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TOWARD SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**AGGREGATION DEGREE OF CITIZENS' NEEDS
IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, SIZE OF THE LOCAL
PUBLIC RESOURCE FOR THEIR MEETING AND THE SIZE
OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WHICH SHOULD PRODUCE IT**

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***Abstract:** Modern development of the local communities through the production of infra-marginal and agglomeration external effects leads to differentiation of the local production structure in the direction of concentration of the so-called development activities in urban centers (administrative, commercial, health, school) and the dispersion of manufacturing activities in the wider area of the local community. It is assumed that there is a functional relationship between the degree of satisfaction of the basic needs of citizens and potential dysfunctional political and territorial organization of local self-governments in Serbia. The subject framework is moving on the relationships between the degree of meeting the needs and interests of citizens and the appropriate level and form of political representative and participatory organization and the size of the local community that needs to produce it.*

***Keywords:** public resource, social development, local community, participatory democracy.*

Introduction

Needs of a higher level of aggregation (urban and communal) require solid forms of political organization. In Serbian conditions, insufficiently explored local communities as sociological categories, are primarily understood and accepted as a territorial community groups with developed internal functions and relationships. First of all, there are still no clear indicators upon which we can determine the boundaries of the local community in the area of one unit of local government. A research effort has been made to discover the distinctive characteristics of modern social and economic development and its relationship with the political participation of citizens.

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Local government is very complex, heterogeneous system and as such is difficult for studying and systematizing research results. The location of each unit of local government within a defined system is specific and it ultimately determines the way of achieving the common interests of the local community and each of its members.

Citizen participation in the formulation, adoption and implementation of local policy aims to direct it into the direction of solving problems and achieving their interests and needs. The survey of form and scope, as well as the functional level of citizen participation in the conduct of public affairs are separately dealt by political scientists, sociologists, lawyers, economists, each from its own point of view. According to Robert Dahl political system would be generated in the process of deciding on the final solution: through the equality in voting, effective participation, the right to understanding, the ultimate control over the agenda and comprehensiveness in decision-making process about important issues.

1. Local Self-government in Serbia and Modern Integration and Globalization Processes

The first more comprehensive, clear requirements for the transformation of the government system in Serbia on the principles of self-government occur immediately after the government of the Paris Commune (1871.). Their main exponent was Svetozar Markovic, who wrote about people's self-governemnt as a first-rate political and social issue. In this regard, among other things, he wrote: "Self-government at home, in the municipality and the district, it is the foundation on which the freedom of the people is establishing. Understanding about the things that are directly related to him and that he closely knows, he would have learned to take care about the things affecting the entire nation - the entire state. When people are constantly being developed mentally and financially, it will organize better and better its political institutions according to its needs, according to its conscience: it will rather any tutoring and will achieve full self-government - a republic "(Samouprava, Đorđević 1983, 121)

Although the modern world society is affected by the integration and globalization processes, inside it, in line with global megatrends especially those relating to the role and importance of participatory democracy and decentralized systems of development management, does not reduce the interest for the local government. Password of the new social movements, "think globally and act locally" just means the participation in the democratic processes, i.e. transformation at the local level. Historical experience has shown only temporary and apparent rationality of hipercentralized models of state organizations, while the democratization and functional decentralization of the system in practice verified as the driving force of society development. Starting from these findings and the current development needs of the society in Serbia, we want to point out a number of theoretical and social reasons, which problematise the issue of local government, making it multiply relevant issue today, both from the standpoint of science and social practice. (Promene, Mitrović 1999, 209)

First, it should be said that there is a need to, in accordance with our national tradition but also with European experience and modern megatrends provide completeness of answer to the question: What is the place and role of local government in the modern social development? Secondly, it is necessary to critically examine the ruling political

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model of development management in us, because it, as an excessively centralistic, became brake to further development. Third, further economic development in accordance with the needs of post-socialist society in transition, requires a different conception of development and development management model in order to eliminate systemic blockades and allow rational mobilization of all development factors, i.e. to liberate people's initiative for creativity and this is not possible without the active participation of people in the management of local government.

Scientific approach to the macro-approach (Metod, Milić 1978), because each local community is entity for itself and possesses something universal, is important for other local communities in Serbia. Modernity of this theoretical concept for the development of democracy in the context of turbulence of normative - regulatory and economic political reality in the surroundings, non-exploration of comprehensive concept of the local community as a social category and the need for exploring the ways of the ideal model of participatory democracy, especially in Serbia, in order to demystify exposed development strategy and political models for social changes management. There is a practical need to provide a comprehensive response to issues primarily related to the place and role of local government in the modern social development and review of the dominant political model of development management in us because it excessively centralistic, became brake to further development. Further economic development in accordance with the needs of the post-socialist society in transition requires a different conception of development and models for development management.

