

EMUN 2018 | Special Conference on Cities and Sustainable Urban Development for Communities -
Measures to empower city's leadership and citizen's participation |



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**Special Conference on Cities and Sustainable
Urban Development for Communities - Measures
to empower city's leadership and citizen's
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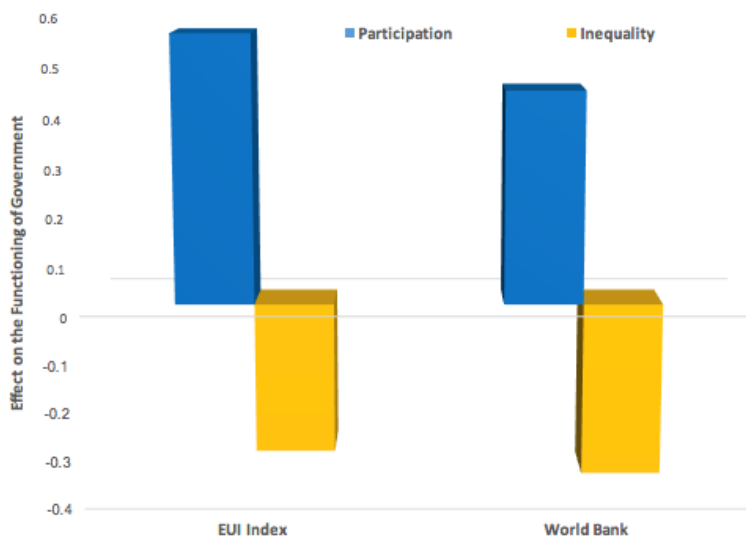
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Introduction

Citizen's participation is directly connected to the improvement of city's leadership, it could be said that in a democracy if more citizens participate there is a better government; some of the problems that have grown due to urban development are affecting the functioning of governments.

One of the main problems affecting the relation between citizen's participation and the empowerment of city's leadership is the high rate of inequality. As shown in the graph inequality is important, when there is large inequality in overall participation, good governance is lower. In sum, the best democratic governance generally occurs when citizens are more active and the participation gap is smaller.



As we can see in the graph inequality affects citizen's participation and that affects the leadership of a city and its Sustainable Development, because as a result of inequality poverty is created and those are two of the main aspects tackled by the Sustainable Development Goals, that means that for a city to be sustainably well it doesn't need to have either poverty or inequality. |

Definition of key-terms

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development was defined under the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development as the “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” and it has three dimensions of development: economic development, social development and environmental development.

Citizen

The term citizen has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. Citizens have a set of rights and responsibilities, including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is a process which provides private individuals an opportunity to influence public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process.

Leadership

Leadership is about mapping out where you need to go to "win" as a team or an organization; and it is dynamic, exciting, and inspiring.

Leader

A guiding or directing head, as of an army, movement, or political group.

Empowerment

Empowerment is based on the idea that giving employees skills, resources, authority, opportunity, motivation, as well holding them responsible and accountable for outcomes of their actions, will contribute to their competence and satisfaction.

Inequality

Inequality the state of not being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities is a concept very much at the heart of social justice theories. However, it is prone to confusion in public debate as it tends to mean different things to different people. Some distinctions are common though. Many authors distinguish “economic inequality”, mostly meaning “income inequality”, “monetary inequality” or, more broadly, inequality in “living conditions”. Others further distinguish a rights-based, legalistic approach to inequality of rights and associated obligations.

