" competition. I think it helped me adequately conduct research and draw conclusions.

Research background. Participatory budgeting (this tool of democracy is also called public budget or participatory budget) has been implemented in the world for more than 30 years, and every year it is gaining more and more popularity. This is not surprising, because participatory budgeting makes it possible to solve the urgent needs of the community in a relatively short period of time, stimulates economic development at the local level, and improves relations between institutions and representatives of civil society and authorities. In addition, the public budget contributes to the effective use of budget funds and the activation of the public, its participation in decision-making regarding the use of financial resources of local budgets. Also, this tool of direct democracy helps the socially protected majority to take care of the vulnerable minority: for example, the disabled, the unemployed, internally displaced persons, the elderly, the homeless, and orphans [6].

Participatory budgeting can be an effective tool for education and training in the field of self-government - it encourages residents to familiarize themselves with the mechanisms of building and spending the local budget, forces them to make balanced decisions regarding the rationality of using budget funds, as well as to think about the prospects and general vision of the development of this area. All this is reflected in the way the budget is constructed. Therefore, the participatory budget should be considered not only as a tool that can be applied in any circumstances, but also as an element of a specific philosophy of self-government as a community, i.e. a set of authorities and residents of one territorial unit who cooperate with each other for the sake of the development of the latter [7]. In Ukraine, the history of participatory budgeting (public budget, participatory budget) dates back to

2015. This mechanism became a kind of "good deal" between local authorities and the public, as well as a new opportunity for dialogue.

Authors of projects, representatives of authorities and public organizations, residents learn to interact and build new connections, so more and more initiatives to improve living space and solve other local problems are implemented. The participatory budget is increasingly being considered as a platform for strengthening social cohesion, implementing the principles of inclusiveness and accessibility in communities [2]. The Law of Ukraine "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" gives territorial communities the right to participate in the process of developing and making decisions on issues of local importance, in particular, the Law introduces such a mechanism as local initiatives.

In the city of Mariupol, for the first time, the regulation on the Public Budget was approved by the decision of the Mariupol City Council dated 28.02.2018 No. 7/28-2437 Regulation on the Public Participation Budget of the City of Mariupol. Its goal was development of a democratic society, improvement of the dialogue between the authorities and the territorial community, the involvement of the community in solving issues of local importance, the implementation of innovative mechanisms for involving the public in the distribution of funds from the city budget of the city of Mariupol, the solution of socially significant issues, the implementation of the best European practices of participatory budgeting [8].

The regulation provides that large and small projects can be implemented at the expense of the funds of the public (participatory) budget of the city of Mariupol. Large projects are projects of inter-district, city-wide significance, the total cost of which is from UAH 300,000.01. up to UAH 600,000.00. 40% of the funds allocated for each type of project are allocated to such projects. Small projects are projects of street, quarter, and district importance, the total cost of which is from UAH 20,000.00. up to 300,000.00 UAH. For such projects, 60% of the funds allocated for each type of project are allocated, which are evenly distributed among the districts of the city (15% of the total volume of the public budget of the city of Mariupol for each district).

Data from the SocialBoost organization was used to analyze the Mariupol experience of implementing the Public Budget. It is a technological public organization that develops IT projects with social impact, tools for e-democracy, e-government and open data [9]. Summary statistics of each stage of the competition were always available on the city's competition website, but due to security reasons, after the full-scale invasion of Russia into the territory of Ukraine, the organization closed the sites in the occupied territories. At the same time, SocialBoost provided information on my request regarding general statistical data for 4 years for Mariupol.

The volume of the Public Budget is determined annually in accordance with the decision of the City Council on the City Budget. According to the Law of Ukraine "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine", the amount of the competition should be up to 1% of the total budget, but not less than 7 million UAH. The budget of Mariupol for 2021 is 4 billion 678 million UAH. One percent of the city budget is 46.7 million UAH. At the same time, the budget of the Public Budget competition in Mariupol in 2021 was not so large, but only 7 million UAH.

