

# How well do participatory governance arrangements serve political leadership?

Marte Winsvold<sup>1</sup>  | Signy Irene Vabo<sup>2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Institute for Social Research, Oslo, Norway

<sup>2</sup>Department of Political Science, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

## Correspondence

Marte Winsvold.

Email: [m.s.winsvold@socialresearch.no](mailto:m.s.winsvold@socialresearch.no)

## Funding information

Norwegian Research Council, Grant/Award Number: 254781

## Abstract

Participatory governance arrangements are assumed to strengthen elected representatives' capacity for political leadership. This study argues that the relationship between participatory arrangements and perceived political leadership depends on the design of the participatory arrangements. Drawing on a survey to local councilors in Norway, we found that sharing power with citizens through interactive governance arrangements was associated with lower perceived capacity for political leadership than giving power away through distributive arrangements. Case studies exploring how politicians experienced interactive and distributive participatory arrangements showed that politicians were especially ambivalent about interactive arrangements that were perceived to disrupt their traditional ways of doing political leadership. Notably, interactive arrangements were believed to decrease leadership capacity because politicians remained responsible for matters over which they no longer had full control, challenging their ability to stay accountable to the voters.

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Participatory governance arrangements inviting citizens to contribute to policy development are currently being introduced in the domain of representative government to encour-

-----  
This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2023 The Authors. Governance published by Wiley Periodicals LLC.

age participation, deliberation and attentiveness in those affected by policy decisions (e.g., Heinelt, 2018; Hendriks, 2016; Hertting and Kugelberg, 2018; Sørensen, 2022; Torfing et al., 2012; Warren, 2009). By providing elected representatives with the possibility to engage in problem-focused interactions with relevant and affected actors, participatory governance arrangements are assumed to strengthen elected representatives' capacity for political leadership, allowing them to design policies that better respond to citizens' needs and preferences (Hambleton & Howard, 2012; Sørensen, 2020). Although much has been written about participatory arrangements' importance for political leadership, the relationship between such arrangements and leadership largely remains an empirically uncharted territory. The aim of this article is to examine the relationship between participatory governance arrangements and political leadership to understand whether and how such arrangements contribute to the elected representatives' perceived leadership capacity.

In accordance with institutional theory, we contend that the design of participatory governance arrangements likely affects their contribution to political leadership (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Nørgaard, 1996; Scott, 2014). We discern between two broad categories of participatory governance arrangement designs identified in the literature: (1) *interactive* participatory governance arrangements in which politicians and citizens cooperate to develop policies together and (2) *distributive* participatory governance arrangements in which political competencies are delegated to groups of citizens. Investigating the relationship between politicians' experiences with these two types of participatory governance arrangements and their perceived ability to exercise political leadership, the article addresses three issues that remain largely unexplored in the otherwise ample literature on participatory governance. First, while numerous studies have looked at the relationship between participatory governance arrangements and citizens' perceived ability to influence policymaking (Fischer, 2012; Michels, 2011, 2019; Speer, 2012; Turnhout et al., 2010), the effect of participatory governance arrangements on *politicians'* perceived ability to exercise their policymaking duties is frequently theorized, but rarely studied empirically (Eckerd & Heidelberg, 2019; Hendriks & Lees-Marshment, 2019; Hertting & Kugelberg, 2018; Sørensen, 2020). As elected representatives are the core bearers of representative democracy and are endowed with the task of formulating, voting on, and implementing policies, knowledge of how such arrangements affect their capacity is of key importance for devising a system in which all the central actors of the democratic system work effectively together. Second, reported experiences from participatory governance arrangements are typically based on studies of single cases (e.g., Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016; Fung, 2015; Geissel & Joas, 2013; Geissel & Newton, 2012; Hertting & Kugelberg, 2018; Sønderskov, 2019). Analyzing unique data from a web-based survey with more than 2000 Norwegian local councilors from municipalities offering different types of participatory governance arrangements enabled us to draw conclusions on how different types of participatory governance arrangements serve politicians. Third, subsequent case studies of two municipalities that have introduced an interactive and a distributive participatory arrangement, respectively, enabled us to further gain an in-depth understanding of how and through what mechanisms these design features contribute to elected representatives' perceived capacity for political leadership. Through this mixed methods' approach, we addressed a gap in the literature on the patterns of resistance and endorsement that participatory governance arrangements face while being implemented.

In the following section, we first conceptualize political leadership and the two forms of participatory governance arrangements. We outline our arguments concerning how these two types of arrangements can be expected to affect councilors' perceptions of their own ability to exercise political leadership. We then present the research design, including the different data

sets and the measurement of the main variables. Finally, we present and discuss the results and conclude by presenting the main findings and suggesting implications for further research.

## 2 | POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

By the term *political leadership*, we refer to the activity of helping a group of people create and realize commonly shared goals (Nye, 2008, p. 18). In a democracy, it is vital that the elected representatives, who manage the community's shared resources, have the capacity to exercise political leadership, as the lack of leadership capacity would prevent the community from developing in a collectively defined direction. Following Tucker (1995), we claim that three tasks in particular are crucial in the exercise of political leadership: (1) identifying problems that needs to be solved through collective action (Greasley & Stoker, 2008; Kellerman, 2015; Leach & Wilson, 2002), (2) finding solutions to the problems that the community is facing (Leach & Wilson, 2002; Masciulli et al., 2009; Tucker, 1995) and (3) gathering the necessary support for the ensuing implementation of policies (Dyhrberg-Noerregaard & Kjær, 2014; Svava, 2003). Politicians who see themselves as capable of performing these three tasks have high perceived leadership capacity. Specific to political leadership is that it must be carried out in accordance with the wishes of those to be led. Democratic leaders shall serve the people and can therefore never be sovereign. They must continuously confront the problem of reconciling leadership with popular control, balancing on a tight rope between taking the strong action they believe necessary for the public good and acting as the people's obedient servants (Kane & Patapan, 2012, pp. 5–7).

