

**PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WORLD ATLAS**

# **PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING OF MILTON KEYNES**

**ENGAGING CITIZENS IN DISCUSSING  
REVENUES: CHALLENGES,  
EXPERIENCES AND LESSON LEARNED**



**DATE**

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**AUTHORS**

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# PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

## MILTON KEYNES



### **I. Name of the country where the experience is/was located**

United Kingdom.

### **II. Name of the City**

Milton Keynes.

### **III. Name of the Region**

County of Buckinghamshire.

### **IV. Name of the organization that promoted the experience**

Town Hall of Milton Keynes.

### **V. Typology of the organization that promoted the experience**

Municipal Government.

### **VI. Name of the process**

Referendum on different options for an increase of local taxes.

### **VII. Dates or year(s) in which the citizens engagement happened**

Between September 1998 and February 1999.

### **VIII. Was the experience formally part of PB?**

No, because that place has not a PB.

## **IX. Short description of the methodology of the experience**

Between September 1998 and February 1999, the Mayor proposed a series of discussions about the risks to have to cut several services for the difficult situation of the local treasure. The solution imagined was to increase local taxes, but for the municipality governing majority, this could result in the risk of losing next elections.

But the participant to the meetings organized by the Town Hall suggested how to formulate a multiple option referendum, committing the council to imagine a special fund where to deposit the new resources coming to the eventually approved increase of tax collection, so that it could be controlled in a transparent way. At the end of the process, a municipal propositional referendum was held. The ballot was organised for the council by the Electoral Reform Society.

## **X. Short description of the results of the experience**

Voters were given three options to choose from: a 5% rise, a 9.8% rise and a 15% rise of local council tax. Over 46% backed the 9.8% rise while nearly 24% plumped for a 15% rise in their taxes.

## **XI. Some data on participants**

The city has 184,000 inhabitants, and around 149,200. Over 45% of the voters took part in the ballot - a figure 20% higher than that for the last council elections.

## **XII. Weblink or other sources**

a) [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/284733.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/284733.stm);

b) Pratchett L. (2000) *Renewing Local Democracy? The Modernisation Agenda in British Local Government*. London: Routledge

## **XIII. Name and address of the person who answered the questions**

Giovanni Allegretti (University of Coimbra, Portugal)