In 2018, the total budget of the competition was the maximum, and amounted to UAH 13,585,000. In 2020, the competition budget was 8 million UAH, and in 2019 and 2021 the amount was the same and amounted to 7 million UAH. The decrease in the overall budget of the contest led to an increase in competition among the contestants. In general, the total budget of all submitted projects grew every year, with the exception of 2020 (Table 1).

Table 1.

Competition budget Public budget of Mariupol

Year	Population size	The total budget of all submitted projects, UAH.	The total budget allocated for the competition, UAH.	Competition for 1 UAH. Budget
2018	436 569	16 290 217	13 585 000	1,20
2019	436 569	36 159 318	7 000 000	5,17
2020	436 569	33 983 791	8 000 000	4,25
2021	436 569	53 199 635	7 000 000	7,60
Total	436 569	139 632 961	35 585 000	3,92

The results of the analysis of the use of the Public Budget in Mariupol show an increase in the number of initiatives, which reflects the interest of the public and local authorities in its further implementation (table 2). The exception was 2020, partly due to the impact of the 2020 crisis due to the coronavirus epidemic.

Table 2.

Activity of residents in the Public Budget in Mariupol

Year	Number of submitted projects	The number of projects participating in the vote	The number of rejected projects	The share of projects that participated in the vote	Number of winning projects
2018	61	34	27	55.74	30
2019	146	123	23	84.25	32
2020	137	98	39	71.53	33
2021	161	133	28	82.61	26
Total	505	388	117	76.83	121

As of 2018, the total number of residents who took part in voting in the contest was 1,793, and already in 2021 it reached 38,278 people. Over the past 4 years, there has been a sharp increase in the level of involvement of citizens in voting for projects (Table 3), which reflects the desire of residents to directly influence the areas of city budget spending.

Table 3.

Number of people who voted by category

Categories	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Environmental protection	1	237	233	419	890
Creation of sports and entertainment grounds	861	1 694	2 140	1 350	6045
Improvement/equipment of healthcare institutions	322	694	360	0	1376
Landscaping of the surrounding area	0	194	407	766	1367
Improvement/equipment of social welfare institutions	89	169	263	210	731
Improvement of road and transport infrastructure	59	621	428	15	1123
Creation of recreation areas	405	1 564	1 156	488	3613
Improvement/equipment of educational institutions	0	2 828	4 845	14 268	21941
Improvement of beach infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0
Improvement/equipment of cultural institutions	0	77	168	134	379
Street lighting	56	600	63	18	737
Other	0	0	5	71	76
Total	1793	8678	10068	17739	38278

The competition presents a fairly wide range of various categories of citizen participation in various spheres of the city. In total, 12 categories were selected, namely "Environmental protection", "Creation of sports and entertainment grounds", "Improvement/equipment of health care facilities", "Improvement of the surrounding area", "Improvement/equipment of social protection institutions", "Improvement of road transport infrastructure", "Creation of recreation areas", "Improvement/equipment of educational institutions", "Improvement of beach infrastructure", "Improvement/equipment of cultural institutions", "Street lighting" and "Other".

The priority categories of public participation in the implementation of joint initiatives in 2018 were - "Creation of sports and entertainment grounds" (861 votes), "Creation of recreation areas" (405 votes) and "Improvement/equipment of health care facilities" (322 votes). And since 2019, the category "Improvement/equipment of educational institutions" has become the leader in the number of votes.

Different authors have different opportunities, including administrative ones, to promote their projects. Of course, it is easier to connect your resource to educational institutions than to collect the votes of an activist. In recent years, group chats have been very popular in Mariupol, including in educational institutions. For example, each class of the school had at least one separate chat in the messenger to improve communication between the teacher and parents. They became especially popular during the quarantine with the start of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 in Ukraine. Issues related to children's education and organizational aspects were discussed there more often. Of course, when teachers once a year posted information about the school taking part in the "Public Budget" competition and how this school initiative will improve the conditions of stay at school for children, most parents supported their request to vote for the project.

