

Migrants & Ethnic Minorities and Citizen's Participation

Organizers

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Abstract

Citizen's participation is often considered as important for both the cities and the citizens and their communities involved. For the cities, active citizen's participation is important because by including 'local knowledge' and local experience urban authorities can improve the quality of local policies and services, and thus the quality of life in (distressed) urban neighbourhoods. The idea is that neighbourhood-oriented policies make use of existing capacities and resources of communities that enrich the quality of local policy-making. On the other hand, active citizen's participation is also crucial for local residents, neighbourhood-based community organizations or ethnic organizations because it is a means of serving private and collective interests and of empowerment.

This workshop intends to focus on the (lack of) participation of migrants and ethnic minority groups in local practices of active citizen's participation. Do migrants and ethnic minority groups fully participate in such practices or are they underrepresented? In the latter case, what causes the under-representation of migrants and ethnic minority groups in active citizen's participation (lack of interest or capabilities, bureaucratic complexities, exclusion from the part of dominant population categories, etc.)??

The objective of the workshop is to collect local experiences of how migrants and minority groups do or do not participate in community initiatives, what impediments may hinder active participation of migrants and minority groups and what possible solutions there are.