The issue of territorial organization is directly linked to the ruling system of local self-government and, depending on the model of the organization of this system. They all stem from the Constitution and the laws that govern them accurately.

The system of local government in our country is set up as a unique and monotype. Single stage system means that between local governments and the state that is the bearer of sovereignty there is no middlemen in the form of some other local government unit. Monotype system means that all local governments, regardless of their size, have by law given the same kind of competence.

2. A good Example of the Country with Developed Local Self-government

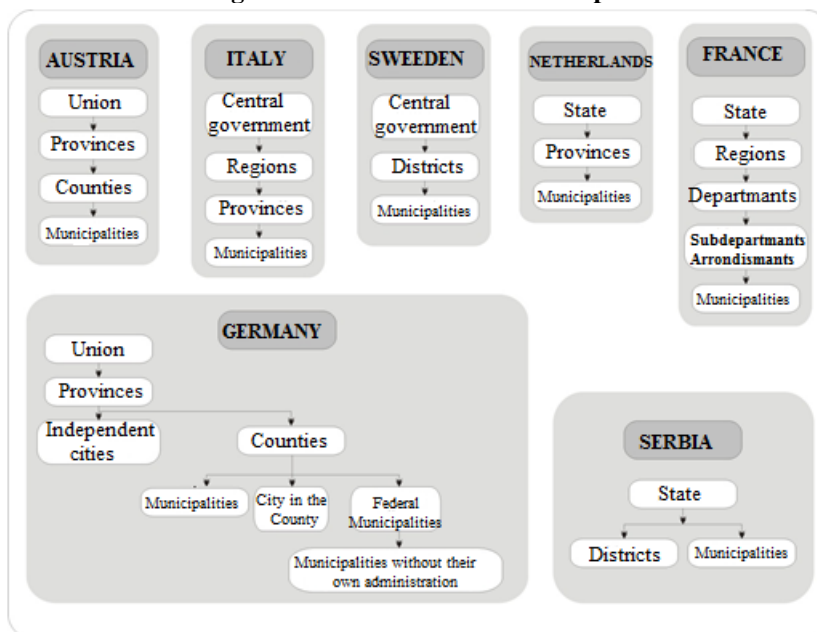
A country with a long and successful tradition of building and functioning of local self-government is England. Distinctiveness of English local government, unlike the countries of continental Europe, is that because the creation of the modern state in England had a different flow, among other things, because this island country always harbored considerable reserves towards the models that come from the European continent and in particular to French centralist model of administration from the time of Napoleon Bonaparte. The creation of the modern English state was not accompanied by centralization of authority at the expense of the rights of local self-government. Local government institutions are preserved as indigenous (emerges) products with significant responsibilities, which in England and Wales include the full authority to maintain order, with the right to establish their own police forces.

Independently and separately from the local self-government, for the state needs a parallel system of their management bodies as institutions of central government, was

developed. In this way two separate systems of government were established, whose competences are determined by the parliaments and between which there are no hierarchical relationships. State organs eventually received some financial (allocation of financial aids), a guiding and indirect control powers to the local self-government organs, which somewhat change the position of local government but has not yet been disrupted its independence. So it happened that in England, the local self-government maintained independence in the process of creating a modern state, while on the European continent it was first privileged state, that would later be imminent a struggle for its independence from the state power. In this sense it is said that the English local self-government is indigenous or originer (native, original), and local self-government in continental Europe is octroyed (granted) by the ruler and the state.

In Europe, there are a very small number of countries that have monotype system of local self-government organization. Countries with a longer tradition of local self-government don't have monotype system of organization. France and Germany have the most complex systems. First has four levels system and second has five levels system of local self-government. The specificity of the French system is that it has parallel and organized administrative system with similar local levels and for German that it is more complex because it is interwoven with the multiplotype organization.

Territorial organization models of some European countries



Source: Territorial (re)organization of Leskovac Municipality (2004), Development Fund of the City of Leskovac, Leskovac.

Since the 50s of the 20th century, Serbia has in power the single-part system of local organization in terms of the municipality as the basic unit of social - political community. This was the first time that local government is abolished and introduced the principle of the

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commune until the constitutional changes in 90s, and 1992, year of adoption of the Law on Local Self-Government, when this system is again restored in Serbia.