In connection with the considerable popularity of the competition among educational institutions in comparison with other categories and the complaints of public activists from other spheres, the city council made amendments to the Regulation on the public budget of the city of Mariupol. Educational projects are projects submitted by the author with the selected category "Improvement / equipment of educational institutions", the implementation of which concerns the premises or territories of schools, preschool institutions, other educational institutions. No more than 50% of the total public budget of the city of Mariupol is allocated to such projects [5]. This decision was well received by the public and closed the issue of disproportionality of resources.

As for the gender indicator of activity, the authors of the projects were more often women (Table 4). The average rate of their participation over 4 years was 77.54%, while the average number of male authors was only 22.46%. At the same time, this ratio became larger every year. Thus, in 2018, the number of male authors was 17 people or 30.36%, and already in 2021 there were 23 people or 16.08%. At the same time, the number of female authors only increased. If in 2018, 39 women or 69.64% submitted their projects to the competition, then already in 2021 this number amounted to 120 people or 83.92%.

Table 4.

Gender of project authors in Mariupol

Year	Total number of authors	Number of male authors	Percentage of male authors	Number of female authors	Percentage of female authors
2018	56	17	30,36	39	69,64
2019	139	33	23,74	106	76,26
2020	117	23	19,66	94	80,34
2021	143	23	16,08	120	83,92
General	455	96	22,46	359	77,54

The age distribution among project authors was also uneven. People aged 46 to 65 showed the greatest activity. Nevertheless, people aged 36-45 turned out to be quite active. The smallest number of authors under the age of 25. After 2020, interest in the contest for authors over 65 years old began to decline.

According to the terms of the Public Budget competition, city residents who have reached the age of eighteen and are officially registered as living on its territory can submit and vote for projects.

In the event that a person is registered outside the city, but actually lives in the city of Mariupol, in order to participate in the process, he must provide a certificate confirming his residence in the city. Examples of such documents can be a student card or a certificate of an internally displaced person.

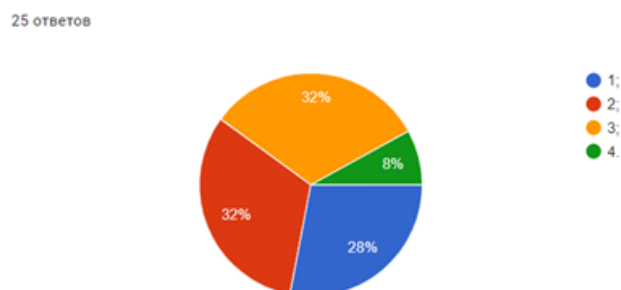
It was possible to vote in one of the city's Administrative Services Centers using a paper voting form. Each resident of the city could choose two projects (one large and one small), or one of these two categories. Voting also took place on the website <https://pb.org.ua/>. The electronic form of such voting was aimed at strengthening digital transformation, decision-making processes, involvement of citizens and civil servants in the context of electronic democracy. The winners of the voting were the projects that received the largest number of votes according to the rating system. Voting results are approved by the Expert Council on Public (Participatory) Budgeting of Mariupol. The projects supported by the citizens during the voting were implemented by the city authorities in the following year, and in parallel, a new cycle of the public budget began.

Analysis of data collected via survey. The data cited in the next part of the article was obtained as a result of a survey of Mariupol activists who took part in the "Public Budget" competition. It was possible to attract 25 project authors to the survey. This number is related to the situation that occurred in Mariupol after the full-scale invasion and the horrors that the city's residents had to experience. A large number of survivors of Mariupol, including activists, are now adapting to a new place, so they do not have time, resources and motivation to answer questions. Encouragement to take part in the study took place through an appeal on my pages in social networks and through personal contacts with activists.

The survey questionnaire consisted of two parts, each of which contained 7 questions. The first block included questions about the experience of the respondents during participation in the "Public Budget" contest. In the second block, I wanted to find out the opinion of activists about the future of Mariupol. At the same time, the answers to the questions of the second block were not mandatory, because I understand the painful attitude of the people of Mariupol to the questions of the future.

During the research, 25 public activists of Mariupol, who took part in the "Public Budget" competition, were interviewed. Among them, 7 people or 28% took part in the contest only once, 8 people or 32% of the respondents were authors two and three times, and 2 people or 8% - every year, that is, 4 times.

