

# Participation

Based on an interview with

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## Participation, a key issue for all

Talking about participation we should have in mind the idea of **engagement**. Engagement is important within stakeholders, especially in responsible research and social innovation.

All persons are important actors in decision making process. That is why, **decisions** should be made not for people, but **with people**, and this means participation.



## Participation & engagement

Older persons can and should be engaged in social and political activities, in economic activities, in education.

In **social organizations**, or organizations supporting the needs or the interests of **political parties**, the elderly can influence policies and decisions to the benefit of the whole society.

In **labor market**, smart elderly, who are 50-60 years old or even older, can bring their capacities equal to young people and foster performance and know how development.

In **education**, they can also help looking after children, playing with them, or even doing activities in schools with children of different ages.



## Where are the main gaps?

**Mentoring** is really an unrepresented area for the participation of older persons who don't find fields where they can mentor.

Thanks to their expertise and professional knowledge, they can be mentor of younger workers, facilitating their professional growth.

In some cases elderly still have **scarce opportunities** to meet younger generations and approach individuals of other ages who could learn from them, and gain from their life experience.

## Programmes and policies

Actually, there are little **programmes** or policies that really increased participation of older people.

Some programmes were carried out in 2012. But after that year all the programmes were ended and very little continuation has remained.

Through participation the elderly can really influence different **welfare policies**, but this influence should not come out through criticism, but rather through **constructive proposals**.

These constructive proposals can be achieved through **membership** of the elderly in social organizations, where they can focus on specific areas.

They have collective thinking and they can produce proposals on equal status that might be respected by **decision makers**.