



Importance of Active Citizenship and Volunteering for Local Authorities

EVARS
Final Event
22 October 2015

Structure

1. CEMR
2. Active Citizenship
3. AFE-INNOVNET Project
4. Guidelines for co-producing age-friendly environments with older people
5. Co-production: Good practices
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Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

- CEMR: organisation of 60 national associations of LRAs from 41 countries in Europe
- Aim: promote a united Europe, based on local and regional self-government and democracy
- How: by enhancing the local and regional contribution, influencing EU law and policy and exchanging experience at local and regional level
- Topic: democracy and citizenship; economic, social and territorial cohesion; resource efficiency and environment; local and regional governments as employers and service providers



Active Citizenship

“Being a **citizen**, doesn’t necessarily mean to be an **active** one”

“Don’t we feel that policy makers are sometimes unprepared for many topics and issues and desperately need inputs from an informed and capable **society?**”

For last decade, new policies and structures have allowed the involvement of citizens to be more important in the decision making process. Their contributions lead to better solutions and to long lasting, balanced developments



**Ownership
of Citizens**



**Democratic Local
Democracy**



**Accountability
of Councils**

Active Citizenship - example

Participatory Budget in Paris

- Building stronger relationship with citizens
- Allocate a total of 500 million Euros to projects imagined and chosen by the public (2014 – 2020)



MADAME LA MAIRE,
J'AI UNE IDÉE !

Jusqu'au 15 mars, proposez votre projet
pour le **budget participatif**

www.ideo.paris



Active Citizenship - example

Horizon Prize for Social Innovation

The European Commission, in cooperation with the European Investment Bank Institute, planned to launch a € 2 million Horizon prize on a social challenge chosen by the public, as part of Horizon 2020 programme (deadline 21/10/2015)

Which challenge do you want to see cracked first?

Childhood obesity (Learn more)	<input type="radio"/>
Ageing population (Learn more)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Integration of immigrants in the labour market (Learn more)	<input type="radio"/>
Women entrepreneurship and women-led enterprises (Learn more)	<input type="radio"/>
Citizens for clean energy (Learn more)	<input type="radio"/>

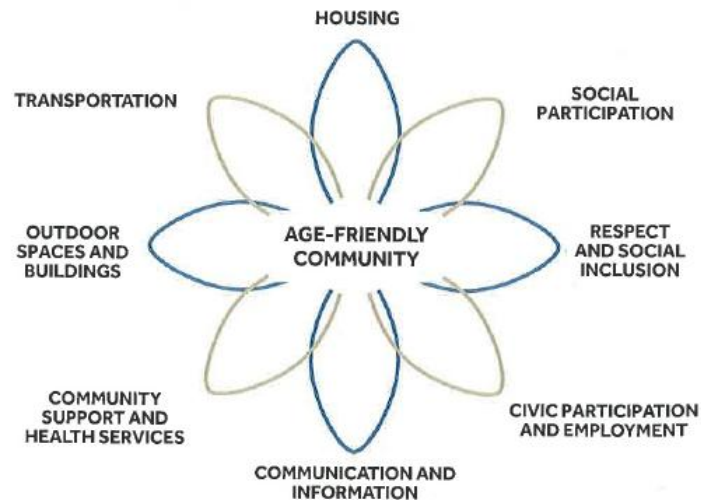
vote

AFE-INNOVNET

Demographic change pushes Local and Regional authorities to adapt their cities, communities and regions to the needs for the ageing population and to identify ways to help people live independently and actively for longer.

CEMR became involved in the **AFE-INNOVNET project** (Feb 2014 – Jan 2016): Network of innovation for age-friendly environments.

According to the WHO, **physical and social environments** are key determinants of whether people remain healthy, independent and autonomous long into their old age.



Guidelines for co-producing age-friendly environments with older people

Create a guide for Local and Regional Authorities to strengthen the partnership and the involvement of older citizens and relevant stakeholders in the development of ageing policies: citizens' should co-produce policies that affect them directly.

Steps:

1. Assessment of the current situation
2. Implementation
3. Monitoring
4. Evaluation
5. Dissemination

	Older citizens	Policy makers
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expressing their concrete needs and demands to be considered in the design process; ✓ Being recognised as main end-users of the policy; ✓ Their needs and demands are better incorporated and understood; ✓ ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Creating an inclusive society; ✓ Building a broad consensus; ✓ Enabling a better understanding of the needs of older citizens; ✓ Using the knowledge, experience of older people and their organisations for the benefit of society as a whole; ✓ ...
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Feeling unheard or not at ease expressing themselves; ❖ Having difficulties in identifying their needs; ❖ ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Engaging older people to participate; ❖ Offering a trust environment; ❖ Identifying the older participants; ❖ Facilitating participation; ❖ ...

Guidelines for co-producing age-friendly environments with older people

“A consultation with older people conducted as part of this report highlighted the importance of involving and engaging older people. The responses indicated that older people are keen to be consulted and **want to engage with their local authority** and they feel they have something to contribute.”
(LGA)

“Co-production enables citizens and professionals to **share power** and work together in **equal partnership**, to contribute to social change” (Wales)

“Effective engagement and consultation means **better decision making.**” (LGA)

Co-production – good practices

Council for older people (Finland)

Since December 2012, every municipality in Finland has to establish a Council for older people (although some already existed since 1988 – City of Tampere).

It ensures the older population's opportunities to participate and exert influence.

The council must be included in the planning, preparation and monitoring of actions in the different spheres of responsibility of the municipality in regard to matters that are of significance for the wellbeing, health, inclusion, living environment, housing, mobility and daily activities of older persons or for the services needed by the older population.

Older People's Commissioner for Wales (UK)

22 local strategy groups representing the 50+ in their area work closely with colleagues at local and national level to ensure that the benefits and challenges afforded by an ageing population are an integral part of the planning and policy development.

Their contribution is then included in the work of the Commissioner who stand and speak up for them.

Co-production – good practices

Age-friendly Manchester (UK)

The study implemented in three different wards in the city of Manchester examined opportunities and constraints for older people living in urban environments with a view to improving their experience of living in the city.

For this particular study, older people stepped from the traditional role of consultee to that of interviewer and researcher. They were trained to become co-investigators in the project.

- stimulates the participation and advocacy of older citizens
- could reach the most “unheard” voices
- enhance high quality data (trust between peers)



Winner of the
Making a Difference award 2015

Conclusion

“Municipalities can’t be isolated if they want to be effective. They need to be in contact with the citizens”

“Service providers are being asked to do more and more, with less and less money. In response they are increasingly adopting **co-production** as a way of delivering better services, while using budgets and resources in a more effective and relevant way.”
(Wales)

“Nothing about us without us”
(Patricia Charles - Member of the Strategy group in Swansea - Wales)

Further reading

Ageing: the silver lining. The opportunities and challenges of an ageing society for local government, LGA, 25 June 2015

An Alternative Age-Friendly Handbook. For the Socially Engaged Urban Practitioner, Sophie Handler, 2014

Citizens' participation at the local level in Europe and Neighbouring Countries, ALDA, 2014

Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide, World Health Organisation, 2007

Guidelines for co-producing age-friendly environments with older people, AFE-INNOVNET, April 2015

Researching Age-Friendly Communities. Stories from older people as co-investigators, The University of Manchester Library, 2015



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