Diagram 1. How many times have you participated in the "Public Budget" competition as an author?

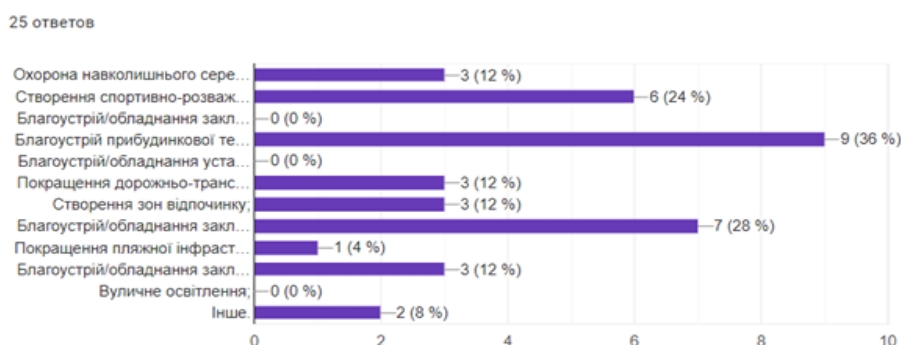


The greater number of respondents, 20 or 84%, had experience in implementing projects at the expense of the city budget. The largest number of respondents implemented 2 initiatives - 9 people or 36%. One idea was implemented by 8 interviewees or 32%. 12% or 3 people to implement 3

projects. And only one interviewee had the experience of implementing 4 ideas within the framework of the Public Budget competition. Not all project authors managed to gain experience in implementing their initiatives, namely 4 persons or 16% of the respondents. Some of them were first-time winners of the competition in 2021, but Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine prevented them from doing so.

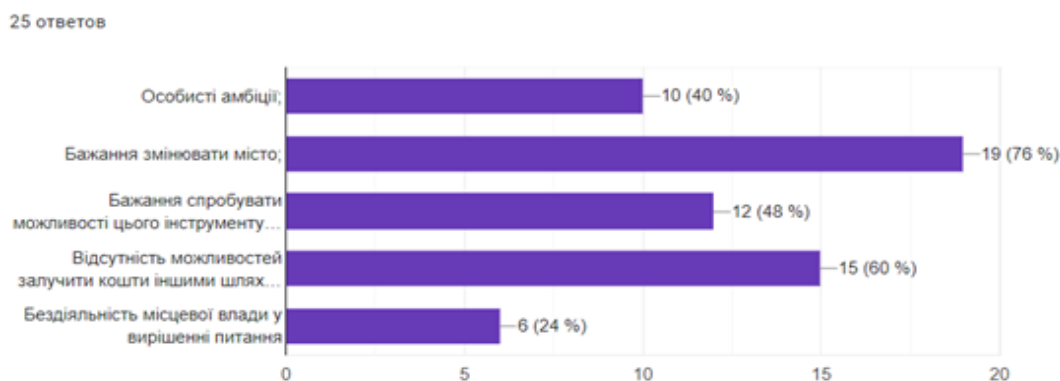
Survey participants were most often motivated to take part in the contest by the success of their first participation; transparency of the competition; available time and knowledge; the opportunity to gain experience in project management; professional interests; the desire to improve the city, street or neighborhood. Survey participants were discouraged from taking part next time - lack of time; a complex voting system for competition projects; people's passivity when voting; prolongation of project implementation deadlines by representatives of utility companies.

Diagram 2. Projects from which category did you submit to the competition in previous years?



The greater number of respondents, 9 people or 36%, submitted projects classified under the category "Improvement of the area around the house". 7 respondents or 28% initiated projects in the "Improvement/equipment of educational institutions" category. 6 people or 24% submitted their initiatives to the "Creation of sports and entertainment venues" category. An equal number of 3 respondents or 12% each initiated projects from the following four categories: "Environmental protection", "Improvement of road and transport infrastructure", "Creation of recreation areas" and "Improvement/equipment of cultural institutions". 2 persons or 8% of respondents submitted projects from the category "Other" and only one among the respondents - "Improvement of beach infrastructure". Survey participants did not initiate a single project from the categories "Improvement/equipment of health care institutions", "Improvement/equipment of social protection institutions" and "Street lighting".

