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Citizenship policy

CHANGE! Good practice factsheet

Image/photo of good practice/initiative





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Description of the good practice /initiative: history, activities, number of involved people, territorial scope, current scale, future plans, impact and benefits (**Max. 400 words**)

Aarhus co-creates the city's first citizenship policy

In order to develop and maintain a sustainable social and economic welfare society, politicians, citizens, businesses, clubs, associations and city council employees need to rethink the way we coexist in Aarhus.

With the aim of defining the vision and foundations for an active citizenship, the City Council of Aarhus have adopted the first policy for citizenship for Aarhus City.

Citizenship concerns everyone - from toddler to mayor

As citizens in Aarhus we are all part of something larger than ourselves. Everyone is important but with regard to an active citizenship, each individual can choose to participate in a more or less active way.

Our citizenship policy addresses all citizens in Aarhus and concerns the city's cooperation with the citizens in all municipal administrations.

Our ambition is to make everyone living, working or studying in Aarhus a committed citizen.

The citizenship policy for Aarhus aims to:

- define roles and responsibilities for our cooperation about Aarhus
- inspire and create time and space for commitment
- help us proceed from words to action
- promote compassion and acceptance
- help create a sense of security and belonging for everyone
- contribute to a diverse society where people of different age, locality, ethnicity and lifestyle will meet and coexist

A new kind of cooperation:

For the first time we have developed a policy through co-creation together with citizens, businesses, associations, volunteers, local authorities, educational institutions, politicians - and all those who normally do not feel included. More than 700 people have participated in the process. Our aim is to create:

- A wide, open-minded and engaging process for all, where everyone involved has the opportunity to discuss subjects relating to citizenship - issues that are important to them - and define themes and content that will be part of the policy.
- A consolidated abstract of the many contributions from all involved parties followed by an open consultation with sufficient time to submit and address the incoming statements.
- An easily readable, relevant, ambitious and robust policy which defines vision and foundations for citizenship in Aarhus.

Brief description of how the specific local public service has been challenged (with figures, if possible)

Our ambition is to create a strong cooperation across systems and boundaries, which often is the main barrier for strengthen community cohesion - both organisational and economic. We want to strengthen the local involvement, the local communities and the political dialogue between citizens and city council.

Role of the municipality within the process (e.g. how the municipality facilitates or coordinates the process to systematise/upscale a civic initiative)

Aarhus City Council is ultimately responsible for the policy, but to live by it will be everyone's responsibility in Aarhus.



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In the future, our citizenship policy will lay the foundation for the development of our city and for our municipal welfare models

The Aarhus way of developing a citizenship policy has inspired other municipalities both in Denmark and internationally.

Recently, our Danish parliament, Folketinget, sought inspiration in Aarhus in connection with an upcoming public consultation where a number of EU issues will be subject to debate between citizens, politicians and various professionals

Key attributes (success factors) enabling (municipal) staff to implement the project successfully

The local CHANGE Integrated Action Plan will deal with the problem, how to bridge the new citizenship policy with local, community-led initiatives, which will hopefully result in creating an environment where people-powered public services can flourish. The action plan should reflect learnings and become a relevant tool for further improvements toward a more collaborative city.

Links to website for further information on the good practice/initiative and recommendation to a specific partner

<http://www.aarhus.dk/da/politik/Udvalg/Medborgerskabsudvalget.aspx> (Danish)