By the term *participatory governance arrangements*, we refer to government-initiated arrangements for involving citizens in policymaking (Hertting & Kugelberg, 2018, p. 1). Such institutional arrangements come in various forms and may address different stages in the policymaking process, but in one way or another they all open up the representative system to include the opinions or voices of citizens in policymaking. Participatory governance arrangements have been categorized in different ways (see, e.g., Fung & Wright, 2003; Fung, 2006; Nabatchi & Leighninger, 2015; Torfing et al., 2019). The two participatory governance arrangements investigated in this paper may, for example, both be characterized as forms of “empowered participatory governance” (Fung & Wright, 2003) and “thick citizen participation” (Nabatchi & Leighninger, 2015). However, they differ in the degree of power given to the citizens and, consequently, the degree of power left to the politicians. Both types of arrangements investigated in our study are characterized by a high degree of citizen involvement; though, the power is delegated to citizens in two very different ways. The *interactive participatory arrangements* are a sort of partnership with shared authority, promoting and supporting interaction between citizens and elected representatives in the process of developing policies (Sørensen, 2020; Sørensen & Torfing, 2019). Crucially, interactive governance arrangements incite politicians to share their powers of defining the agenda and/or identifying solutions while retaining the prerogative to accept or reject proposed solutions and the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of the voted decisions. Politicians are hence held accountable for solutions developed in interactive arenas, both in elections and public debate. The *distributive participatory governance arrangements* offer citizens control over decisions. These are participatory arenas where decision-making power is delegated to citizens themselves, not answering to the municipal council or voters at elections (Bentzen & Winsvold, 2019; Sørensen, 2020). Distributive arrangements have gained increased popularity at the global level, notably through participatory budgeting, a program

through which citizens make decisions regarding the allocation and implementation of a part of the government's budget (Dias et al., 2019; Wampler et al., 2021). While in distributive arrangements, elected politicians are responsible for the act of delegation, they are not formally held accountable for the decisions made by these citizens.

We depart from the assumption that local government institutions, such as participatory governance arrangements, can affect councilors' sense of political leadership. Institutions are generally understood in terms of "the rules of the game", including not only legal arrangements, routines, procedures and organizational forms but also conventions and norms (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Nørgaard, 1996, p. 39; Scott, 2014, p. 57). The regularized patterns of behavior associated with institutions display continuity over time. This is simply because complying with the rules of the game pays off better than deviating from them, or because individuals socialized into particular institutional roles internalize the norms associated with these roles (Selznick, 1957). Therefore, elected councilors tend to comply with the surrounding institutional arrangements, and the arrangements' normative force affects councilors' perceptions of their own political leadership. In other words, we assume that local councilors' perceptions of their own capacity for political leadership vary with institutional design. It should be noted that councilors' motivation for being elected may reduce the overall importance of organizational designs. Many councilors join the council with the aim of making a difference (Balian & Gasparyan, 2017; Callander, 2008)—a motivation that likely makes them somewhat resistant to institutional pressure and to being socialized like members of an ordinary organization. However, most elected representatives in local councils, in Norway and elsewhere, are not full-time employees, and due to high turnover, many are relatively new in their positions and learn through experience to navigate the formal institutions already in place. Therefore, although councilors probably do not identify with the established organized order in the same way as, for example, full-time employed administrators, it seems likely that institutional arrangements frame their role as politicians and affect how they perceive their own capacity for political leadership.

Regarding how participatory governance arrangements impact politicians' perceived ability to exercise political leadership, the literature mostly predicts positive effects; however, it also points to some possible negative effects. In the following section, we will discuss how different mechanisms suggested in the literature may apply to the relationship between the two types of participatory governance arrangements (interactive and distributive) and politicians' perceived political leadership.

Arguments supporting a positive relationship can be subsumed into two broad categories: arguments of revitalization and arguments of effectiveness (Hertting & Kugelberg, 2018). First, *the arguments of revitalization* posit that participatory democracy can better safeguard democratic values, such as political equality, representativeness, responsiveness, inclusion and deliberation (Sørensen & Torfing, 2021; Warren, 2009). Although both interactive and distributive governance arrangements can be presumed to strengthen democratic values, we argue that the two types of arrangements likely target different values. By bringing the voices of citizens into representative assemblies, interactive governance arrangements contribute to inclusion, responsiveness and deliberation, whereas distributive governance arrangements that delegate decision-making power to the people themselves primarily support the value of inclusion. More importantly, distributive governance arrangements have a strong element of direct democracy, placing policies developed through distributive processes closer to the definitional ideal of democracy as the rule of the people. Both types of arrangements can be expected to strengthen democratic legitimacy and, by extension, politicians' capacity for political leadership. In *sharing* power with citizens, politicians fulfill their role as responsive representatives, attentive to the people they

represent; in *delegating* power to citizens, they enact the basic idea of democracy as government by the people.

Second, *the arguments of effectiveness* for participatory governance arrangements suggest that involving citizens in the process of policymaking gives decision makers access to valuable information and insights that citizens possess about opportunities, resources and the possible consequences of different decisions. These insights can be used to devise more precise and accurate policies (Ansell et al., 2017; Sørensen, 2020; Torfing & Ansell, 2016; Warren, 2009). For example, studies have shown that allocating public expenditures in a way that more closely matches citizens' preferences may improve living conditions (Goncalves, 2014, p. 94). Moreover, citizens may possess resources that can be mobilized in implementing solutions (Sørensen & Torfing, 2017). Overall, the argument of effectiveness predicts that citizens' participation increases the community's problem-solving capacity. We expect that this increased problem-solving capacity benefits politicians' sense of leadership through interactive, but not through distributive arrangements. While knowledge and resources accrued through interactive governance arrangements can assist politicians in their policy development, the knowledge and resources gathered in the distributive arrangement do not benefit politicians directly, as they are used to devise measures outside the political sphere.

Arguments suggesting a negative relationship between participatory governance arrangements and political leadership can also be subsumed into two categories: arguments of disempowerment and arguments of inefficiency. The *arguments of disempowerment* draw attention to how involving citizens into the process of policymaking may move political power out of representative assemblies and into the hands of citizens. Such a power transfer may leave elected politicians with less influence, not more (e.g., Edelenbos & Meerkerk, 2016; Hertting & Kugelberg, 2018; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Klijn & Skelcher, 2007; Røiseland & Vabo, 2016). There may be an essential difference between interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements in terms of disempowerment. While one can expect the elected representatives to feel somewhat disempowered by having to share their power with citizens, one can expect them to feel even more disempowered by giving this power away altogether. Although politicians are the ones who make decisions on delegating powers to citizen assemblies, once these decisions have been effectuated, the results of their delegation are out of their control. Moreover, introducing an element of direct democracy, distributive participatory governance arrangements challenge the idea of representative democracy itself. Therefore, we expect that distributive governance arrangements have a negative effect on politicians' perceived ability to set agenda and identify solutions, as the agenda and the solutions identified through such arrangements do not contribute anything to the politicians in their role as representatives but rather deprive them of the opportunity to exercise political leadership in the areas that are delegated to the citizens. Furthermore, since politicians are not involved in the policy development taking place through distributive arrangements, they cannot reap the extra support that would possibly result from successful policies developed together with citizens. Therefore, especially for distributive participatory governance arrangements, politicians are likely to perceive the weakening of all facets of their political leadership: problem definition, finding solutions and gaining support. However, the extent of perceived loss would probably depend on the salience of the delegated issues.