Diagram 3. What motivated you to submit projects to the "Public Budget" competition?



Ranking by priorities of the motivation of survey participants from the most important:

1. The desire to change the city
2. Inability to raise funds in other ways
3. The desire to try the capabilities of this tool in practice
4. Personal ambitions
5. Inaction of local authorities in resolving the issue.

It should be noted that not a single participant of the survey offered his motivation option, all chose from the proposed ones.

The next two survey questions related to the shortcomings and difficulties of the "Public Budget" competition and the ways to solve them according to the opinions of the authors of the initiatives. Among the difficulties, survey participants most often singled out such shortcomings as the search for subcontractors and quality equipment; long paperwork and therefore the projects were implemented in the winter; difficulties with the set of votes. Regarding ways of solving these shortcomings, the following options were proposed: to introduce a base of proven contracting organizations; establishment of cooperation between authors, representatives of the responsible department and project contractors; reduce the terms of project implementation, conduct a broader information campaign because many Mariupol residents do not know about the competition. Three of the interviewees did not experience any difficulties during all stages of the competition.

The second block of questions, regarding the activists' vision of the city's future, included 7 optional questions. The first question was whether the respondents left occupied Mariupol. And most of those who answered, namely 18 people or 85.7% answered that they had left, 2 people or 9.5% had already returned to live in the occupied city and one person had not left at all.

Only 15 respondents answered the following question. At the same time, 13 people or 86.7% indicated that they plan to return/stay in Ukrainian Mariupol, and 2 people or 13.3% do not intend to do so. 20 people or 95.2% gave a positive answer to the question about the need to resume the Public Budget competition in free Mariupol. Arguing this by the fact that the Public Budget is an absolutely real and effective tool for the improvement of the native city, within the limits of its competence; it is a tool that helps to activate public activity and improve the city; it is the realization of individual dreams but for the development of the city. At the same time, only 1 person considers it impractical, justifying his choice by the fact that mostly the authors of the projects waste their own time and do not have sufficient motivation, and after what they have experienced, it will be unrealistic at all.

10 people or 71.4% of those who answered the question would take part in the Public Budget competition as the author of the project again, and 4 people or 28.6% do not plan to do so anymore. At the same time, relevant categories of projects in their opinion will be - "Restoration of the housing stock", "Restoration of housing and communal services (water, gas, energy supply, etc.)", "Restoration of road and transport infrastructure", "Restoration/equipment of educational institutions" and "Restoration/equipment of health care facilities". At the same time, the respondents are ready to initiate projects from the following categories: "Restoration of housing and communal services (water, gas, energy supply, etc.)", "Restoration of the housing stock" and "Environmental protection".

Discussion and Conclusion. As the experience gained to date shows, the participatory budget allows many residents to be heard and contributes to the involvement of those citizens who previously did not participate in solving local problems in local self-government. When reviving the Public Budget in Mariupol, Ukraine, one must remember that the trust of the residents must always be the

value that must be taken care of so that the spent resources, time and efforts bring sustainable long-term results.

Planning the future of Mariupol after the deoccupation of the city and the end of the war is a necessity of the present time. Experts have already started working on the Mariupol Rebirth Strategy "Mariupol Reborn" because there is a lot of work ahead. The basis of the work will be the Mariupol Development Strategy — 2030, adopted shortly before the start of a full-scale war. The new plan will include the best international expertise, leading and modern technologies in operation, and most importantly - a comprehensive and civilized approach in the large-scale construction of the city. It also foresees key priority steps aimed at restoring the critical infrastructure of Mariupol. At the same time, it is important to look at the past in order to develop the future. Because what we bring from the past defines who we are. Do not neglect this when making plans.

Summarizing the results of the research, I would like to note that the five priority areas of public participation in the implementation of joint initiatives in the city of Mariupol for four years (from 2018 to 2021) were "Improvement/equipment of educational institutions", "Creation of sports and entertainment grounds", "Creation of recreation areas", "Improvement/equipment of health care facilities", "Improvement of the surrounding area".

