



Digital Democracy Accelerator at local level

A Participatory Policymaking
initiative in Heraklion

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**Symbiosis - CoE School of Political
Studies in Greece**

Tenants



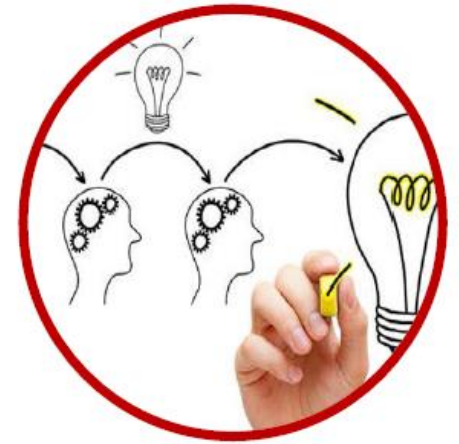
REPRESENTATIVE
DEMOCRACY

"be the voice"



PARTICIPATORY
DEMOCRACY

"to be heard, to have a voice"



COLLABORATIVE
DEMOCRACY

"to build together"

holding
fast to the
following:

PRINCIPLES

Participation

The citizen is at the center of the system and decides how he wants to participate

Intersectionality

Covering all municipal/regional/national services

Interconnectivity

Promoting the articulation between the practices

Transparency

The practice is public and accountable

Evolution

The practice has an evolutionary character

Accessibility and Universality

All practices are accessible to citizens

Evaluation

The practice is monitored and evaluated by the institution/municipality and the citizens

**while
keeping
in mind:**

GOALS

Promote

Structured thinking and a systemic approach to residents/citizen participation

Reinforce

The culture of participation within the Space/Municipality and Society

Create

An opportunity of participation tools adjusted to the expectations of citizens and organisations

Ensure

To all residents (citizens), without discrimination, access to participation

Contribute

To intersectoral management and public policies articulation

Integrate and Consolidate

Spaces and instruments for dialogue between the Institutions/Municipality and Society

STRUCTURE



CONSULT

Knowing a proposal for intervention or public policy and giving opinion in order to improve it.



COCREATE

Cooperating with municipality designing and implementing committed interventions to improve services and qualify territory.



COOPERATE

Being available to contribute with time, knowledge and skills for the development of certain actions.



CODECIDE

Taking part in public policies' deliberations and future public investments.



CO-PLAN

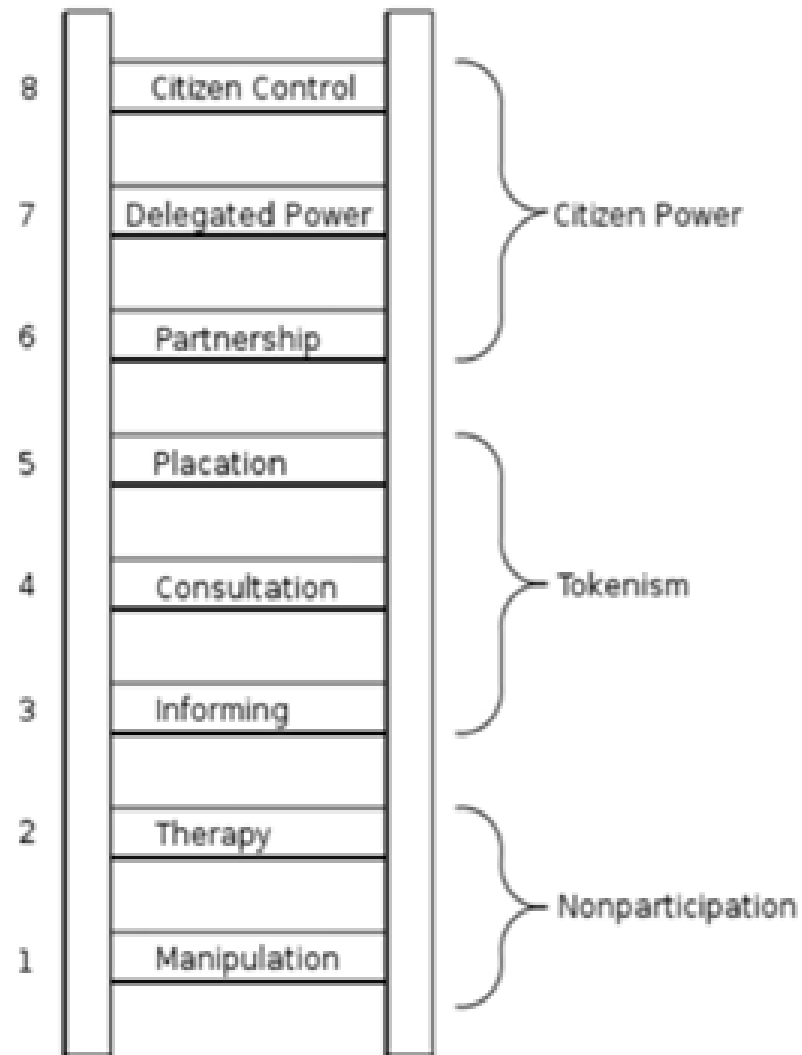
Collaborating with municipality planning and designing public policy instruments.