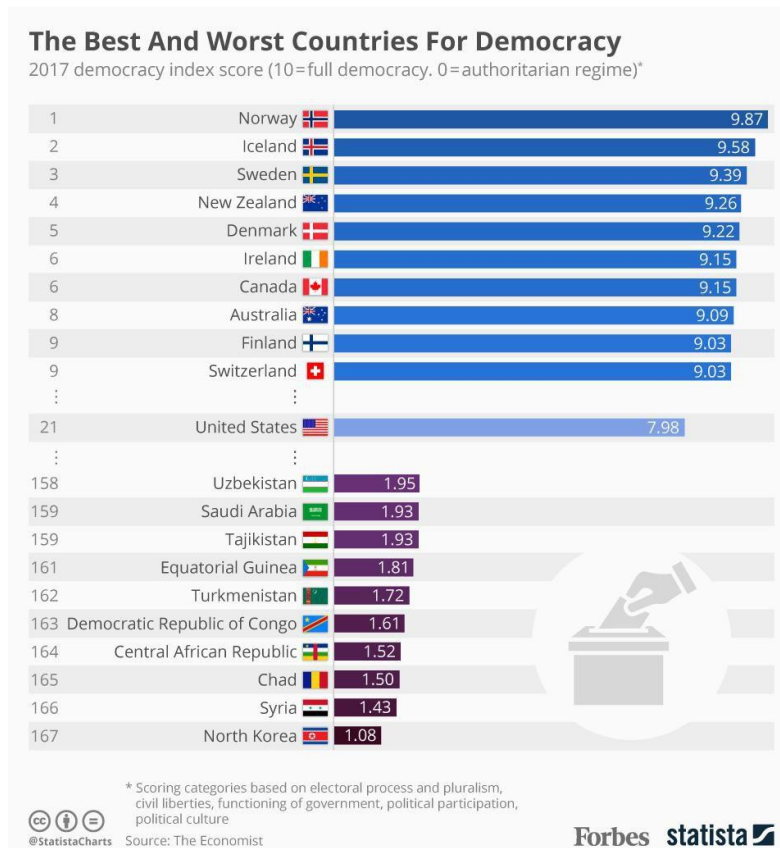
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General Overview Background

If we think of the beginnings of democracy we have to date back to Ancient Greece. In Greek "democracy" means "power of the people". Although at that time cities were much smaller the basis was the same as it is supposed to be nowadays.

Democracy

In 2017, Norway was ranked the world's best democracy, recording the highest score across the above criteria, 9.87. Two other Northern European countries, Iceland and Sweden, came second with scores of 9.58 and 9.39 respectively. In last year's study, the United States was downgraded from a "full democracy" to a "flawed democracy" and in the 2017 edition, it only came 21st overall with a score of 7.98. Unsurprisingly, North Korea and its authoritarian regime comes rock bottom of the ranking with a score of 1.08. Chad and Syria complete the bottom-three countries with both scoring 1.5 or less. Saudi Arabia is also among the ten worst countries for democracy.



Norway

The political engagement in Norway is the best in the world with high levels of membership in political parties and a large voter turnout and this is what separates a flawed democracy from a full one. In Norway, 78 percent made their voice heard in the general election, 20 percentage points higher than in the U.S. One reason for this rather large difference could be the barrier to voting, registration, which in Norway is an automatic process for all citizens.

In a more simple way, the political participation is sprung from the idea of each and all being able to affect the future of the nation. In Norway, a coalition is formed when no party receives the majority of the votes.

According to the Palma ratio figures in the UN Human Development Index, Ukraine, Norway and Slovenia were the most equal countries to live in when considering distribution of income between the richest and poorest in society. South Africa, Haiti and Botswana had the starkest inequalities in income, based on the Palma ratio.

Inequality

Inequality is also a profound moral challenge, as economic inequalities as well as political and social exclusion represent a major impediment to achieving the vision to leave no one behind. Inequality is closely linked to peace and security as unequal distribution of resources can foster conflict, war and displacement. Inequality can create vicious cycles of poverty that reinforce vulnerabilities and negatively affect those in greatest need, with the potential to create further instability and conflict.

Seen from a more general point of view the task of local government is to make decisions in local matters and to be a link between citizens and central government. To most citizens central government is something distant and the most important link is the vote every fourth year. In the long periods between elections, local government should give citizens a feeling that they are included in the system of governance. In other words: a feeling of ownership.

