

The Community Shop

THE CITY/REGION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY

A Learning Region is an inclusive and democratic region. It will inform its citizens about the need for the journey and engage them in it not just as passengers but as activators and drivers. In this section, we would like to explore with you several aspects of local and regional democracy and participation. It will help Regions identify the actions they can take in order to activate the community to contribute to the construction of the learning city/region.

1.1 Firstly, please consider the following quotations and let us know how they equate to the perception of those responsible for guiding the authority into the future.

1= crucial to the future development of the authority

2= very important – implementable strategy now in place

3= important enough to warrant the development of a strategy

4= interesting but not important enough to warrant strategy development

5= Not relevant

		1	2	3	4	5
1.1.1	<i>‘Effective governance of the City relies on an empowered local government and strong avenues for participation by stakeholders such as citizens, businesses and communities. The strengthening of participation in the governance of a city relies on the strengthening of direct citizen and community involvement in decision-making channels. A truly participative society must design its channels of participation to include all citizens. Too often older people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, young people and children, to name a few are excluded from decision making processes (Dublin City Development Board)’</i>					
1.1.2	<i>Links need to be made out into the community and to peoples’ places of work and leisure through sensitive, trusted and sustained outreach. This means stimulating demand by building upon these activities which already interest and involve people or which express their own priorities and aspirations. It also entails targeted activity to raise expectations amongst children and adults, through schools, voluntary and community groups, work and trade unions. (European Memorandum on Lifelong Learning)</i>					
1.1.3	<i>As the focus of education is changing from teaching to learning, and on the problems of the learner in order to satisfy the needs of the customer, so the focus of the service departments of our cities will change from reactive caring to proactive enabling of individuals in order to help them to help themselves. This will entail not just better cross-departmental communication, but a total rethink of the way services are administered in a more holistic way. (Full Service Learning)</i>					

1.1.4 What is your present opinion on democracy and participation in the community. Please use the box below to put any comment you wish.

--

1.2 Trends in personal involvement

Here we explore with you the extent to which people are presently involving themselves in the life and activities of the region. How true are the following typical of your authority?

		True	Partly True	False	Don't Know
1.2.1	Falling levels of participation in local organisations and projects				
1.2.2	Low election turnouts				
1.2.3	General apathy about politics				
1.2.4	Feelings of isolation in the majority of citizens from local government concerns				
1.2.5	A lack of active consultation processes that are worthwhile and meaningful				
1.2.6	Absence of networks to facilitate a participative democracy				
1.2.7	A need to improve the capacity of local communities to tackle local problems				
1.2.8	A need for a policy to increase participation in the community				
1.2.9	A greater need for the transparency and accountability of statutory agencies				
1.2.10	A lack of media interest in local communities				
1.2.11	A growing appetite in the community to participate in a more meaningful and constructive way in the workings of local government				
1.2.12	A growing appetite to participate in voluntary activities				
1.2.13	Other trends (please say)				

1.3 A Learning Authority will have active plans to increase participation in local and regional activities. To what extent does your Authority believe in the following:

- 1= strongly believe and have active plans to encourage it
 2= strongly believe and are thinking about how to implement
 3= Could be important but has a low priority at present
 4= Unlikely to address this issue in the near future

		1	2	3	4
1.3.1	Consulting local community organisations about learning region policies?				
1.3.2	Writing and delivering a booklet about learning region to every household				
1.3.3	Including representatives of community groups on a lifelong committee or board?				
1.3.4	Actively promoting active citizenship to develop of a participative, caring society?				
1.3.5	Creating new channels of participation at neighbourhood level				
1.3.6	Carrying out a region-wide Neighbourhood Mapping Exercise to determine new neighbourhood participative structures				
1.3.7	Carrying out local referendums on learning region policy				
1.3.8	Ensuring greater accountability of service providers in the City to the communities they serve				
1.3.9	Developing innovative methods of consultation and participation that ensure the inclusion of all groups in decision making processes, especially older people, people with disabilities and young people				
1.3.10	Putting up posters about the learning city and/or the value of contribution				
1.3.11	Establishing a Good Urban Governance Audit and Excellence Mark				
1.3.12	Promoting examples of national and international best practice of good participation.				
1.3.13	Providing an on-line directory of community & voluntary organisations active in the City				
1.3.14	Developing a volunteers register for the region				
1.3.15	Advertising volunteering opportunities				
1.3.16	Increasing the number of Community bulletin boards				
1.3.17	Supporting the development of Community TV Channels for the region				
1.3.18	Facilitating the development of a support secretariat for each neighbourhood				
1.3.19	Developing a Consultation Resource Pack to advise statutory service providers, businesses, community organisations, agencies and individuals on consultation and channels of participation.				