The *argument of inefficiency* focuses on the quality of policies resulting from citizen interactions. While interactions can result in more accurate and better-informed policy solutions, they can also make the process of policymaking inefficient and complex (Yang & Pandey, 2011). This argument better applies to interactive governance arrangements than to distributive governance arrangements. While the complexity of political processes is undeniably felt in interactive

settings, the processes are alleviated one time and for all, in distributive settings. Once the powers are delegated, politicians do not have to be frustrated about inefficient processes any longer. Thus, it is assumed that interactive governance arrangements prevent politicians from efficiently defining problems, finding solutions and even gaining support for the policies chosen. Regarding the introduction of distributive participatory governance arrangements, the argument of inefficiency is less likely to have a negative influence on how politicians perceive their leadership capacity. In contrast, such arrangements may offload some responsibility of politicians and thereby strengthen their perceived leadership capacity. However, as argues Rosenvallon (2008:306), distributive arrangements represent fragmented, disintegrated and untransparent spaces that prevents the development of a comprehensive understanding of problems and a vision of shared world necessary to sustain or structure collective projects. If too much political power is delegated to distributive arrangements, the representative democratic system may be wing-clipped to the point where it is no longer political.

To sum up, in line with the *argument of revitalization*, both types of arrangements should be positively associated with politicians' ability to mobilize support. In line with the *argument of effectiveness*, interactive governance arrangements should strengthen politicians' perceived ability to set agenda and identify solutions—while this may not be the case for distributive governance arrangements. In line with the *argument of disempowerment*, the association between a politician's perceived leadership capacity and participatory governance arrangement are likely to be more negative for the distributive than interactive arrangements, whereas in line with the *argument of inefficiency*, it would be the other way around: the association between a politician's perceived political leadership and participatory governance arrangement may be more negative for interactive than distributive governance arrangements.

However, as abundantly illustrated in the comparative literature on participatory budgeting, the same design is likely to produce different outcomes in different contexts, not least because of the varying intentions behind the implementation of such arrangements (Wampler et al., 2021). Participatory arrangements may be implemented as radical democratic practices that offers the possibility of social transformation, as means for civic education and community empowerment, or as a way for governments to provide small changes, preventing citizens from making more radical demands for systemic change (Wampler et al., 2021, pp. 16–17; Touchton et al., 2023, p. 529). Participatory practices may also morph into technical tools devoid of politics (Rosenvallon, 2008; Touchton et al., 2023).

To disentangle the relationship between interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements and a politician's perceived political leadership, we first examined the statistical relation between the two types of participatory governance arrangements and perceived political leadership among local councilors. Through case studies in two municipalities, where one had introduced interactive participatory governance arrangement and the other had introduced distributive participatory governance arrangement, we then explored the mechanisms and processes through which participatory governance arrangements affect politicians' perceptions of their political leadership.

### 3 | CONTEXT OF STUDY

In the European context, Norwegian local governments have a broad responsibility for welfare services in a highly decentralized social–democratic welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Local governments are relatively autonomous, and the decisions by local councils carry

substantial weight (Ladner et al., 2016). Hence, Norwegian local governments represent vital political systems where the effect of participatory governance arrangements on political leadership matters; therefore, they are suitable as cases for investigating the relationship between such arrangements and political leadership. There is a long-standing tradition of citizen involvement in Norwegian local governments, and several consultative arrangements are instructed by law. Interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements are voluntary; however, they are highly encouraged by national authorities (Torfing et al., 2020) and normatively expected by the public (Schwab et al., 2017). Although the normative expectations for citizen involvement can mean that Norwegian councilors are encouraged to be positive about citizen participation, the relative difference between the impact of sharing and giving away power, is likely to be independent of normative expectations.

## 4 | METHODS AND DATA

Norwegian councilors' perceptions of political leadership were gauged by conducting a nationwide online survey. The survey was distributed and conducted through emails in autumn 2018 with the entire population of local councilors with valid email addresses (9196 out of 10,621 councilors). After three reminders, 3387 of the councilors replied, giving a response rate of 40%. Mayors and male representatives were slightly overrepresented in the sample. No other systematic biases were detected. In the analysis, the relationship between participatory governance arrangements and perceived leadership was controlled for position and gender.

Data on participatory governance arrangements were collected by conducting an online survey of political secretaries of all 424 Norwegian municipalities in autumn 2018. Replies were obtained of 74% of municipalities. Only those councilors were included in the analysis of this study who had come from the municipalities that had responded to the survey mapping participatory governance arrangements; this reduced the number of respondents to 2292.

In the analysis, "perceived political leadership" was constructed as an additive index consisting of survey items measuring the three elements of political leadership: setting agenda, pointing out solutions and mobilizing support. The respondents were asked to check on a 5-point Likert scale how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: "As a councilor I... (1) contribute to the political agenda in this municipality, (2) contribute to finding solutions to the problems of the municipality and (3) find it easy to mobilize support in the local community/ among citizens". A high value indicated a strong perception of political leadership among councilors. The index measured the subjective perception of the councilors' ability to exercise political leadership, perceived political leadership capacity. We distinguish between actual and perceived capacity for political leadership. Councilors with formal positions and who belong to the political majority have somewhat greater power to influence decision-making and therefore greater actual leadership capacity. While in principle, there does not need to be any connection between the two, perceived leadership capacity is likely to be affected by formal powers. The distribution of the items and the index are displayed in Table 1. As we see, Norwegian councilors perceived their capacity for political leadership to be high, although with some variation.

Interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements were coded as established or not established. Four interactive and three distributive participatory governance arrangements were chosen based on a pilot study conducted in 2017, identifying them as common participatory governance arrangements (Bentzen, 2020). In line with the theoretical definition of interactive governance arrangements, such arrangements were operationalized as those in which elected

**TABLE 1** Summary statistics of variables measuring “perceived political leadership capacity”, single items and index. Mean values are given on a scale from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).

