

Conference in Florence



Quality of Life. Reflections, Studies and Researches in Italy

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NUMERO SESSIONE	6
TITOLO SESSIONE	Qualità della vita: processi di consultazione e deliberativi
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TITOLO	Instances of participatory governance for critical and social-sensitive decision-making

ABSTRACT

According to previous research conducted at European Commission level, governance has been defined as “a conceptual construct dealing with societal sensitive and complex issues that can be translated in a decision-oriented process, inclusive of all concerned private and public stakeholders. The process’ outcome is based on the participative deliberation, the informing of options, and the commitment to the implementation of the joint deliverances. The governance process represents the interface with stakeholders, the source and support of strategic decisions and the instrument through which the principle of accountability can be properly implemented... Governance is a concept that expresses the aspiration for ‘joint and integrated management’ of affairs that cannot be handled by single stakeholders because of their multi impact effect and because of the complexity of relations between them”

Such definition responds to the need of resolving the dichotomy of those systems, critical for well-being and economic development, which can be considered as public goods, yet are administrated by private and isolated management systems, in the context of the deregulated free market.

The implementation of such governance stances has taken advantage from Delphi methodologies proper of future studies and resulting in a recursive governance system in support to decision-making processes. Such process is the result of the cooperation of public and private concerned institutions, as well as of other concerned stakeholders’ groups. It ensures the transparency, participation to enlarged communities of social-sensitive policies, and the accountability of decision-makers towards them.

The studies carried out involved qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and showed the need of undertaking a number of tasks proper of stakeholders’ participation:

- 1) Survey planning and methodological improvement:
 - a) Refining of the methodology
 - b) Specification of the meaning of the questions
 - c) Changing of the formulation of the questions when it results unclear
 - d) Additon of questions
 - e) Addition of instruments for analysis, statistical or methodological
 - f) Addition of communication tools for policy-makers
- 2) Survey development
 - a) Further decomposition of single questions in more other questions, addressed to specific issues, reaching a higher levels of details
 - b) Building of a discussion on the matter.
 - c) Provision of additional analysis when it seems worth or it is required by policy-makers or stakeholders.
 - d) Consideration of other connected issues, such as lifestyles, urban development, cultural and social peculiarities of single countries or areas and so on.

A particular example has regarded the European interconnected electric power infrastructure. A proposal for self-regulation by a European Council for the Security of Electric Power (ECSEP) has

been made in occasion of a study for the International Risk Governance Council (IRGC). It would consist in a decision-oriented and voluntary association of the infrastructure national regulators and market and industrial participants with the mission of guaranteeing an effective response to the risks of security, adequacy, stability and reliability of the infrastructure as a whole, taking decisions on preventive and operative measures, monitoring the compliance and effectiveness of measures and interacting with current European and regional TSO associations like UCTE, NORDEL etc., and other sector organisations (Eurelectric, ETSO, CEER and ERGEG). The ECSEP would consist in a decision-oriented, voluntary association of European Critical Electricity Infrastructure (ECEI), on the basis of ERO experience in US.

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