At the same time, all three types of priorities (which were, which are relevant now, which the respondents are ready to initiate) differ from each other. And this is not surprising, because the projects proposed by residents in Mariupol from 2018-2021 were aimed at improving the city. The categories that the authors called relevant in the future in Mariupol, namely initiatives to restore normal conditions for life, which the city does not currently have. And the last group of priorities for the authors of past projects is related to their personal motivations.

In connection with the brutal acts of violence and the humanitarian catastrophe that resulted from the blockade of the city, it is necessary to understand that not all residents of Mariupol will survive this and return to live in the city even after the end of the war. Now there are approximately 100,000 Mariupol residents in Mariupol [10]. One part of the residents who decided to leave the occupied city now lives in Ukraine, and the other part lives abroad. The longer the war continues, the more likely it is that people will get used to a new place and return to their hometown will not be so desirable for them. Mariupol residents are already finding a new job, a new home, finding loved ones and new friends. Most likely, young families with children will settle down, and it is precisely for their sake that they will stay.

And this must be taken into account when planning the future of Mariupol, because it is the return of young people, experts and specialists who will not only want to restore it, but also plan their future life there, will give the city a revival. It is also necessary to take into account the factor of changes in the population structure of post-war Mariupol. Currently, almost half of Mariupol residents who remain in the city are pensioners. At the same time, the share of their participation in the Public Budget in 2021 amounted to only 4.9%. Which shows that this age group is not interested in using this tool.

Before the full-scale invasion of Russia, residents of each house in Mariupol tried to improve it and their yard, creating comfortable conditions for all residents of the house. To do this, the people of Mariupol took part in various programs, grant competitions and the Public Budget. For example, the yard of my high-rise building always attracted the attention of passers-by. Because one part of it resembled a park with avenues of roses, on the other - there was a modern children's playground, and at the end of the yard, we and our neighbors, including thanks to participation in the Public Budget

competition, built a universal sports ground. Where you could play football, basketball, volleyball and tennis. In 2021, thanks to the second victory in the competition of my project "Sport next door", we added a playground with a complex of street simulators to it. In the summer, more than 100 people sometimes spent time in our common yard at the same time. We celebrated public holidays, New Years, special dates and birthdays outside with our neighbors. During the blockade of the city, the courtyards of the houses turned into common field kitchens, humanitarian headquarters and psychological assistance centers. What helped many to survive this terrible period. Unfortunately, there were not isolated cases of the transformation of the courtyards of high-rise buildings into cemeteries, sometimes with mass graves.

The survey participants noted that, in their opinion, future relevant areas of joint public initiatives could be "Restoration of the housing stock", "Restoration of housing and communal services (water, gas, energy supply, etc.)", "Restoration of road and transport infrastructure". And I agree with them, to confirm these forecasts I will provide data from the Mariupol City Council. In Mariupol, 2,257 apartment buildings were damaged by Russian shelling. In total, more than 50% of high-rise buildings were destroyed, which is 1,356 buildings. More than 38,000 private houses have various damages, of which more than 11,000 have been destroyed by more than 40% or destroyed [11]. The data and results of the study indicate the need to pay priority attention to this problem. Because problems with the housing stock can prevent even those who want to return to the city. And only when there is improvement in these areas, other categories of projects will start to interest the Mariupol community.

At the same time, I believe that it is absolutely necessary to immediately renew the Public Budget competition in the liberated Mariupol. Because the projects implemented within the limits of this tool acquire special value not only for the author but also for those who voted for him, because they will give a feeling of participation in the revival of the city.

In my opinion, a long war can be a problem for the return to the city, but not for its revival. Returning to Mariupol is not a return to a past life. And whether the "old" residents of Mariupol will want to live in post-war Mariupol is an open question.

While the city is still under occupation and there are many unknown and unpredictable factors, I want to conduct additional research opportunities and developments in this topic. For example, the impact of participatory budgeting on various spheres of public life in Mariupol; the influence of civil society institutions on urban changes in the city of Mariupol; how to use the existing experience of Mariupol residents living abroad or in other cities of Ukraine to improve the environment of Mariupol.

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