Variable	Statement	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. dev.
Setting agenda	As a councilor, I contribute to the political agenda in this municipality.	1	5	3.91	1.00
Finding solutions	As a councilor, I contribute to finding solutions to the problems of the municipality.	1	5	4.13	0.92
Mobilize support	As a councilor, I find it easy to mobilize support in the local community/among citizens.	1	5	3.65	0.79
Political leadership index		1	5	3.90	0.72
	<i>N</i>			2292	

representatives and citizens discuss or develop policies together. The included measures cover interaction taking place in different phases of the policy cycle—agenda setting, policy development and decision making. The degree of interaction may vary between arenas, but they all imply some sort of digital or non-digital discussion between elected representatives and politicians. In two of the arrangements, “Political committees inviting guests do discuss political issues” and “Committees for policy development including citizens as full members”, interaction between politicians and citizens is systematic and face to face. In two other arrangements, “Arenas for discussion of priorities” and “Digital solution for discussion of policy proposals”, interaction between citizens and politicians is implied and intended but not guaranteed. Earlier research indicates that especially for the digital solutions, participation from both politicians and citizens may be highly variable (Winsvold, 2013). Distributive governance arrangements were operationalized as those in which decision-making power is delegated to citizens and the latter discuss or develop policies on their own. Although decision-making power is left to the citizens, two of the distributive arrangements, “Participatory budgeting” and “Local citizen councils”, will always be organized by the municipality. A third measure, “Financial support for citizen councils or sub-municipal councils”, can be given also to arrangements initiated and organized by the citizens. The two kinds of participatory governance arrangements were included in the analysis as additive indexes. The occurrence of the different types of arrangements is described in Table 2 that shows that interactive governance arrangements are more widespread than distributive governance arrangements.

In the empirical model, variables were included as controls that had previously been found to affect perceived political leadership. Municipal size, measured as the number of inhabitants, was found to be positively associated with perceived political leadership (Torfing & Winsvold, 2020). Councilors’ formal and political position was expected to be associated with a strong sense of political leadership because it defines access to the important arenas where policies are formulated. *Formal* position was measured as being a member [1] or not being a member [0] of the executive board. In Norwegian municipalities, the executive board is a committee that includes the most experienced politicians from both the government and the opposition and is led by the mayor. The executive board prepares cases for the council and normally has significant delegated decision-making powers. Therefore, members of the executive board are likely to have a stronger sense of political leadership than ordinary council members. *Political* position was operationalized as affiliation with the mayor’s or vice mayor’s party [1]. Belonging to the political opposition [0] was operationalized as affiliation with any other parties. Because councilors belonging to



TABLE 2 Share of municipalities with interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements.

Kind of arrangement	Participatory measure	Percent
Interactive governance arrangements	Arenas where citizens are involved in discussions about how to prioritize different policies and services	50
	Political committees regularly invite guests to discuss political issues	45
	Digital solutions for citizens to discuss policy proposals	43
	Committees for policy development that include citizens or local organizations (non-politicians) as full members	37
Distributive governance arrangements	Financial support of citizen councils' or sub-municipal committees	26
	Local citizen councils	17
	Citizen budgeting	3
	<i>N</i>	314

TABLE 3 Summary statistics, control variables. *N* = 2292.

Variables	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. dev.
Municipal size	208	673,469	21,003	53,060
Mayor	0	1	0.07	0.25
Executive board	0	1	0.34	0.47
Number of periods in council	1	7	2.66	1.69
Majority coalition	0	1	0.33	0.47
Gender (women = 1)	0	1	0.36	0.48

the majority coalition are more likely to get their political priorities through, they are assumed to experience a higher sense of political leadership (Klausen et al., 2022). Length of tenure was expected to affect perceived leadership capacity because experience likely provides insight into how to maneuver in the political-administrative system to get things done. Finally, gender has been shown to be related to perceived political leadership (Torfing & Winsvold, 2020); therefore, it was included as a control. The distribution of the control variables is displayed in Table 3.

The causal relationships between the two types of participatory governance arrangements and perceived political leadership are argued for theoretically. As we included data for only one point in time, we observed caution while interpreting support for the suggested causality. Therefore, to explore the mechanisms through which different participatory governance arrangements affect perceived political leadership, we conducted case studies in two municipalities one of which had implemented an interactive governance arrangement and the other of which had implemented a distributive governance arrangement. The municipality of Svelvik (7000 inhabitants) had established an *interactive* participatory arrangement called “task committees”, involving groups of citizens and politicians who worked together to develop policies on given topics defined by the municipal councils. The committees submitted their policy proposals to the councils, who then voted on the suggested policy (Vabo & Winsvold, 2022). The committee meetings were organized with the explicit purpose to ensure interactivity and to make sure all members were actively involved in the discussions. Observational data gathered by a research team evaluating the arrangement, concluded that the task committees did succeed in making

politicians and citizens interact (Sørensen et al., 2017). The municipality of Steinkjer (21,000 inhabitants) had established a *distributive* participatory governance arrangement where local communities could apply to the council for delegation of decision-making and budgetary power in areas defined locally. For example, citizens could apply for delegation of decision-making power concerning the upgrade of a recreational area, the restructuring of the road system in a limited area or the development of cultural activities. If the council voted to delegate such powers, local citizens were given access to the administrative apparatus of the municipality to aid them in planning and implementation. In neither of the arrangements, the issues dealt with were high politics. Citizens were invited to contribute to uncontroversial and uncontested issues about which the politicians did not feel strongly. Contentious issues or issues that required tough choices or priorities were retained within the council, and citizens were not involved.

In Svelvik, 12 (out of 25) councilors were interviewed, and 9 of them were interviewed twice. In Steinkjer, 7 councilors (out of 47) were interviewed, and 3 of them were interviewed twice. In both municipalities, the interview sample included the mayor, politicians from the majority and minority constellations—from all political parties and with different formal positions in the councils. In Svelvik, also politicians involved in the task committees were interviewed. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and manually coded for the three aspects of political leadership: (1) agenda setting, (2) identification of solutions and (3) mobilization of support. Interpretations of transcripts and coding were discussed and agreed upon by the two authors. When quoted, interviews are referred to by a number, corresponding to the order in which they were conducted. Interviews 1–23 are from the interactive municipality, Svelvik. Interviews 24–35 are from the distributive municipality Steinkjer.

## 5 | RESULTS

### 5.1 | Statistical analysis

To assess the relationship between different participatory governance arrangements and perceived political leadership, we conducted ordered probit regression analyses separately for the political leadership index and each of the items in political leadership. The results are displayed in Table 4.

The analyses shows that *interactive participatory governance arrangements* are negatively associated with the political leadership index and the perceived ability to set agendas. In other words, politicians in municipalities with interactive participatory arrangements are less likely to perceive their ability to exercise political leadership as strong and, in particular, they perceive themselves as less able to set a political agenda. Interactive participatory arrangements are negatively associated with all three elements of political leadership; however, only the relation between interactive arrangements and the ability to set agenda is statistically significant. *Distributive participatory governance arrangements* were found to be significantly associated with neither the perceived political leadership index nor with any of the items.