In the long tradition of local management system organizing in Serbia this is the only period when this system was organized as a single-stage. It should be said that it was usually parallelly controlled by the central state organs, so this multistage has often been impaired. Since the beginning of 1966, it functions in the current unaltered form regardless of whether the principle of local organization is community or local self-government.

In addition, it constituted as monotype, so, the largest free-organized municipality in Serbia (Leskovac) and smallest one (Crna Trava) have the same powers and the same way of organizing their local unit. The possibility of joint and eventually freer association by some issues between municipalities as the only local government units (except the city's), is open only after adoption of the newest Law on Local Self-government, but without serious regulation. There is no registered case of experimenting on these provisions somewhere.

Irrespective of the governing principles and rules that regulate the system of local self-government and territorial organization of local self-government that emerge from it, the quality of that organization depends on the specific legalities of this system functioning in the many centuries tradition, of this practicology category. About this, there are great experiences but also numerous empirical and scientific studies that have attempted to systematize these experiences.

3. The Local Community as Part of the Social System

From the sociological point of view the local community in its root and origin has the need as a purpose of every individual and the community. That is the need to be in a certain area in a community populated with a group of people, carrying out joint activities, achieve specific and only that, common interests.

Defining the needs in one part, are defined the components of the local community. One component of the local community are the people who make or residing in a particular area. The activities of the local community are the ones that its members undertake to achieve some common interests in a defined area of the local community (not any interest). These activities are wide-ranging and through them are included: interconnections and relationships among members of the local community (socio-psychological dimension), the formation of institutions for carrying out organized activities (normative-political dimension), forming the services that will produce resources and services (economic dimension).

The local community is defined as any social system (Zajednica, Pušić 1963, 23). The space of the local community is somewhat more complicated to define. It is determined by the time-space distance between the function of time, energy and money spent and the function of profit/benefit because of the life in that community in such area. The greater the difference between the function of benefits and the function of costs in favor of profit, the greater is the reason for living in such a community. This difference is the greatest in the center of the local community. In the intersection of these two functions is the final boundary of the local community.

4. Democracy in the Context of Socio-economic Development

Today, the term democracy is generally associated with the political system of relatively economically developed and stable societies. A positive correlation between democracy and economic development in particular emphasized in the 50s of the 20th century, American sociologist Dahl, who considered inadequate the term democracy, considering the fact that it refers to the direct participation of citizens in government, which is impossible in today's conditions, such as impossible a "perfect democracy" in the market. Therefore, he introduced into the literature the term "polyarchy" (Demokratija, Dal 1994, 13), which is considered more adequate in the labeling of what is today called modern democracy. For the operationalization of socio-economic development in the scientific literature often the following indicators are used: incomes (social products) per capita in the country, adult population literacy in percentages, the development of education measured by the coverage of children and youth of the education ages, industrialization (measured by the share of industry in GDP of the country), urbanization (the percentage of the population that lives in cities compared to the total population) and the distribution of the press. Political development, as opposed to this operationalized socio-economic development, measures growth by percentage of voters participation in elections, the military forces and public expenditures.

Starting from the world megatrends, which affirm participatory democracy and decentralization and management system as development factors of modern society, and then from the modern European experience and the European Charter of Self-Government, as development and civilization needs of society in Serbia, it is necessary to make radical reforms in the prevailing system of local self-government, participatory and direct democracy. The reasons for these changes are the development and civilization, constitutional and legal, political and sociological. Namely, the modern social development presupposes developed forms of participation, direct democracy as a factor of development and the conquest of democracy by citizens, as a factor of labor social mobility and emancipation of man. In this sense, the development of forms of local self-government should be in function of reaffirmation of operational participatory democracy and the creation of political prerequisites for more optimal mobilization of human resources in achieving of global development-civilizational goals.

5. Democracy as an Ideal and a New Political Culture

During two thousand years mostly was valid the opinion that the democratic processes are reserved for a very small countries, such as the city-states in Greece or medieval Italy. More and more pervasive use of democratic ideas to the national states, from 17th century onwards, demanded new political institutions, drastically different from those that fit the city-states. These new institutions simultaneously maintained and encouraged changes in thinking about the democracy itself. Along with justification of new forms with old ideas, often complex, deceptive and confusing changes in political power were occurring. "Today, the term democracy is like the ancient kitchen pantry in which are the selected leftovers almost continuous two and a half thousand years of use" (Demokratija, Dal 1994, 32).