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Major parties involved and their views

National Democratic Institute

NDI has supported the advancement of democracy in nearly every corner of every continent, monitoring elections, training political leaders, supporting civic engagement, promoting opportunities for women and helping build democratic institutions. Every country is different, and embarks on its own unique path to a democratic outcome.

Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)

MKSS has been deeply involved in a collective process which has shaped and influenced the Campaign for the Right to Information in India. MKSS makes the case that without access to information and transparency there can be no genuine participation of all members of society, particularly the poor, in democracy.

UNDP

Working with 170 countries the UNDP looks to foster international cooperation and increased information dissemination to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations Development Programme was created in 1965 to achieve the eradication of poverty, inequalities, and social exclusion.

Norway

Norwegians are the happiest people in the world living in the world's greatest democracy. This is the conclusion from The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, which ranks Norway as number one for the sixth consecutive year. The political engagement in Norway is the best in the world with high levels of membership in political parties and a large voter turnout.

UN-Habitat

The United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) is the major UN party focused in dealing with human settlements and sustainable urban development. It was formed in 1974 and is dedicated in applying its technical expertise for all UN nations to achieve the new Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goal

World Bank

The World Bank is the creator of the first Poverty and Shared Prosperity file and is working towards the reduction of inequality and poverty as stated on the file, with the aim of fulfilling Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 10.

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Timeline of important events/Documents |

1718 – Sweden was the first country to allow Female taxpaying members of city guilds to vote in local city elections.

1893 – New Zealand was the first self-governing colony in the world in which all women are given the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

May/June 1976- UN-Habitat I is established as an outcome of the First UN Conference on Human Settlements and Sustainable Urban Development, which took place in Vancouver Canada.

December 1977- Habitat I resulted in the creation, of the precursors of UN-Habitat: the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (commonly referred to as “Habitat”), which served as the executive secretariat of the Commission.

June 1996- Habitat II the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements was held in Istanbul, Turkey.

July 2015- Resolution 69/313: Establishment of Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing sustainable development.

September 2015 - A/RES/70/1 General Assembly decides on new global Sustainable Goals for the following 15 years.

October 2016 –The first Poverty and Shared Prosperity file was created. The Poverty and Shared Prosperity is an annual series that provides a global audience of development practitioners, policy makers, researchers, advocates, and citizens with the latest and most accurate estimates on trends in global poverty and shared prosperity.

October 2016 - Habitat III offers a unique opportunity to discuss the important challenges of how cities, towns, and village can be planned and managed, in order to fulfill their role as drivers of sustainable development, and how they can shape the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

UN involvement

New Urban Agenda

The New Urban Agenda was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016. It represents a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future – one in which all people have equal rights and access to the benefits and opportunities that cities can offer, and in which the international community reconsiders the urban systems and physical form of our urban spaces to achieve this.

Addis Ababa Action Agenda

The Action Agenda establishes a strong foundation to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It provides a new global framework for financing sustainable development by aligning all financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental priorities.

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Possible Solutions

Give the people the necessary tools

In order to make people participate and ensure a strong participation, they need to be sure, and know how to participate and that is where the government has to be prepared to facilitate citizen participation. One very useful way to do this is by social media, nowadays media has such a powerful impact on people that it is a space in which debates and dialogues take place and where transparency is improved, especially in areas of conflict.

Reduce inequality

One of the main problems in nowadays society is inequality and it is one of the most important things in order to achieve good citizen participation. We have to recognize everyone as an equal if we want to improve nowadays society if not we are going to reach anywhere and being exclusive towards the weak or powerless is one of the main causes of poverty and weak leadership. As stated in sustainable development goal 10 we need to reduce inequality because in this case is affecting the effectiveness of a country's government, so we need to start by reducing inequality between and among countries in order to improve city's leadership and citizen's participation all around the globe.

Education

The problem with this is that generally people do not know how to participate or where to go to participate, and governments do not teach people on the subject because in some cases it might not be beneficial for them to be receiving one, five, ten or a hundred thousand different opinions or suggestions on how to do things from different point of view, but if they want their leadership to succeed they will need citizens participation.

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