As expected, position and experience were found to be positively associated with perceived political leadership, as was municipal size. Gender was found to be significantly associated with perceived political leadership, especially with the ability to mobilize citizen support; female councilors found it harder than male councilors to mobilize support.

While these analyses of cross-sectional data results provide a starting point for understanding the impact of different participatory governance arrangements, in-depth case studies can help to

**TABLE 4** Ordered probit regression analysis of the relation between perceived political leadership and participatory governance arrangements.  $N = 2212$ .

Variables	Political leadership index	Agenda	Solutions	Support
Interactive participatory arrangement	-0.046*	-0.042*	-0.031	-0.037
Distributive participatory governance arrangements	0.0254	-0.002	0.021	0.027
Formal position (mayor, vice mayor or executive board)	0.381**	0.438**	0.407**	0.118*
Majority coalition	0.348**	0.377**	0.367**	0.094
Election periods	0.053**	0.045**	0.053**	0.030*
Gender (woman = 1)	-0.094*	-0.059	-0.001	-0.133**
Number of inhabitants (ln)	0.001*	0.001**	0.000	0.000
Pseudo $R^2$	0.0191	0.0308	0.0294	0.006

\*, significant at a 0.01 level; \*\*, significant at a 0.05 level.

further uncover the mechanisms through which perceived political leadership is related to the two types of participatory arrangements.

## 5.2 | Case studies

The survey indicated that neither interactive nor distributive governance arrangements were associated with an increased sense of leadership capacity; interactive governance arrangements were actually associated with decreased perceived leadership capacity among councilors. Through case studies in two municipalities that had introduced interactive and distributive arrangements, we explored the mechanisms through which the two participatory governance arrangements affected the perceived ability to exercise the three functions of political leadership: (1) setting an agenda, (2) identifying solutions and (3) mobilizing support. Based on the results of the survey, we expected to find that interactive governance arrangements would weaken politicians' perceived leadership capacity because interactive processes were considered inefficient in setting the agenda and finding solutions. However, the analysis of the two cases revealed a more complex picture in which different processes simultaneously strengthened and weakened politicians' abilities to exercise leadership. Contrary to our expectations, inefficiency was not alluded to, but arguments of disempowerment, efficiency and revitalization were. In the following sections, the mechanisms through which interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements affect the ability to set agendas, identify solutions and mobilize support are analyzed.

### 5.2.1 | Setting an agenda

Regarding the perceived ability to set agenda, the case studies revealed the same patterns as the statistical analysis: Politicians in the interactive municipality felt that the interactive participatory governance arrangements somewhat detracted from their ability to set agenda, whereas politicians in the distributive municipality believed that the distributive arrangement left their agenda-setting abilities untouched. In the interactive municipality, the feeling of disempowerment seemed to result from having to share agenda-setting power with citizens. Politicians believed

that there was room only for a certain number of issues on the political agenda and that the issues brought up in the interactive arrangements took up “much of the time” and got “much administrative attention and resources” (Interview 7)—at the expense of the politicians’ own agendas. Interestingly, norms of citizen involvement seemed to exacerbate the unease of politicians and make them somewhat defenseless against proposals coming from the citizens. As elected representatives, the politicians felt obliged to be responsive to citizen inputs. At the same time, the logic of representative democracy impelled them not to deviate from the promises made in the party program on which they had been elected. From the politicians’ perspective, the obligation to “work for what we have promised the voters at election” and the fear of “developing policies not in line with our party program” (Interview 15) were repeatedly alluded to. Thus, the interactive governance arrangements presented the politicians with the recurring dilemma of having to choose between the incompatible imperatives of being responsive and accountable.

The distributive participatory governance arrangements were not perceived as interfering with politicians’ ability to set agendas, simply because politicians were not involved in these arrangements. They inferred from their own absence that the issues dealt with were “not political but rather administrative issues”, “issues (the citizens) discuss when they meet at the grocery store such as, we need a new walking path, these signs should be fixed, and so on” (Interview 29). Moreover, not being involved in the local citizen committees seemed to create an out-of-sight-out-of-mind effect, and the arrangements were thought as being outside the political sphere. However, the apolitical status of the committees was challenged when they came up with suggestions that required a vote in the council, which was perceived as nuisance and not as part of the deal: “When the committees raise large issues that require a political process, it just gets messy” (Interview 32).

### 5.2.2 | Finding solutions

The politicians’ attitudes toward the impact of interactive arrangement on their ability to find good solutions to perceived problems were mixed. The same tension that manifested itself regarding the perceived opportunity to set agenda occurred, and it was even more explicitly addressed. Sometimes, politicians felt compelled to support solutions developed in interactions with citizens, even though these solutions deviated from those they had promised to their voters. For example, politicians expressed that “it would take some courage to go against the committees’ proposals” (Interview 2) and that if solutions developed in the interactive committees were at odds with the party program, you would “find yourself in a real dilemma” (Interview 10). On occasion, politicians felt that they were prevented from acting as accountable representatives. Some also believed that there had “been a shift in power in favor of the citizens” because “the sharing of power is, in a way, losing power” (Interview 4). At the same time, politicians believed that knowledge provided by citizens could indeed strengthen their ability to identify solutions—both because citizens possessed “knowledge that could contribute to better solutions”, and because they would more readily accept solutions in the development of which they had been involved, which would prevent them from “raising against the solutions” (Interview 9).

In rare cases when solutions proposed by citizens required a vote in the council, the sense of being unable to say no also made politicians in the distributive municipality feel disempowered. Sometimes they felt compelled to accept solutions they “would otherwise not have accepted” because “voting against a proposal that comes from the citizens, that’s next to impossible” (Interview 24). Otherwise, the politicians were mostly unconcerned about what took place on

the citizen committees, as they were perceived as being outside of their domain. Although these councils did not contribute to politicians' ability to perform political leadership, they were still believed to increase local communities' ability to lead themselves. Moreover, "giving citizens responsibility" was believed to "unleash a lot of new resources", as citizens "get things done on their own, for free" (Interview 29).