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Of the many possible ways the most adequate understanding of democracy is that which concerns democratic pluralism. According to this interpretation, the ideal democratic processes will satisfy five criteria:

1. Equality in voting: In making collective obligatory decisions expressed determination of each citizen (citizens collectively constitute the demos) should be on an equal manner taken into account when deciding about the final solution.
2. Effects of interaction: Through the whole process of collective decision-making, including the phase of placing problems on the agenda, every citizen should have adequate and equal opportunities for expressing his own priorities until the final outcome.
3. Right of understanding: During the time given for deciding, every citizen should have adequate and equal opportunities to reach its own deliberate judgment about the most desirable outcome.
4. The final control over the agenda: Civil body (demos) should have the exclusive authority to determine on what issues will or will not make decisions in a way that meets the first three criteria. (In other words, provided that the demos do not alienate the ultimate control over the agenda, it may delegate authority to others who can make decisions in a democratic way).
5. Coverage: In demos should be included all adults that are subject to its laws, except those who have no permanent residence. (Democracy, Dahl 1994, 33).

6. The Term of Social Development

Sociology of the early nineties of the last century almost did not have examples of thorough and precise definition of the term social development but it usually defined a special type and its forms, such as modernization, urbanization, industrialization, etc. In doing so, applied knowledge and expressions were used the most, such as "underdevelopment" or "development" or "industrial societies" development, as well as transitioning from an agrarian to an urban society, from "closed" to "open social structure", etc.

On the basis of interest of the scientific and social public for the social development are processes and problems related to the transition of traditional to modern society, classical movement of industrialism to post-industrial society, autarchic development towards a global planning development (urbanization modernization processes, globalization of the modern world); the need to harmonize regional development; environmental crisis and environment protect.

The complexity and ambiguity of social development is facing even in the literature of domestic sociologists and political scientists. Social development is described as the union of all the segments that make up human life. Connected within itself, interwoven complex of economic development, social development, understood in terms of transformation of social structures and layers and cultural development, means the development of normative-assessment sphere of society, scientific development, technological development, political development, etc.

Social development in terms of social progress is really to be perceived only by how much is focused on achieving certain goals set in advance, on the realization of some

already established values, the satisfaction of some human needs and demands, personal and social.

Keeping in mind that for many people the highest political value is freedom, for others, for example, equality (say equality in terms of equal access to education, employment, satisfaction of cultural needs, etc.), for the thirds personal safety, law and order, then it is understandable why according to these different values - ideals, someone can very differently evaluate social and political progress or development.

7. Local Public Resource and the Size of the Local Community who Needs to Produce it

One of the most important categories for understanding the local organization is the theory of local public resource, which is defined as resources that are produced in the local area by organizing citizens into local authorities for its production and to meet the common local needs, as there is no private profit interest for this resource to be produced spontaneously, but there is interest for this well to be used more citizens (sometimes free). Since it is a spatial principle of organization and production of local public resource, it can be divided into two types: 1) communal resource and 2) socio-economic resource.

Local municipal resource in the broadest sense of the term (in relation to space and building land) is the first resource due to which citizens are organized in local units of government in order to get it produced. It has excellent spatial destination and a strong bond between the bid and its users. The basic rule is that it is produced by those who use it. This resource usually corresponds to the first level of local organization for its production. These are usually cities or small group of settlements that have a common interest in space. Outside of this area common interest in the production of local communal resource shall cease so any larger organization of citizens is counterproductive in terms of quality and efficiency. In countries with a longer tradition of local government this form of local public resource production, belongs the first level of local organization and according to it, the corresponding territorial organization is built. In such systems, that unit is the municipality.

Unlike the communal resource, in defining (and production) of the local socio-economic resource to a certain extent spaciousness loses its importance but the economic strength and social cohesion gain. These are resources that are originally local but also the national, so, in the management, these resources are the most commonly shared between the state and local authorities. Their use can not be stopped at the border of one of the local unit of the narrow scope, so, for their production the second level of local government, is suitable. In countries with a long tradition that are the counties, districts or regions. The best balance would be established if it could accurately determine the size of the local unit in which common socio-economic interest is identified, produces and uses this local public resource. Unlike communal, for local socio-economic resource, it is usually not possible and the regulation of its production most commonly takes the state on itself or give it to a wider territorial forms of organization of local authorities.

The fact remains that in the local socio-economic area there is an essential difference between the two public resources: communal and socio-economic. For the first, the spatial destination is important and for the second, broader economic and social basis for its production and use. The quality of a country's territorial organization and the quality

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of functioning of any local government unit within that organization will depend on how it is adapted to the laws of the production and management of these types of local public resource.

