

## Societal changes and how older people can influence these changes

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International Age-friendly Cities Conference  
October 3, 2017

### Background

- Older people play an important role in the social participation in our society.
- Stimulating social participation of older people is a major goal for both the Dutch government and European policy in general.
- A central issue for the European Commission is to promote active and healthy aging.
- However, as the welfare state retracts, the role of civil society increases and we now find ourselves in a transition towards a new kind of civil society.



## Dutch Law on Social Support (WMO)

- In effect since 2007
- Replaces several old laws:
  - Welfare Act (Wet op de Zorg)
  - Law on Special Medical Costs (AWBZ)
  - Law on Provisions for the Handicapped (WVG)
- **Key objective: fostering social cohesion and participation**
- Local authorities have to make their own policy
  - ➔ Differences between communities

## Dutch Law on Social Support (WMO)

A changed system of social and care policy with the following objectives:

- To make care and support systems more transparent for citizens ('one office')
- To enable people to live outside institutions as long as possible
- To reduce the use and demand on existing care and support systems

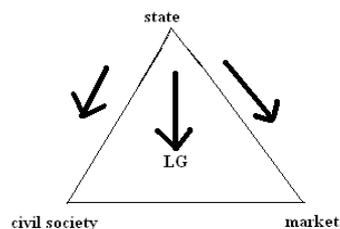
## Dutch Law on Social Support (WMO)

Points of departure:

- The citizen is responsible for own participation in society (self-reliant with a personal network)
- Citizens are responsible for each other (civil society)
- In addition to general facilities for participation, municipalities must also facilitate participation of vulnerable groups

## Dutch Law on Social Support (WMO)

A neo-liberal change



- National government steps back

- Increased responsibility for citizen (+ network), civil society and municipality (coordination)

- Services offered in a free market through contracting (even international)

## Social participation of older people



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## Social participation of older people

- Social participation is a broad concept and focuses on social activities such as:
  - Leisure activities
  - Informal care
  - Volunteering
  - Educational activities
  - Religious activities
- Especially functional impairment, depressive symptoms, and cognitive impairment affect the social participation of older people

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## Social participation of older people in Europe

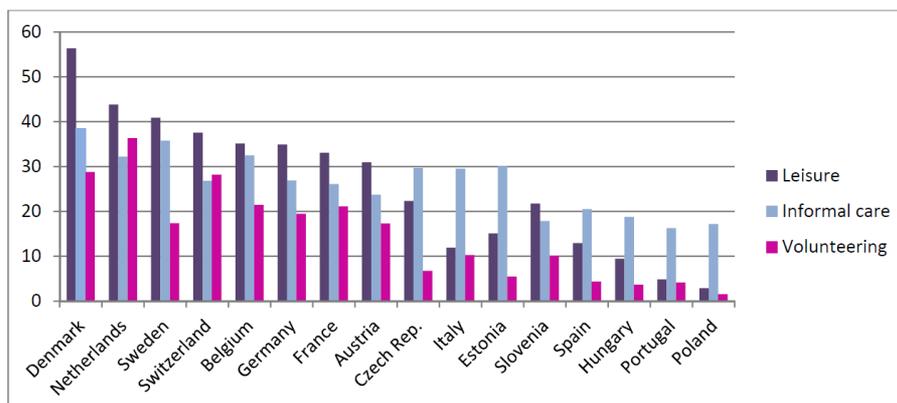


Figure 2: percentage over people of 65 year and older that report to be involved in leisure activities, informal caregiving and volunteering in selected European countries.  
(Source: country report Poland, based on SHARE data).

## The impact of health on social participation of older people

- Older people with multimorbidity have a lower chance of participation in almost all activities (except for religious activities).
- The impact of multimorbidity depends on the type of activity.
- For participation in educational activities and in volunteering the negative effect of having multimorbidity was larger than for informal care.

## Engaging ageing communities as co-creators of age-friendly communities

- Proportion of vital older adults is growing.
- Increasing number of older adults as critical consumers asking for tailor made products and services (EC, 2015).
- Some want to act as co-producers actively designing new products and services (Waycott et al., 2013).
- Older adults, social professionals and civil servants take on new roles that require specific capacities/practices of interaction.



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## Co-creation as an approach

A practice of interactions between older adults, professionals, students, researchers and community stakeholders who jointly define needs and choices as well as design and implement services and support

Citizens as:

1. co-implementer of public policy
2. co-designer
3. co-initiator

Voorberg et al, 2013



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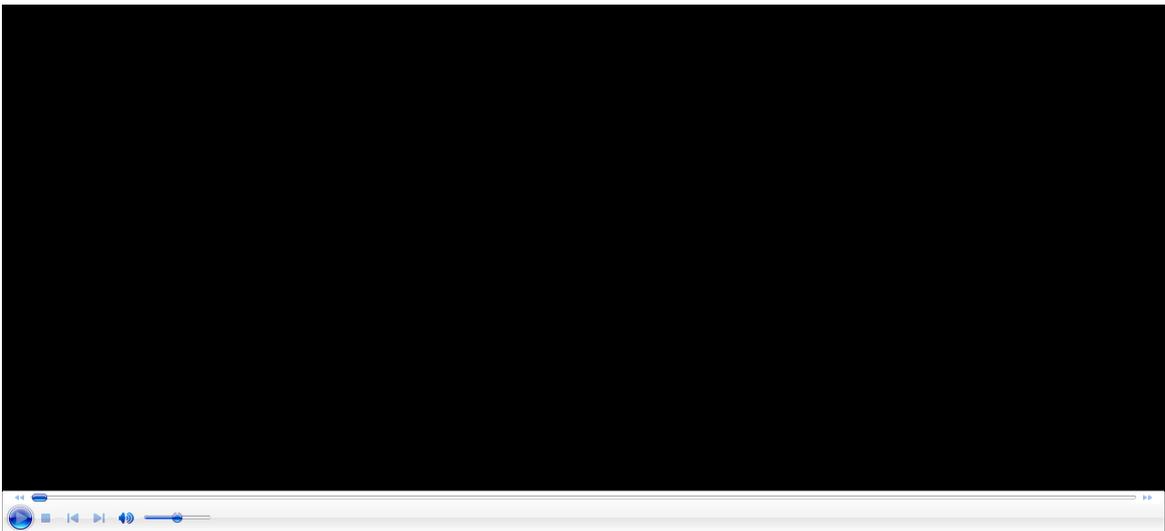
## Co-designing age-friendly cities: The Hague Filmhuis project

- Joint project with the Filmhuis, The Hague University of Applied Sciences
- 20 older residents of The Hague, 10 students, lecturers and filmmakers from the filmhuis



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## Through the eyes of older residents of The Hague: one example



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