

CIVEX

Exclusion from civic engagement of a diverse older population: Features, experiences, and policy implications

DURATION
1/10/2021 - 1/01/2025

BUDGET
244 050 €

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Description of research topic, main research questions and methods:

In Europe’s ageing societies, older adults continue to be at risk of social exclusion in key life domains, including material and financial resources, social relations, access to services, community and neighbourhood integration, and civic and cultural participation. A major shortcoming in the literature concerns the lack of conceptual development and empirical evidence on older adults’ exclusion from multidimensional civic engagement. CIVEX aims to meet this gap by investigating features of exclusion from multidimensional civic engagement in later life and older adults’ experiences of such exclusion, and by identifying evidence-based policy responses to address it. The CIVEX consortium includes five European countries selected to represent contrasting welfare state regimes and cultural contexts: Anglo-Saxon (UK), Continental (Belgium), Nordic (Sweden and Finland) and Southern (Spain). Taking a holistic perspective, the overarching aim of CIVEX is to examine, for the first time, exclusion from multidimensional forms of civic engagement in later life.

CIVEX will address five research objectives linked to multidimensional civic engagement of a diverse older population:

- O1)** micro-level variables, with a focus on a diversity and intersectionality (gender, socio-economic and ethno-cultural backgrounds);
- O2)** mesolevel variables; and
- O3)** macro-level drivers of exclusion; to understand how neighborhoods and communities as well as welfare state regimes influence the multidimensional exclusion from civic engagement of a diverse older population;
- O4)** lived experiences of inclusion and exclusion from civic engagement of potentially marginalised groups of older adults, who have been largely overlooked in previous studies; and
- O5)** life-course perspective to assess how conditions earlier in life and at key stages of the adult life course affect individuals’ opportunities to participate in multidimensional civic activities later in life.

Objectives 1, 2 and 3 will be examined using statistical methods, such as Latent class analysis and Multilevel analysis and will be conducted on data gathered from databases that are readily available, such as SHARE, ELSA, EVS and EuroStat statistics. Objectives 4 and 5 will be examined using in-depth life-story interviews with 60 persons residing in Belgium, 15 from each of four groups: (1) older people living in residential care institutions; (2) older people living at home who receive substantial social and/or health care via formal services; (3) older people living in socially disadvantaged areas and (4) older people with diverse migrant and ethno-cultural backgrounds. The identification, recruitment, and selection of the community-dwelling older people will be done by working with a purposeful sampling procedure, together with stakeholders (e.g. social-cultural associations, care organizations, social services from the municipalities).



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Results and impact:

The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to study older people's exclusion from civic engagement will allow us to understand how people give meaning to their life-course trajectories of inclusion and exclusion from civic activities. The use of a life-course qualitative analysis will also allow us to trace the causes and consequences of civic engagement trajectories over the life course. Taken together, findings from CIVEX will permit the creation of a comprehensive theoretical model to conceptualise exclusion from multidimensional civic engagement in later life. They will inform evidence-based policy and practice responses to promote greater inclusion.

CIVEX will also contribute to a nuanced representation of older citizens. Moreover, by giving voice to people who may be more at risk of experiencing exclusion from civic engagement in later life, CIVEX will contribute to exposing the inequalities faced by older people when it comes to fully exercising their citizenship rights.

With the objective of disseminating knowledge in appropriate scientific fora, a series of working papers is planned. Working papers will be presented first at international conferences to elicit feedback before being submitted to leading scientific journals. Thus, at least six posters/oral presentations will be presented at prestigious international congresses. Improved versions of the working papers will be submitted to peer-reviewed, high-impact journals.

Results from CIVEX will be disseminated to the general public through four complementary channels: 1) a website, 2) social and mainstream media, 3) a final integrated report, and 4) webinars. CIVEX also foresees five national policy workshops to engage relevant stakeholders in translating research evidence into policy and practice and identifying policy-relevant messages to inform decision-making processes. These five national policy workshops will result in five national policy briefs. A final conference will be organised in Brussels to engage relevant policymakers and stakeholders at the European level. This conference will result in a final report summarising research evidence, analysing policy challenges, and outlining a key set of policy messages to reduce civic exclusion in later life.

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LINKS

<https://www.civex.eu>