1.3.20	Facilitating the availability of information to citizens through the use of the web				
1.3.21	Increasing opportunities for access to the internet for all citizens				
1.3.22	Including local schools in the Learning Region Consultation process				
1.3.23	Linking with other city/regions in learning City matters eg twinning				
1.3.24	Other initiatives - please indicate in the boxes below				
1.3.25					
1.3.26					
1.3.37					

1.4 If you wish to make any comment for discussion about active citizenship, involving the community etc please put them in the box below

1.5 Partnerships and Relationships with stakeholders

A Learning Region will encourage and enable its stakeholders to participate in the construction of the Learning Region. Stakeholders in this sense means any organisation which has a capability to contribute to the future of the learning authority and/or an interest in making it happen – ie just about every organisation in the authority. We therefore explore together the extent to which the authority activates organisations to use their creative energies.

1.5 With which of the following organisations has the authority formally discussed its potential contribution to the building of the learning authority.

1= all these organisations 2= some of these organisations, 3= none of these organisations

		1	2	3
1.5.1	Schools			
1.5.2	University(s) if any			
1.5.3	Adult Education Colleges			
1.5.4	Small Businesses			
1.5.5	Large companies			
1.5.6	Neighbourhood Community Centres			
1.5.7	Voluntary organisations			
1.5.8	The Police department			
1.5.9	Social Services department			
1.5.10	Hospitals and the Health Departments			
1.5.11	Libraries			
1.5.12	Museums			
1.5.13	The Chief Executive's Office			
1.5.14	The Education Department of the Local Authority			
1.5.15	Financial Services department of the Local Authority			
1.5.16	The City/region Publicity and Information Department			
1.5.17	The City Development Board			
1.5.18	Other (please state in the boxes below)			
1.5.19				
1.5.20				
1.5.21				

1.6 Activities and contributions.

Here we explore with you the sorts of activities you may have discussed in order to mobilise these organisations in the service of the construction of the learning authority

3.6 Please say which of the following activities you have (or will have) enabled to allow these organisations to contribute more effectively.

		Yes	No	In plan	Don't know
1.6.1	Actively enabling Schools-industry partnerships				
1.6.2	Actively creating a structure for other partnerships in the authority				
1.6.3	Developing a leadership strategy for each sector				
1.6.4	Encouraging local schools to include contribution to the community in their social curriculum				
1.6.5	Encouraging and aiding employees to spend at least 5% of their working time to contribute to community development				
1.6.6	Encouraging business and industry to do the same				
1.6.7	Carrying out a schools lifelong learning and contribution audit*				
1.6.8	Carrying out an Adult Education College lifelong learning and contribution audit*				
1.6.9	Carrying out a universities lifelong learning and contribution audit*				
1.6.10	Carrying out a small businesses lifelong learning and contribution audit*				
1.6.11	Including them in the Learning City development Committee				
1.6.12	Developing a leaflet for each stakeholder on the learning authority and what its contribution might be				
1.6.13	Developing a lifelong learning roadshow for organisations –(a peripatetic group for visiting stakeholders)				
1.6.14	Organised a stakeholders conference or seminar				
1.6.15	Organising a mentoring scheme between citizens and stakeholders				
1.6.16	Carried out audits of learning needs				
1.6.17	Linking schools with schools in other learning city/regions to discuss contribution				
1.6.18	Linking adult education colleges with those in other learning city/regions				
1.6.19	Discussing with each stakeholder what each can do to help the learning city/region flourish				
1.6.20	Including lifelong learning and learning city/region concepts on in-service training courses for teachers				
1.6.21	Turning schools into community centres where every member of the community can congregate for learning stimulation				
1.6.22	Encouraging schools to include all ages in their classes				
1.6.23	Organising a Learning Festival in which all stakeholders can participate				
1.6.24	Other (please say below)				

***NB – Separate stakeholder Audits exist for schools, universities, small businesses and adult vocational education institutions**