### 5.2.3 | Mobilize support

While both participatory governance arrangements were thought to mobilize support for the agendas and solutions developed within the arrangements, neither was believed to mobilize support for political agendas or solutions developed outside the arrangements. Hence, the mobilization range of the participatory governance arrangements was believed to be limited and not strengthen the politicians' ability to mobilize support for their own political agendas or solutions. The politicians were still enthusiastic about the governance arrangements' ability to mobilize support for local democracy and the local representative democratic system. It was widely assumed that local democracy lacked legitimacy. Both participatory governance arrangements were believed to show the citizens that "they have an impact" (Interview 3, 25), thereby preventing democratic legitimacy from "further deteriorate" and "distrust" from further developing (Interview 15, 31).

The expectations of the politicians in the interactive municipality were somewhat more mixed than the expectations of the politicians in the distributive municipality. While the politicians in the interactive municipality did believe that the interactive arrangement was "democracy in practice" and they were "doing the right democratic thing" (Interview 2), they also feared that the interactive arrangements could "disappoint the citizens" (Interview 2) and thereby decrease support for the local democratic system. In particular, they feared that the citizens would "get their hopes up" (Interview 10)—and when the politicians could not respond to all their ideas, the disappointment would result in "disillusionment and political contempt" (Interview 4).

## 6 | DISCUSSION

With the outset in the literature on participatory governance, we started out with the alternative expectations that interactive and distributive participatory governance arrangements could either contribute positively to political leadership through a sense of revitalization or enhanced effectiveness, or negatively through a sense of disempowerment or inefficiency. The results from the survey among Norwegian local councilors suggested a negative relationship between interactive participatory governance arrangements and the politicians' perceived ability to exercise political leadership but they showed no association between distributive governance arrangements and perceived political leadership. Case studies in two municipalities, one of which had introduced an interactive participatory arrangement and the other, distributive participatory arrangement, contributed to a nuanced understanding of the statistical associations and shed light on the mechanisms through which these arrangements impacted politicians' perceived political leadership. The weak or absent statistical associations did not indicate that politicians were indifferent to the participatory governance arrangements but rather that the politicians were ambivalent about the arrangements and that negative and positive effects seemed to cancel each other out. The effect on perceived leadership capacity depended on how the politicians

experienced these new practices and whether they perceived them to disrupt the way they traditionally exercised political leadership.

For reasons partly predicted by the literature, the interactive and the distributive participatory governance arrangements were perceived to contribute differently to the three elements of political leadership—setting agenda, pointing out solutions, and mobilizing support. In line with the disempowerment argument, politicians in the interactive municipality felt that having to share power with the citizens in setting an agenda prevented them from pursuing their own agendas. Partly because citizen interaction was seen as something indisputably good and presumed to revitalize democracy, they struggled to maneuver the dilemma of simultaneously staying true to the agenda on which they had been elected and endorsing the agenda resulting from citizen interaction. Therefore, normative expectation of revitalization seemed to exacerbate the sense of disempowerment, compromising the politicians' ability to stay accountable to the voters. This dilemma was also felt by politicians in the distributive municipality, but less so, simply because, for the most part, the citizen agendas developed in the distributive governance arrangements were perceived not to be in competition with the politicians' own agenda but as being outside the sphere of politics and of representative democracy.

In line with the efficiency argument, the solutions developed in both types of participatory governance arrangements were believed to contribute to better political solutions. However, attenuating effects were present for both types of arrangements. In the distributive municipality, the politicians did not reap the benefits in terms of increased sense of leadership capacity since the solutions were aimed at issues perceived as apolitical and outside the politicians' sphere of responsibility. In the interactive municipalities, in line with the disempowerment argument, solutions developed in the participatory governance arrangements were perceived to prevent politicians from advocating solutions forwarded in the party program and hence decrease their ability to stay accountable to their voters.

Regarding the arrangements' contributions to mobilizing support, politicians in both arrangements believed that they could possibly lead to support and higher legitimacy for local democracy, as predicted by the revitalization argument. However, politicians in the interactive municipalities were anxious that the arrangements would decrease support should citizens' expectations go unmet. The inherent tension in being required to lead and follow at the same time, seemed to be activated mainly in the interactive arrangements. This tension was solved by choosing either the follower role, taking orders from the citizens qua principals, or the leader role, ignoring citizen input. Either way the politicians felt that they betrayed an important part of the role as political representative, which disturbed their self-perception and raised question about how they should act in relation to the voters.

While firm conclusions about the impact of interactive and distributive governance arrangements on political leadership cannot be drawn based on these empirical studies, the patterns that emerged suggest that the two arrangements were unequally related to political leadership. Both arrangements were perceived to not only contribute to political leadership but also restrain it. The restraining effect was more keenly felt in the interactive than in the distributive municipality, which may explain the net negative association between interactive governance arrangements and perceived political leadership seen in the statistical analysis. Overall, sharing power seemed to be more disempowering than giving power away altogether. At least two concurrent mechanisms may account for this tendency. First, being obliged to share power with citizens prevented politicians in the interactive municipality from acting in line with the norms of representative democracy. Sharing power made it harder to promote the views of their political parties and to focus on what they had promised their voters in elections. However, while having to share

their power to set agendas and point out solutions, the politicians still retained full responsibility for the agendas and the solutions that they had developed through interaction with the citizens. Hence, the politicians were put in a position where they could not advocate for their party politics and stay accountable to their voters as prescribed by the representative democratic system but had to back and be responsible for agendas and solutions that they had not themselves advocated and that they did not necessarily agree with. In contrast, in the distributive setting, while politicians lost power to the citizens, they were also relieved of the responsibility for the agendas or solutions chosen by the citizens. Therefore, although their net power was somewhat diminished, their role as representatives was left more or less untouched, and they could still act as representatives for their parties remaining accountable to their voters.

Second, in the interactive setting, the loss of power was more visible to politicians, because they were continuously and actively engaged in the process of sharing it. The repeated interactions with citizens constantly reminded the politicians that they had to share power with the citizens, and the potential feeling of disempowerment was reiterated at every interactive encounter. However, in a distributive setting, politicians were confronted with their loss of power only during the one-off act of delegation. After that, a sort of “out-of-sight-out-of-mind” logic seemed to occur. The politicians did not give much thought to the distributed power, and it was easy for them to define what took place in distributive governance arrangements outside of the political sphere.

Both mechanisms—the discrepancy between power and responsibility and the constant reminding of the loss of power—seemed to contribute to a sense of disempowerment and weakened ability to exercise political leadership in the interactive but not in the distributive settings. Accordingly, the interactive arrangement was perceived as more intrusive and threatening to the role of elected representative than the distributive one, which was perceived as decoupled from the role of representative.

