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COPRODUCTION AS A NEW APPROACH TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

In order to improve the quality in public sector several specific tools differing according to the degree of users' participation in implementation have been designed. According to the assumption of the positive effects of competition and commercialization in public sector, quality awards and satisfaction surveys have been applied in public sector organisations. The public service charters are the instrument aiming to strengthen the citizens' position in their relationship with public administration. However, it seems that charters do not achieve their aim in practice due to insufficient involvement of citizens in their development and implementation.

In recent years, there has been a shift of the focus from consumers' satisfaction and quality of services to governance quality. The latter implies the improvement of the relationship between a public service and citizens as active members of community. This paper's aim is to provide insight into the potential benefits and contribution of coproduction to local governance quality improvement. The article provides an analysis of the citizens' participation in the creation of local budgets and potential of participatory budgeting to improve public governance in Croatian units of local self-government.

Keywords: quality in public sector, public governance, citizens, coproduction, participatory budgeting, Croatia