



In collaborazione con



STREAM 2

Promoting social participation at local level: theoretical and practical issues

Stream Coordinator

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Contrary to what often think policy- and politics-makers, the capacity, the willingness and the motivation of individuals to participate cannot be taken for granted. Participation is cultural-cognitive and time demanding; it is filtered by gender, social condition, education; it is influenced by space and territorial aspects; it is related to political dynamics both at local and beyond the local level and so on and so forth.

What can we learn from the many and different experiences of participation made at the local level? What do the success cases teach us? And what about the cases of (complete or partial) failure? Moreover, participation itself can be questioned: when is it really useful and effective? What kind of ambiguities and ambivalences are interwoven in practices of participation? What kind of virtuous and/vicious circles can emerge between innovative participatory devices and more traditional, political and institutional mediated ways of participation? What relationships do exist between participation and the objects which are treated through it? In which way can social organization of spaces promote or discourage participation?

People participate in different ways (also) according to the different characters of places: formal assemblies, institutionalized meetings, informal and open places in the urban context, etc. Participation can be performed differently in different places and spaces, formally institutionalized spaces of the public sphere, but also informal, easily accessible places (squares, gardens, cafes, etc): what kind of relationships do exist between these different spaces and practices? Is there any relationship between these different kind of places? Participation and deliberative practices have a relevant role in the development of human capability: in which ways do “voice” and “capacity to aspire” strengthen and promote the participation of individuals in search of solutions to the difficulties they experience?

As we can see from the questions raised above, participation is a sort of anthropological issue: what feed and what destroy the individual interest to participate and to do a public use of individual competences' of evaluation? Of course, the current crisis or

deep metamorphosis of the “democratic capitalism” strongly affect issues related to participation.. For this stream, papers from different methodological perspectives (at macro, micro and meso level) and different disciplinary fields are welcome.