



# Impact of Integrated Municipal Agglomeration on Democratic Waste Governance

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## DESCRIPTION

Municipal government in western democracies is largely founded on the representative democracy tenet, which holds that individuals govern themselves through their elected representatives. This concept is implemented through local elections, when voters choose representatives for the local council, a popular body tasked with making decisions on behalf of the local communities. Additionally, the majority of democracies complement their representational, democratic institutions with participatory frameworks that function between or between elections, giving locals the chance to take initiative and participate actively in local affairs. However, during the past 20–25 years, increased agencification has posed an increasing threat to democratic governance in general. Agency formation takes place when a single municipality establishes a functional organisation that is autonomous or semi-autonomous, or when multiple municipalities work together to do so, a process we refer to as joint agency formation [1]. Clarifying if inter-municipal cooperation is required and whether municipalities desire to cooperate is the first step in joint municipal agency. Municipalities must then decide with whom to work. Additionally, collaborating parties must decide on the organisational structure they want for their joint entity. In public management literature, joint bodies go by many names and have many different shapes, but in this context, we'll just call them joint arm's length bodies. The founding agreement, which specifies the ALB's autonomy, financial foundation, and other elements, must be created by the collaborative municipalities for their new joint ALB [2].

The effects of collective agency on democracy by concentrating on Municipal Waste Management (MWM) of household and similar garbage. Waste collection, treatment, and disposal make up the MWM operational process. MWM has a long history as a regional public service, and its initial mission was to address urban public health issues. MWM's current environmental focus is extensive. It is a field of policy that is heavily governed by EU law and adheres to the self-sufficiency concept, which states that

waste should be managed as close as possible to its source. This requires that, generally speaking, public tasks should be carried out by the institutions nearest to the citizens, i.e. the local government. However, since waste quantities have continually increased, municipalities have increasingly implemented joint agencification to their MWM services. This is consistent with the European Charter on Local Self-Government [3]. Local policy-makers sought to give service units greater autonomy so they could function more like commercial firms, which led to the conclusion that agencification had advanced based on local public partnership and externalisation of municipal garbage disposal in Italy and Sweden. By concentrating on the associated concerns of representative and participatory democracy, we may examine the democratic implications of both public-law and private-law joint ALBs. We examine how the combined agencification of MWM services affects the democratic governance of waste management organisations using two country case studies. a municipality's democratic nature and its inhabitants' interactions with its local government as seen from the perspectives of representational and participatory democracy.

The Northern countries application of the proportionality principle in municipal elections allows all different interest groups typically political parties to be fairly represented in both the municipal council and other political municipal entities like boards and committees. A consensus-based political culture is often made possible by the proportional foundation. In contrast, the majority principle refers to a framework where the majority group is granted executive decision-making ability, which is seen to foster the development of a more stable political authority. Since the positions of trust are distributed among political groupings according to the proportions of a local election result, the idea of equality of political representativeness serves as the national guiding principle of Finnish municipalities. Residents can express themselves freely and actively [4]. Affected individuals can make their views heard by appealing a municipal decision and then patiently waiting for the appeal to be looked at and resolved. Municipalities offer citizens opportunity to engage, express their thoughts, and influence the agenda of local

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public policy. Examples include municipal referendums, hearing procedures, customer panels, and participatory public budgeting. Participatory democracy enhances societal education, encourages residents to listen to a variety of perspectives, and promotes the assimilation of habits necessary for informed citizens, which may ultimately assist strengthen the legitimacy of local decision-making processes. Exit is frequently linked to consumerism since, as customers, people can choose a more alluring good or service provider. In the case of municipalities, residents can change their domicile by relocating from one municipality to another. According to popular belief, residents can completely stop using municipal services. They can leave a local government internally by selecting a different municipal service unit, which is frequently an option in multi-branch services like schools and urban public transportation. Additionally, if residents have the option to choose a private service over a municipal service provider, they might also have a private exit.

This study advances knowledge on the subject by showing that all joint municipal ALBs limit representative democracy in general and that private law ALBs in particular limit residents' rights to influence and participate. It also advances the field of public management studies by using Hirschman's theory to the

comparative assessments of public and private joint ALBs [5]. Additionally, we draw the conclusion that the joint agency of MWM encourages the technocratization, industrialization, public entrepreneurship, and professionalisation of waste administration, despite the fact that it undermines the traditional role of local citizens and civic involvement.

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