

NAME OF THE PRACTICE

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP



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Short summary of the practice: Active citizenship in this context refers to the power of individuals or small groups of residents to proactively engage in community mapping exercises to improve their city or neighbourhood. Being an active citizen means being part of the community through individual civic engagement and exercising rights and responsibilities in a balanced way.

Goal of the practice: Identify and address community problems or overlooked issues in the development of the neighbourhood.

Target group: Residents of the city

Number of participants: One person or small group up to 8 people

Age of participants: Young people and adults, 12+

Materials: Varies depending on the focus and scope of the project. However, there may be a need for mobile phones and cameras to collect evidence for urban-based projects and print/digital materials for workshops, paper, pens, pencils, physical/digital maps.

Method Settings: Varies depending on the focus and scope of the project. May require urban or workshop space, digital platform to initiate discussion.

Duration of the practice: Varies depending on the focus and scope of the project. However, it's the long-term projects that require time not only to research the topic but also to initiate activities.

Preparation: Varies depending on the focus and scope of the project. Preparation may include researching historical facts about the currently neglected or problematic urban spaces, organising a local workshop with residents to gather ideas and opinions, writing a blog post or conducting an online survey.

Step-by-step guide:

Resident-initiated mapping projects are diverse. However, they tend to be inspired by acute community problems or neglected neighbourhood development issues.

Citizens can document the neglected spaces in the city by taking photos and adding them to the map if they have the opportunity and skills. A discussion can then be started on the local community platforms. Ideally, an active group can be formed to initiate some changes.

Expected output: The results of mapping projects powered by active citizenship can differ depending on their objectives and the ability of the organizers to deliver. Yet, a common thread among these projects is a compelling map that underscores community concerns and emphasizes the call for change or action.

DOs, DONTs and ethical considerations of the method:

Do share constructive content.

Avoid sensitive or sexual content

Change the method brings to the communities: Active citizenship can trigger far-reaching changes in communities and policies. However, its success depends on many factors. The resonance of the topic, the techniques of data gathering and communication, and ensuring that the right stakeholders are engaged at key moments are all key to achieving meaningful impact.

Adaptation/Application of the method:

The method can be adapted to any context by anyone, provided they have the drive and passion to effect change. Consider the MAXICO case study, “Mapping Helsinki’s Gravel Fields.” In this instance, a Helsinki resident took it upon himself to spotlight the underutilized gravel fields within the city’s inner parks. Aiming to ignite discussions about smarter public space utilization and the enhancement of urban life quality, he meticulously mapped, observed, and photographed these fields. His efforts culminated in an online map and a detailed blog.

Credit, References, and Resources:

<http://www.participology.com/index.php>

<http://www.participology.com/case-studies.php#>

Robinson, G. M., Hardman, M., & Matley, R. J. (2021). Using games in geographical and planning-related teaching: Serious games, edutainment, board games and role-play. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 4(1), 100208.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2021.100208>

Mapping Helsinki's Gravel Fields - <https://urbanfinland.com/2022/08/10/what-is-the-future-for-helsinkis-mini-deserts/>

The Centre of Democracy blog post - Active Citizenship - <https://www.centreofdemocracy.sa.gov.au/active-citizenship/>

Active citizenship in a democracy - <https://www.rememberingresistance.com/active-citizenship.html>

Applying Active Citizenship Indicators to Practice, the resource that has been developed as a supplement to Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network's (MYAN - Australia) National Youth Settlement Framework (NYSF) - https://myan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/nysf-applying-active-citizenship-indicators-to-practice_.pdf

A collection of resources from Young Citizens - a citizenship education charity. It helps educators offer inspiring citizenship education for their pupils and students - both as a part of the curriculum and beyond - <https://www.youngcitizens.org/>

Scientific papers:

Students as active citizens: A systems perspective on a Jean Monnet module, experiential learning and participative approaches - <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333771976>

Active Citizenship: An Empirical Investigation - <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232005356>