



Making Europe more social and supportive: it does concern me! Europe is about us!

THEMATIC WORKSHOP:

Participation

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Issues

In brief

All the various forms of exclusion and vulnerability impede people from exercising their rights and prevent them from playing a full part in life in society and exercising their citizenship effectively.

Excluded people are rarely involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of public policy, including policy which effects them directly.

Yet there is nobody better qualified than the people experiencing these situations to speak about them and offer the “real-life expertise” required to understand exclusion and develop appropriate responses.

Can we continue to develop social policy without involving the people directly affected, informing them or consulting them? This is surely why we have developed social policy for years which those on the receiving end find complicated and opaque.

Enabling excluded people to take part in think tanks and to be consulted allows them to become stakeholders and citizens again. They are no longer viewed as mere beneficiaries of social mechanisms and measures, but as full citizens in their own right.

In a broader sense, this involves including them as citizens in consultation and cooperation processes relating to local life, public policy, etc.

<p>What is the European Union doing, or failing to do, in this area?</p>	<p>The European Union encourages Member States to introduce participation processes and to involve all stakeholders in the governance of social inclusion policies. Getting stakeholders involved and encouraging the participation of all European citizens is one of the themes of the 2020 Strategy. European Commission policy brief on the drafting of strategic national reports on social welfare and inclusion.</p>
<p>Questions, focal points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main blockers to participation for people experiencing exclusion? • What different forms of participation exist? • How can we promote participation and support people? • How can representation be organised and a shared view expressed? • What examples are there in Europe of successful approaches, tools and methods? • How can we encourage participation and demonstrate that it is useful for making citizen commitment attractive?
<p>Proposal for leading the workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual presentation by every participant. Each participant will finish his presentation by the phrase “For me, participation means....” - Presentation on the modern context of participation with special attention in regard of participation of the vulnerable people. - Listening to opinion of concerned people. Discussions and exchanges of good practises about participation. - Conclusion <p>Working out the final document which answers following questions: Which claims and recommendations could be communicated to the MPs, especially in regard of European elections? This document will be used as an instrument for future advocacies on this matter.</p>	

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