When it comes to the average size of local government units, viewed individually, within a country, then a very small communities (population 1,000) with over 50% share in the total number of units of the country have: Iceland (83%), Greece (79%), France (77%), Slovakia (67%), Switzerland (59%), Hungary (54%) and Germany (53%). Relatively small local units (1000-5000 residents) have Austria (55%), Norway (52%), Italy (49%), Finland (44%), Malta (45%), Luxembourg (41%) and relatively big local government units (10,000 to 100,000 inhabitants) have: Sweden (73%), Bulgaria (63%), Portugal (59%), the Netherlands (58%), Belgium (52%) and Denmark (45%). (Modernizacija, Sharpe 1996, 133).

The territorial organization of the Republic of Serbia, falls into this last group of relatively large local units because 83% of municipalities (the highest percentage of all listed of countries ahead) have 10,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. Only eight municipalities have a smaller population compared to the lower limit criteria and only 20 municipalities (and cities) have a greater number of citizens in relation to the upper limit criteria. (Društveni razvoj, Vukosavljević Pavlović 2008, 157). Among these 20 municipalities is the municipality of Leskovac and quoted on the 8th place in relation to the 20 grouped absolutely (not just relevant) large local units. In fact, all seven local units larger than the municipality of Leskovac, are municipalities or cities. This means that the municipality of Leskovac is the largest independent local government in Serbia and it is not organized in a broader form of territorial organization, although under the provisions of the existing Constitution may be only the city or urban community of municipalities.

8. Relationship between Economic Development and Territorial Organization of Local Self-government Unit in Serbia

Management of communal and socio-economic structure of the local community is an important element of the overall local development and there we meet a double problem. It can be seen on the one hand, the question of the distribution of competences with the state because it still retains and insists on constitutional responsibility for "the health of the nation", and on the other hand, the need for a sufficiently broad socio-economic basis to manage this process. From the first arises the problem of the local authority because it does not receive clear and precise instruments of socio-economic policy for managing its own development. From the second, arises the problem that local communities are not allowed to perform free territorial-political organization, in order to concentrate necessary mass of socio-economic base. Here, in addition to territorial-political organization, emerge additional problems of unique and two-stage system of local government.

The issue of territorial organization is directly linked to the ruling system of local self-government and it depends on the model of the organization of this system. They all arise from the Constitution and the laws that govern them accurately.

The system of local self-government in our country is set up as a single-stage and monotype. Single stage system means that between the local self-government unit and state,

which is the holder of sovereignty, there is no mediator in the form of some other local self-government unit. Monotype system means that all local self-government units, regardless of their size, have by law given the same kind of competence. The only variation that disrupts this single type is the internal organization of cities as a two-stage system.

Territorial organization of local self-government unit is regulated by applicable law on territorial organization. In the last 40 years in Serbia was adopted more such laws or amendments but the position of the municipalities did not change even though the number of municipalities marginally increased in the case of the formation of some new municipalities. Ruling Constitution and the law on local self-government most commonly determine the way the territorial organization. This means that in the last four decades in the field of local territorial organization nothing serious has changed. Under existing regulation change of territorial organization is only possible by decision of the majority of the population of a municipality and the consent authority that makes the law on territorial change of organization (Assembly of the Republic of Serbia). Both conditions must be fulfilled simultaneously.

Change of the concept of local self-government system organization and based on it, the territorial organization of municipalities, is necessary because for the countries with a longer tradition of local self-government in Europe, Serbia has the highest average local self-government unit, after Great Britain. Comparing territorial Serbia to be organized with comparative European countries, on the basis of selected criteria, we determined that Serbia needs to duplicate the total number of local governments. Comparing territorial organization of Serbia with comparative European countries, on the basis of selected criteria, it is determined that Serbia needs to duplicate the total number of local self-government units.

Citizens, from the perspective of the local economy, predominantly prefer investments in their own place and thus they direct the possible future trends of economic development. Based on realized research, the conclusion is that the existing territorial organization and institutional system that supports local economic development, does not meet these needs because citizens majority expressed dissatisfaction. In doing so, they expressed the intention to find a solution to their own immediate environment.

It can be concluded that the existing territorial and political organization in Serbia is not conducive to socio-economic development. This is confirmed by the results of an empirical analysis of the relationships of economic development and territorial organization of local self-government units in Serbia, which is derived on the basis of examinations and sublimation of views of citizens in the scope of one unit of local self-government unit in Serbia. So, on the direct question, the huge number of participants (over 2700), replied with "no", "dissatisfied" and "not", with sub-response the problems of village and town should be separated.