The theoretical assumption that institutional arrangements frame politicians’ role perceptions, seemed to come into play in our study. The lack of normative fit between the participatory arrangement and institutionalized roles appeared to prevent politicians from reaping the benefits especially of interactive arrangements, which seemed to activate and pit the norms of accountability and responsiveness against each other. When promises made to voters in elections diverged from citizen input between elections, politicians felt expected to comply with irreconcilable demands, decreasing their perceived capacity for political leadership. If we assume that experience with these new designs coupled with their inherent normative power eventually will alter norms, the observed decrease in perceived leadership capacity may diminish as politicians get used to the idea of sharing power with citizens. The observed negative impact of interactive arrangements may be due to the current self-perception of politicians and thus be temporary. However, a new role perception requires that the link between voters and representatives be renegotiated to include responsiveness to citizens between elections. A possible solution to the challenge of reconciling accountability and responsiveness might be to give deliberation and justification a more prominent role in securing accountability. This would require politicians to make less concrete promises in exchange for the promise that all political choices be deliberated and justified. However, as accountability is a key norm in electoral, representative democracy, institutional designs that relax the link between the mandate given by the voters at elections and how the politicians act, may risk encountering perpetual opposition.

## 7 | CONCLUSION

Local governments introduce participatory governance arrangements because they expect them to have positive consequences for democracy, and their expectations are largely supported by

the normative theoretical literature that points to the benefits of including citizens in policy-making. Our study suggests that such inclusion may not always be in the service of democracy in the way that is usually expected. We have investigated how politicians experience the introduction of interactive and distributive governance arrangements, and how they believe that these two different types of participatory design affect their capacity to exercise political leadership. Contrary to general expectations, the interactive governance arrangements that were thought to bolster the representative system were perceived as more threatening than the distributive governance arrangements that actually reduced representative power by introducing an element of direct democracy. The recurring dilemma that politicians faced when they had to negotiate between advocating the party program that gained them a seat in the representative assembly in the first place and the expectations to include citizens in policymaking appeared to detract from their perceived ability to exercise political leadership. Thus, sharing power paradoxically seemed to be perceived as more disempowering than giving away power, even though the issues dealt with in the interactive governance arrangements were looked upon as uncontroversial and even apolitical. Our findings indicate that interactive participatory governance arrangements may have touched upon important aspects of politicians' perception of their role as elected political leaders. While, as representatives, they are accustomed to "acting for" the citizens, the transition to "acting with" the citizens appeared to be perceived as more challenging than giving away a small part of their power. Our study contributes to the knowledge and discussion about how different types of citizen involvement may challenge the idea of what it means to be an elected representative and to better understand the patterns of resistance and endorsement faced during the implementation of participatory governance arrangements. Moreover, our findings testify to the need to examine and not only assume how participatory governance arrangements affect the different actors in the democratic representative system. Demonstrating how institutional fit between role perceptions and participatory design impact on perceived political leadership, our study contributes to the ongoing debate about how participatory arrangements and their outcomes are altered when diffused to different settings (Touchton et al., 2023; Wampler et al., 2021). Future research would likely contribute by studying how different contextual features interact with role perception and perceived political leadership.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The article was written as part of a research project on political leadership in local councils funded by the Norwegian Research Council (Grant #254781).

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Survey data can be obtained from [www.sikt.no](http://www.sikt.no).

## ORCID

Marte Winsvold  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6096-0594>

Signy Irene Vabo  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6438-175X>



## REFERENCES

- Ansell, C., Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2017). Improving policy implementation through collaborative policymaking. *Policy & Politics*, 45(3), 467–486. <https://doi.org/10.1332/030557317x14972799760260>
- Balian, A., & Gasparyan, A. (2017). What drives politicians to run for office: Money, fame or public service? *NICPAce Journal of Public Administration and Policy*, 10(1), 9–29. <https://doi.org/10.1515/nispa-2017-0001>
- Bentzen, T., Lo, C., & Winsvold, M. (2020). Strengthening local political leadership through institutional design: How and why. *Local Government Studies*, 46(3), 483–504. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2019.1690994>
- Callander, S. (2008). Political motivations. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 75(3), 671–697. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-937x.2008.00488.x>
- Dias, N., Enriquez, S., & Júlio, S. (2019). *The participatory budgeting world atlas*. Epopeia.
- Dyhrberg-Noerregaard, N., & Kjær, U. (2014). Non-zero-sum leadership games: Is facilitative leadership a win-win? *International Journal of Public Administration*, 37(4), 249–258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2013.830624>
- Eckerd, A., & Heidelberg, R. (2019). Administering public participation. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 50(2), 133–147. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074019871368>
- Edelenbos, J., & van Meerkerk, I. (2016). *Critical reflections on interactive governance. Self-Organization and participation in public governance*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Polity Press.
- Fischer, F. (2012). Participatory governance: From theory to practice. In D. Levi-Faur (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of governance*. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ea3/b558ee629df8e-853320644b515573ee71c99.pdf>
- Fung, A. (2006). Varieties of participation in complex governance. *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00667.x>
- Fung, A. (2015). Putting the public back into governance: The challenges of citizen participation and its future. *Public Administration Review*, 75(4), 513–522. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12361>
- Fung, A., & Wright, E. O. (2003). Countervailing power in empowered participatory governance. In A. Fung & E. O. Wright (Eds.), *Deepening democracy* (pp. 259–289). Verso.
- Geissel, B. & Joas, M. (Eds.) (2013)., *Participatory democratic innovations in Europe. Improving the quality of democracy*. Barbara Budrich Publishers.
- Geissel, B. & Newton, K. (Eds.) (2012)., *Evaluating democratic innovations. Curing the democratic Malaise?* Routledge.
- Gonçalves, S. (2014). The effects of participatory budgeting on municipal expenditures and infant mortality in Brazil. *World Development*, 53, 94–110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.01.009>
- Greasley, S., & Stoker, G. (2008). Mayors and urban governance: Developing a facilitative leadership style. *Public Administration Review*, 78(4), 722–730. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2008.00910.x>
- Hall, P., & Taylor, R. (1996). Political science and the three new institutionalisms. *Political Studies*, 44(5), 936–957. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1996.tb00343.x>
- Hambleton, R., & Howard, J. (2012). Place-based leadership and public service innovation. *Local Government Studies*, 39(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2012.693076>
- Heinelt, H. (Ed.) (2018). Introduction, *Handbook on participatory governance* (Vols. 1–16). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Hendriks, C. M. (2016). Coupling citizens and elites in deliberative systems. *European Journal of Political Research*, 55(1), 43–60. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12123>
- Hendriks, C. M., & Lees-Marshment, J. (2019). Political leaders and public engagement: The hidden world of informal elite–citizen interaction. *Political Studies*, 67(3), 597–617. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321718791370>
- Hertting, N. & Kugelberg, C. (Eds.) (2018)., *Local participatory governance and representative democracy. Institutional dilemmas in European cities*. Routledge.
- Kane, J., & Patapan, H. (2012). *The democratic leader: How democracy defines, empowers and limits its leaders*. Oxford Academic.
- Kellerman, B. (2015). *Hard times, leadership in America*. Stanford Business Books.
- Klausen, J. E., Vabo, S., & Winsvold, M. (2022). Competing perspectives on participatory arrangements. Explaining the attitudes of elected representatives. *International Political Science Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01925121221092600>

