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INCLUSION AND CITIZENSHIP IN A SOCIETY OF LONGEVITY: FROM PRINCIPLES TO METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES. THE CASE OF CITIZEN DESIGN WORKSHOPS IN FRANCE

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I. INCLUSION, CITIZENSHIP, AND PARTICIPATION IN A LIFELONG PERSPECTIVE

1.1 From Demographic Transitions to Democratic Challenges

- Population **65 +** is expected to **more than double**, increasing from 761 million in 2021 to 1.6 billion by 2050 (UN, 2021).
- **Challenges :**
 - **Equal access to longevity**
 - **Ethical dilemmas**
 - **Intergenerational relationships** require new approaches to **cooperation between younger and older generations.**
- The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promotes **the principle of "leaving no one behind", by integrating older populations into policy discourses on inclusion and participation** (United Nations, 2015).

1.2 Towards a Sustainable Citizenship across the Lifecourse?

- **Citizenship** is not a static status, but an evolving engagement shaped by continuous education, participation, and societal integration.
- The concept of "**sustainable citizenship**" as a lifelong, dynamic and regenerating process that encompasses democratic engagement and social inclusion from early childhood through old age
- It highlights the **continuum of citizenship or the capabilities to develop civic engagement and active citizenship along the life cycle even in later life**, whereby individuals accumulate, create, develop and exercise civic competencies throughout their lifespan.
- **Its activation requires :**
 - ✓ To remove barriers to engagement in civic life, across the lifespan.
 - ✓ To implement policies and practices toward lifelong learning and inclusion

1.3 Implementing Inclusive Policies for the Lifelong Civic Engagement and inclusion

- Help individuals to develop **their autonomy and capacities throughout life**, promote their **multi-faceted skills**, to take responsibility despite the increasing alternation between periods of activity and inactivity throughout their life course. **(the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002).**
 - ✓ **Dismantling systemic barriers** that hinder the participation of older individuals in civic and economic life
 - ✓ **Combatting ageism** as a significant **obstacle to sustainable citizenship** and social participation
- **Community based approach** that recognizes the local communities as both a **living environment** and a **political space**. This aligns with the initiatives of the **World Health Organization's** which promote the development of the **Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**.



II. A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS: THE ISSUE OF A CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PEOPLE

2.1 Genesis, Development and Challenges of a Convention on the Rights of Older People

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948, 1
- . Over time, specific conventions emerged to protect vulnerable groups, such as
 - ✓ CEDAW (1979) for women's rights,
 - ✓ CRC (1989) for children's rights,
 - ✓ ICMW (1990) for migrant workers,
 - ✓ CRPD (2006) for persons with disabilities.

But no dedicated international convention exists for the rights of older persons

- The UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG) recommended a new treaty in 2024,
- 2021 UN Human Rights Council resolution called for eliminating age discrimination.
- Amnesty International's 2024 "Age Loud!" campaign

2.2 South America as a precursor?

- **San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons (2012)** in Latin America and the Caribbean,
- **Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons (2015),**
- **UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030).**



III. FROM THEORETICAL AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORK TO INITIATIVES TOWARD METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUMENTS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION, CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICIPTION OF OLDER CITIZENS

3.1 Genesis of the Citizen Design Workshops (CDW) and its first developments

- The **Citizen Design Workshops (CDWs)** in France illustrate an attempt to develop participatory model where older individuals co-create public policies, highlighting the role of social sciences in fostering inclusive governance.
- The **Citizen Design Workshops (CDW)**, developed in the **Lorraine region (2018-2021)** seeks to include marginalized older populations—such as elderly women, immigrants, and nursing home residents—in local decision-making.
- It promotes **active citizenship and social inclusion**. Participants present their findings in "**citizen memorandums**" to local officials, ensuring that experiential expertise shapes policies.
- It fosters collaboration between researchers, older adults, and policymakers to **empower aging populations** and enhance participatory democracy.

3.2 Methodology structured into six workshops, divided into three phases

A. Participatory Diagnosis

- **Workshop 1: Metaplan** → Identification and categorization of issues by participants based on their experiences.
- **Workshop 2: Focus Group** → Prioritization and in-depth discussion of identified needs to refine the collective diagnosis.

B Development of Solutions

- **Workshop 3: Idea Generation** → Encouraging collective discussion to bring forth initial solution pathways through free and creative exchanges.
- **Workshop 4: Action Sheets** → Integrating feedback from other communities and territories into responses to aging individuals' needs. Proposals are then **structured into concrete action sheets**, facilitating their adoption by policymakers.

3.2 Methodology structured into six workshops, divided into three phases

C. Public Restitution

- **Workshop 5: Preparation** → **Validation of action sheets** and training participants for public speaking.
- **Workshop 6: Public Restitution** → Presentation of proposals to policymakers to **initiate dialogue and encourage implementation**.

3.3 challenges and future perspectives

- **A. Diversity of Audiences and Territories & Inclusion of the “Invisible”**
- **Diverse selection of stakeholders and networks during recruitment, as well as identification via social geography** (e.g., Val de Fensch).
- **Creation of various groups** (e.g., town hall/residences in Metz) reflecting different **socioeconomic and residential statuses** (home, senior residences, nursing homes in Hauts-de-France).
- **Integration of diverse territories**, including large **metropolitan areas** (Strasbourg), **mid-sized cities** (Metz), **small towns** (Thann), and **rural areas** (vineyard regions).

3.3 challenges and future perspectives

B. Beyond Complaints: Creating Civic Expertise

- **From individual concerns to collective action** through the formation of a **citizen group**.
- **After the diagnostic phase**, the development of **thematic areas, toolkits, and the "citizen memorandum"**.

C. The Relationship with Public Decision-Making Processes

- **Equipping citizens** with the memorandum...
- **But also guiding them** toward a "**civic habitus**", preparing them to engage in **Agoras** and/or **Forums** (with rehearsal sessions).
- **Providing tools** for citizens and researchers to **monitor public decision-making** (e.g., evaluation methods integrated into toolkits, assessments at **6 and 12 months**).
- However, **many challenges remain**, both for **social science research** and for the **deepening of democratic mechanisms**.



CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

- The **demographic transition** presents complex challenges for **active and sustainable citizenship**, requiring a **redefinition of inclusion, participation, and intergenerational solidarity**.
- We advocates for **empowering policies** that ensure **dynamic, participatory, and equitable citizenship** at all ages.
- For citizenship to be truly **sustainable** in line with **UNESCO's Global Commitment to Sustainable Development and Social Inclusion**.
- Finally, the discussion **extends beyond aging issues**, exploring how the **CDW participatory method** can be adapted to **address broader socio-economic challenges at national and international level**