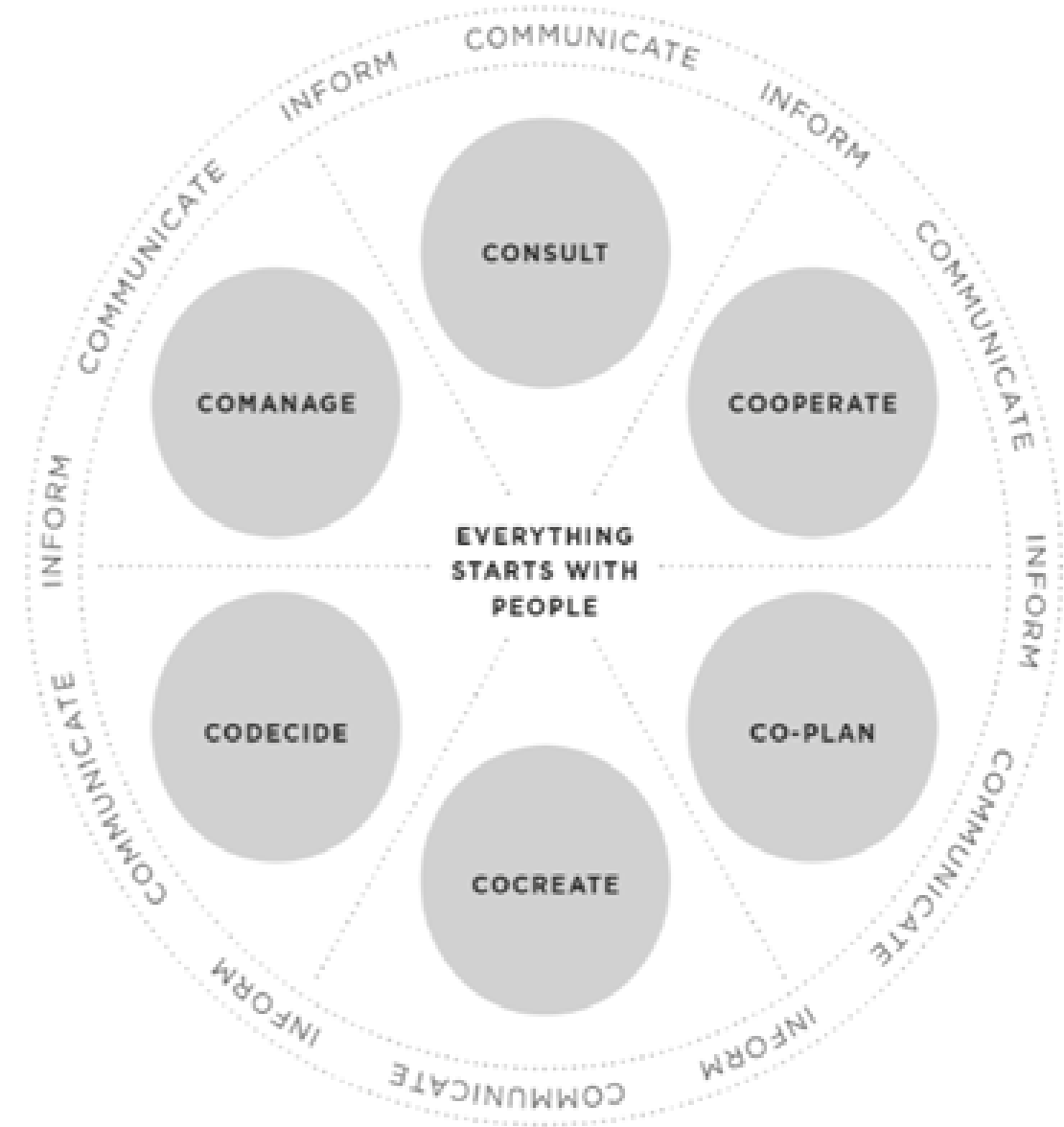
COMANAGE

Supporting municipality managing common goods and territory.





Sherry Arnstein's ladder of participation (1969)





Συμμετέχοντας

στην πόλη και τις γειτονιές

πολιτικά & ψηφιακά - DECIDIM



Τρίτη 8 Οκτωβρίου 2024, 18:00 – 21:00



**Αίθουσα Καρούζου, Επιμελητηρίου Ηρακλείου
(Κορωναίου 9, Ηράκλειο)**

What?

A multi-stage process designed to engage all citizens in the policymaking cycle, including advocacy, planning, outreach, ideas collection, deliberation, and monitoring, ensuring diverse stakeholder involvement and inclusive decision-making.

The E-Participation Platform Decidim supports the participation of migrants and marginalised groups in developing social inclusion policies and practices, in digital policymaking and participatory democracy at the local level.

The platform, <https://her.decidim.gr>, contributes to Heraklio municipality developing a Digital Strategy promoting participation and cooperation between citizens and the municipality, to implement open governance processes and greater transparency and accountability of the municipality's administration to the citizens.

Why?

Heraklio in Crete has the highest GDP per capita in Greece, yet also many pockets of economic and social deprivation.

Historical movements of populations in the Mediterranean and current tourism create a social fabric of many ethnic belongings and religions.

Yet, most not belonging to the majority population group do not actively participate in civic and political life. This seriously impacts social cohesion and in the long run democracy.

Goals:

- To gather inclusively citizen opinions on public services and policies.
- To empower citizens with greater decision-making power in developing policies.
- To facilitate the inclusion of marginalised social groups.
- To increase government legitimacy among residents.
- To improve the efficiency of policy and services access and implementation.
- To ensure officials remain attentive to their promises and action plans.

Scope

The initiative operates on a regional and a local scale.

It spans across all stages of the policymaking cycle, including agenda-setting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

The process is designed to include multiple participation methods such as hybrid (online and in-person) formats. It involves decentralization through itinerant meetings as well.

Participants

General public, including individuals of all ages without a minimum age requirement.

Marginalised groups such as women, the elderly, migrants, refugees, ethnic or racial minorities, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, and informal workers.

Individuals living, working, studying, or registered to vote in the municipality, city, region

Actions

Submitting, collecting and commenting on proposals.

Collecting signatures on initiatives.

Auditing and rating government actions.

Interacting with and advocating to authorities and stakeholders.

Monitoring and providing feedback on the implementation of proposals.

