



# **The Changing Context of Local Democracy: Role Perception and Behaviour of Municipal Councillors**

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Political leadership at the local level has attracted growing attention in recent years in parallel with reforms of local government and of the municipal administration as well as the debate on a shift from government to governance. But this debate is mainly focused on single leaders, i.e. mayors or executive officers.

Considering the power triangle of (i) the mayor, (ii) the municipal administration (executive officers) and (iii) the council, it is surprising that councillors have gained little interest so far. The aim of this book is to reflect on the role and task perception as well as the behaviour of councillors in the changing context of local democracy.

The chapters start from a common conceptual framework. We start from the hypothesis that the role perception as well as the behaviour of councillors can not be conceived of being determined directly by (i) both formals and informal institutional structures as well as by (ii) personal characteristics. Instead, we argue that the perceptions and behaviour of councillors are depending on their notion of democracy. However, the understanding of democracy can be affected by institutional structure – but not solely by such organisational arrangements but depending on personal characteristics of the councillors.

This book was published as a special issue of *Local Government Studies*.

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