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**Participatory Governance for Better Socio-economic Inclusion of Elderly**

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In recent times, the main needs and challenges related to governance systems within European countries can be associated with decreasing public institutional capacities to incorporate participatory approach into decision-making processes. The absence of participatory mechanisms is contributing to reduced motivation of people to engage in governance and administration because they feel relegated from political, social and economic agendas and not competent enough to act as an equivalent counterpart and a considerable driver of “change”. The gap between citizens and public authorities at all levels is therefore increasing and leading to intensified mistrust and lack of public participation, especially among the most disadvantaged communities at risk of exclusion, such as the poor, unemployed, and elderly. The growing social and economic inequalities are reflected in reduced quality of urban spaces. To overcome these challenges the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts promotes Participatory Governance as a powerful and emerging method to improve public institutional capacities in order to tackle socio-economic exclusion of vulnerable/marginalized groups and to stimulate sustainable urban development in European territories. To this end the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts is developing innovative methodology of participatory planning and integrating it into decision-making processes through numerous national and European projects (see some references below). The methodology can improve capacities of public administrators to involve elderly into governance and public participation. Intensified cooperation can boost mutual trust and stimulate strengthened socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable/marginalized groups. The reduction of social and economic inequalities can lead to more sustainable development of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

References:

* <http://giam.zrc-sazu.si/en/programi-in-projekti/inter-cultural-dimension-for-european-active-citizenship#v>
* <http://isim.zrc-sazu.si/en/programi-in-projekti/step-in-building-inclusive-societies-through-active-citizenship#v>
* <http://giam.zrc-sazu.si/en/programi-in-projekti/rurbance#v>
* <http://giam.zrc-sazu.si/en/programi-in-projekti/sycultour#v>