



Call for Papers at the European University of Voluntary Service

Abstract – Focus “Strengthening of Society through Volunteer Work”

**How to increase participation and volunteering of elderly citizens –  
experience gained from joint community development in Germany**

How can local authorities foster participation and volunteering of elderly citizens? Many insights about supportive frameworks on the local level have been gained within the programme “Aktiv im Alter” (Active Ageing) by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth: A total of 175 municipalities from small villages up to big cities like Hamburg or Munich have taken part in the programme that was dedicated to the strengthening of participation of elderly citizens from 2008 until 2010.

Surveys about existing demands and local citizens’ panels have been important tools in order to activate elderly citizens and to enable the development of projects, mostly run by the citizens themselves. More than 20,000 people attended the citizens’ panels. 890 projects were put into practice.

Each municipality had to initiate its own process by creating task groups with relevant actors. Most of these working groups will proceed with their activities since they proved to be a suitable means to structure activities for “active ageing”.

In my contribution I would like to report about experiences made and to pass on the recommendations for successful project implementation to those, who would like to initiate such a process. Since cooperation of many actors, such as municipalities, associations, initiatives and citizens is important, all these actors are addressed and may suggest the launch of such a process within their local communities.

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