Partners

Officials from the local or municipal executive branch

Members of the local legislative power

Civil society organizations and experts

Private-sector entrepreneurs

Media

Educational institutions

Various stakeholders including political leaders at national and European levels

INTENDED RESULTS

Advocacy

Increased Awareness and Political Support: Successfully raise awareness about the importance of participatory policymaking and gain support from key political leaders at the municipal and regional levels.

Partnerships Formed: Establish partnerships with civil society organizations, media outlets, and educational institutions, creating a robust support network for the initiative.

Planning and Design

Collaborative Design Process: Involve a diverse group of stakeholders in designing the participatory process, resulting in a well-rounded and inclusive framework.

Creation of Steering Committee: Form a steering committee that provides valuable feedback, helping to ensure the participatory process was fair and representative.

Outreach and Engagement

Broad Engagement: Successfully reach a wide audience through various communication channels, ensuring that information about the participatory process was accessible to all community members.

Participation of Marginalised Groups: Specifically targeted outreach to underrepresented groups, increasing their participation in the process.

INTENDED RESULTS

Idea Collection and Proposal Submission

Deliberation

Citizen Monitoring

High Volume of Proposals: Collect proposals from citizens, indicating high levels of engagement and interest in local governance issues.

Diverse Ideas: Receive a wide range of ideas on 20 topics, reflecting the diverse concerns and priorities of the community.

Productive Discussions: Facilitate meaningful discussions among participants, leading to the refinement and improvement of initial proposals.

Consensus Building: Build consensus on several key issues, demonstrating the effectiveness of the deliberative process in resolving conflicts and finding common ground.

Implementation Tracking: Begin tracking the implementation of the approved proposals, providing regular updates and maintaining transparency in the process.

Active Citizen Feedback: Enable citizens to monitor and provide feedback on the implementation of proposals, ensuring continued engagement and accountability.

INTENDED RESULTS

Inclusive Practices

Addressing Barriers: Identify and address barriers to participation for marginalised groups, ensuring that the process was as inclusive as possible.

Capacity Building: Implement capacity-building programs, particularly for to participate effectively.

Funding

Secured Funding: Successfully obtained funding from international sources, including NGOs and the EC, to support the participatory process and related activities.

Social Cohesion and Trust Building

Improved Trust: Foster a culture of trust and collaboration between citizens and authorities, as well as among different community groups, contributing to greater social cohesion.

Enhanced Civic Engagement: Increase the overall level of civic engagement in Heraklion, with citizens feeling more empowered and involved in local governance.

Challenges and difficulties

Digital Divide: Limited access to technology and the internet for marginalised groups, hindering their ability to participate in online activities.

Engagement Fatigue: Sustaining interest and participation over the long term, especially in a process that spans multiple months or years

Initial Mistrust: Overcoming initial scepticism or distrust among citizens towards the process and the intentions of the authorities.

Transparency Issues: Ensuring complete transparency in all stages to maintain trust, especially regarding decision-making and the implementation of proposals.

Aligning Interests: Coordinating and reconciling the differing interests and priorities of stakeholders, including government departments, civil society organizations and community groups.

Awareness Raising: Reaching and informing all potential participants, particularly marginalized or hard-to-reach groups, about the opportunities to get involved.

Governmental Resistance: Encountering resistance or lack of commitment from government departments or officials in implementing the approved proposals.

Measuring Impact: Effectively measuring the impact of implemented proposals and the overall participatory process.

Political Changes: Navigating changes in political leadership or priorities that might affect the support and momentum of the participatory process.

Social Dynamics: Addressing social tensions or conflicts that could arise during the participatory process, particularly in deliberative and decision-making stages.

What positions
this initiative as
a democracy
innovation

Enhanced Inclusivity

Flexible Participation

Comprehensive and Cyclical Process

Capacity Building and Empowerment

Integrated Monitoring and Transparency

Innovative Use of Technology

Focus on Equity and Social Cohesion

EXPLORE

DECIDIM

Her.decidim.gr



THANK YOU!

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