- Klijin, E. H., & Koppenjan, J. (2000). Politicians and interactive decision making: Institutional spoilsports or policymakers. *Public Administration*, 78(2), 365–387. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9299.00210>
- Klijin, E. H., & Skelcher, C. (2007). Democracy and governance networks: Compatible or not? *Public Administration*, 85(3), 587–609. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.2007.00662.x>
- Ladner, A., Keuffer, N., & Baldersheim, H. (2016). Measuring local autonomy in 39 countries (1990–2014). *Regional & Federal Studies*, 26(3), 321–357. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13597566.2016.1214911>
- Leach, S., & Wilson, D. (2002). Rethinking local political leadership. *Public Administration*, 80(4), 665–689. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9299.00323>
- Masciulli, J., Molchanov, M., & Knight, W. A. (2009). Political leadership in context. In J. Masciulli, M. Molchanov, & W. A. Knight (Eds.), *The Ashgate research companion to political leadership*, 3–27. Ashgate.
- Michels, A. (2011). Innovations in democratic governance: How does citizen participation contribute to a better democracy? *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 77(2), 275–293. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852311399851>
- Nabatchi, T., & Leighninger, T. (2015). *Public participation for 21st century democracy*. Jossey-Bass.
- Nørgaard, A. S. (1996). Rediscovering reasonable rationality in institutional analysis. *European Journal of Political Science*, 29(1), 31–57. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1996.tb00640.x>
- Nye, J. (2008). *The powers to lead*. Oxford University Press.
- Røiseland, A., & Vabo, S. I. (2016). Interactive – or counteractive – governance. In J. Edelenbos & I. van Meerkert (Eds.), *Critical reflections on interactive governance*. London: Edward Elgar.
- Rosenvallon, P. (2008). *Counter-democracy. Politics in an age of distrust*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schwab, C., Bouckaert, G., & Kuhlmann, S. (2017). *The future of local government in europe. Lessons from research and practice in 31 countries*. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH.
- Scott, W. R. (2014). *Institutions and organizations. Ideas, interests, and institutions*. SAGE Publishing.
- Selznick, P. (1957). *Leadership in administration: A sociological interpretation*. Harper & Row.
- Sønderskov, M. (2019). Do local politicians really want collaborative governance? *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 32(3), 320–330. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijpsm-10-2017-0271>
- Sørensen, E. (2020). *Interactive political leadership. The role of politicians in the age of governance*. Oxford University Press.
- Sørensen, E. (2022). Democratic network governance. In C. Ansell & J. Torfing (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of governance* (2nd ed., pp. 462–471). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2017). Metagoverning collaborative innovation in governance networks. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 47(7), 826–839. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074016643181>
- Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2019). Designing institutional platforms and arenas for interactive political leadership. *Public Management Review*, 21(10), 1443–1463. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2018.1559342>
- Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2021). Accountable government through collaborative governance? *Administrative Sciences*, 11(4), 127. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci11040127>
- Sørensen, E., Torfing, J., Røiseland, A., & Winsvold, M. (2017). *En ny politisk arbeidsform? Evaluering av oppgaveutvalg i Svelvik kommune våren 2017. (Evaluation of task committees in Svelvik municipality)*. University of Roskilde.
- Speer, J. (2012). Participatory governance reform: A good strategy for increasing government responsiveness and improving public services? *World Development*, 40(12), 2379–2398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.05.034>
- Svara, J. (2003). Effective mayoral leadership in council-manager cities: Reassessing the facilitative model. *National Civic Review*, 92(2), 157–172. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ncr.14>
- Torfing, J., & Ansell, C. (2016). Strengthening political leadership and policy innovation through the expansion of collaborative forms of governance. *Public Management Review*, 19(1), 37–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1200662>
- Torfing, J., Bentzen, T., & Winsvold, M. (2020). "How institutional designs condition perceived local political leadership." *Local Government Studies. Local Government Studies*, 48(3), 341–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2020.1821664>
- Torfing, J., Peters, B. G., Pierre, J., & Sørensen, E. (2012). *Interactive governance: Advancing the paradigm*. Oxford University Press.

- Torfig, J., Sørensen, E., & Røiseland, A. (2019). Transforming the public sector into an arena for Co-creation: Barriers, drivers, benefits, and ways forward. *Administration & Society*, 51(5), 795–825. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399716680057>
- Torfig, J., and M. Winsvold. 2020. "Demokratiparadokset – hvordan styre et folk som skal styre seg selv?" (The Democracy Paradox). I Røiseland A., and S. Vabo, Folkevalgt og politisk leder. Cappelen Damm.
- Touchton, M., McNulty, S., & Wampler, B. (2023). Participatory budgeting and community development: A global perspective. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 67(4), 520–536. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642221086957>
- Tucker, R. C. (1995). *Politics as leadership* (2nd ed.). University of Missouri Press.
- Turnhout, E., Van Bommel, S., & Aarts, N. (2010). How participation creates citizens: Participatory governance as performative practice. *Ecology and Society*, 15(4), 26. <https://doi.org/10.5751/es-03701-150426>
- Vabo, S., & Winsvold, M. (2022). A framework for analysing organisational culture among politicians: Exploring implications for participatory governance schemes. *Public Administration*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12868>
- Wampler, B., McNulty, S., & Touchton, M. (2021). *Participatory budgeting in global perspective*. Oxford University Press.
- Warren, M. (2009). Governance-driven democratisation. *Critical Policy Studies*, 3(1), 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19460170903158040>
- Winsvold, M. (2013). *Lokal digital offentlighet (The local digital public sphere)*. Doctoral thesis. University of Oslo.
- Yang, K., & Pandey, S. (2011). Further dissecting the black box of citizen participation: When does citizen involvement lead to good outcomes? *Public Administration Review*, 71(6), 880–892. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02417.x>

**How to cite this article:** Winsvold, M., & Vabo, S. I. (2023). How well do participatory governance arrangements serve political leadership? *Governance*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12825>