Conclusion

In connection with the complexity and vitality of the system of local self-government, should be kept in mind the knowledge that normative-legal political context is not sufficient for the articulation of needs, interests and problems of citizens on the territory of one municipality. Large uncertainties are latent, undiscovered needs and interests of

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citizens as a product of social, economic, political and cultural processes that are particularly intensified and insufficiently defined in transition process where currently the state of Serbia is. Strategic, planned approach to priorities setting, on the basis of newly discovered needs and problems, gives the possibility of preventive action, creating conditions for more sustainable and purposeful development of one municipality.

So far in our sociological practice have not been done scientific-empirical researches to observe and reveal many latent processes that result in different needs, interests and problems that citizens face in their everyday life. As a result of such scientific-empirical researches, a space for new forms and types of services, will be open, that are brought to light by the social, economic and cultural processes and conditions. In support of the previous paragraph is F.A. Hayek thought that democracy can not function well without a large share of the local self-government, that "only where the responsibility can learn and be trained in the tasks with which most people are familiar and where procedures are governed by awareness about its fellow man and not by some theoretical knowledge about the needs of other people, just there ordinary man can really participate in public affairs because they are concerned the world that he knows" (Upravljanje, Begović, Simić, Staničić, Stojanović, Hiber 2002, 15).

According to some studies (Modernizacija, Đorđević 2002, 133) the general trend in Europe in the second half of the 20th century is the reduction in the number of local units. This means that they are increasing, mostly by merging or joining together of several smaller units. For those observed 50 years in most European countries that have undergone this procedure, average degree of reduction in the number of local units is 65%. In almost all European countries to a greater or lesser degree occurred this process except in two cases (Italy and Portugal). In the same period, the number of local self-government units in Serbia is reduced by 93% (from 2.819 to 190; without Kosovo and Metohija to 160), where the process has already been completed after fifteen years and in such state is for 40 years, to the present day. This is at the same time, the answer to the question of how to market functionalism of profit interest subordinate to collective social needs. It is a fact that the local urban centers in Serbia should be placed in their specific economic, social and political context. For the full realization of this ideal, instruments and authorities of local community are necessary, to manage their own local socio-economic development (political, social and economic). Management of their own local socio-economic development by the citizens is the first and one of the major steps in that direction.

The existing territorial organization of the Republic of Serbia, based on constitutional and statutory defined system of local self-government does not provide opportunities to some oversized municipalities in Serbia as a major socio-economic gravity centers find exit solution for the responsibility which was externally transferred to them. Local socio-economic resource is the local public product that is appropriate to the current scope and complexity of the territorial arrangement of the largest municipalities in Serbia, where the local area of common interest is probably somewhat larger than the current boundaries of existing municipalities. In the work of local public authorities there is a space outside of these normative regulations for additional expansion of citizen participation in the conduct of public affairs, like: round tables, working, professional teams to cooperate with citizens, updating of municipal sites, preparation of controversies, debate and comments on issues related to the specific interests of the citizens. That space is not recognized and almost not used by local authority.

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STEPEN AGREGACIJE POTREBA GRAĐANA REPUBLIKE SRBIJE, VELIČINA LOKALNOG JAVNOG DOBRA KOJIM SE ONE ZADOVOLJAVAJU I VELIČINA LOKALNE ZAJEDNICE KOJA TREBA DA GA PROIZVEDE

Rezime: Savremen razvoj lokalnih zajednica kroz proizvodnju inframarginalnih i aglomeracijskih eksternih efekata vodi ka diferencijaciji lokalne proizvodne strukture u pravcu koncentracije tzv. razvojnih delatnosti u urbane centre (administrativni, trgovački, zdravstveni, školski) i disperzija proizvodnih na širi prostor lokalne zajednice. Pretpostavlja se da postoji funkcionalna veza između stepena zadovoljavanja bazičnih potreba građana i potencijalne nefunkcionalne političke i teritorijalne organizacije lokalnih samouprava u Srbiji. Predmetni okvir rada se kreće na relaciji odnosa stepena zadovoljavanja potreba i interesa građana i odgovarajućeg stepena i oblika političkog predstavničkog i participativnog organizovanja i veličine lokalne zajednice koja treba da ga proizvedu.

Ključne reči: Javno dobro, društveni razvoj, lokalna zajednica, participativna demokratija.