

Empowering People and Places

Welcome and introduction

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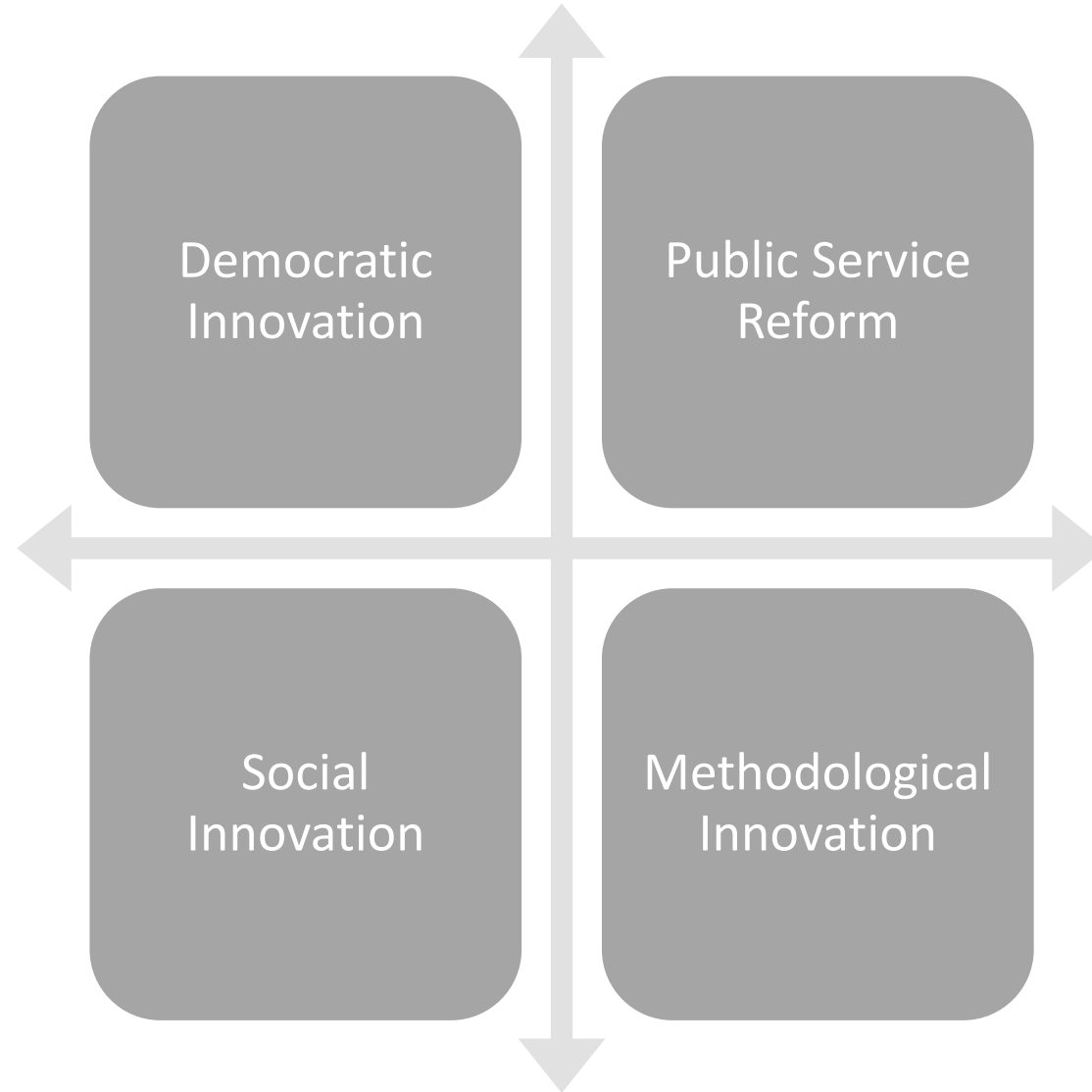
What Works Scotland / University of Edinburgh

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The **purpose of WWS** is to use **evidence**
to inform public service reform
and transform **public services**
for all of Scotland's **communities** to flourish

4 areas of innovation in contemporary governance



WWS activities



Aims of this conference

- share learning and resources developed across the WWS **research** programme and beyond
- make **connections** between researchers, citizens, practitioners and policy workers
- think together about **what's next** for community empowerment in Scotland.

Programme

09.30 – 10.00	Registration and tea/coffee
10.00 – 10.30	Welcome and introductions
10.30 – 11.10	Ministerial address and Q/A
11.10 – 12.30	Lightning talks and table conversations (1)
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.45	Lightning talks and table conversations (2)
14.45 – 15.05	Break
15.05 – 16.00	Closing session: What is next for community empowerment in Scotland?

Global democratic recession?



*Everywhere there are waves of criticism and doubt as to whether democracy can meet pressing problems ... **Wherever it has fallen, democracy had not become part of the bone and blood of the people in daily conduct of its life.** Democratic forms were limited to Parliament, elections and combats between parties. What is happening proves conclusively ... that unless democratic habits of thought and action are part of the fiber of a people, political democracy is insecure. It can not stand in isolation. It must be buttressed by **the presence of democratic methods in all social relationships.***

*John Dewey, **The Public and its problems** (1937: 467)*

But community empowerment and democratic innovation are also proliferating across the world

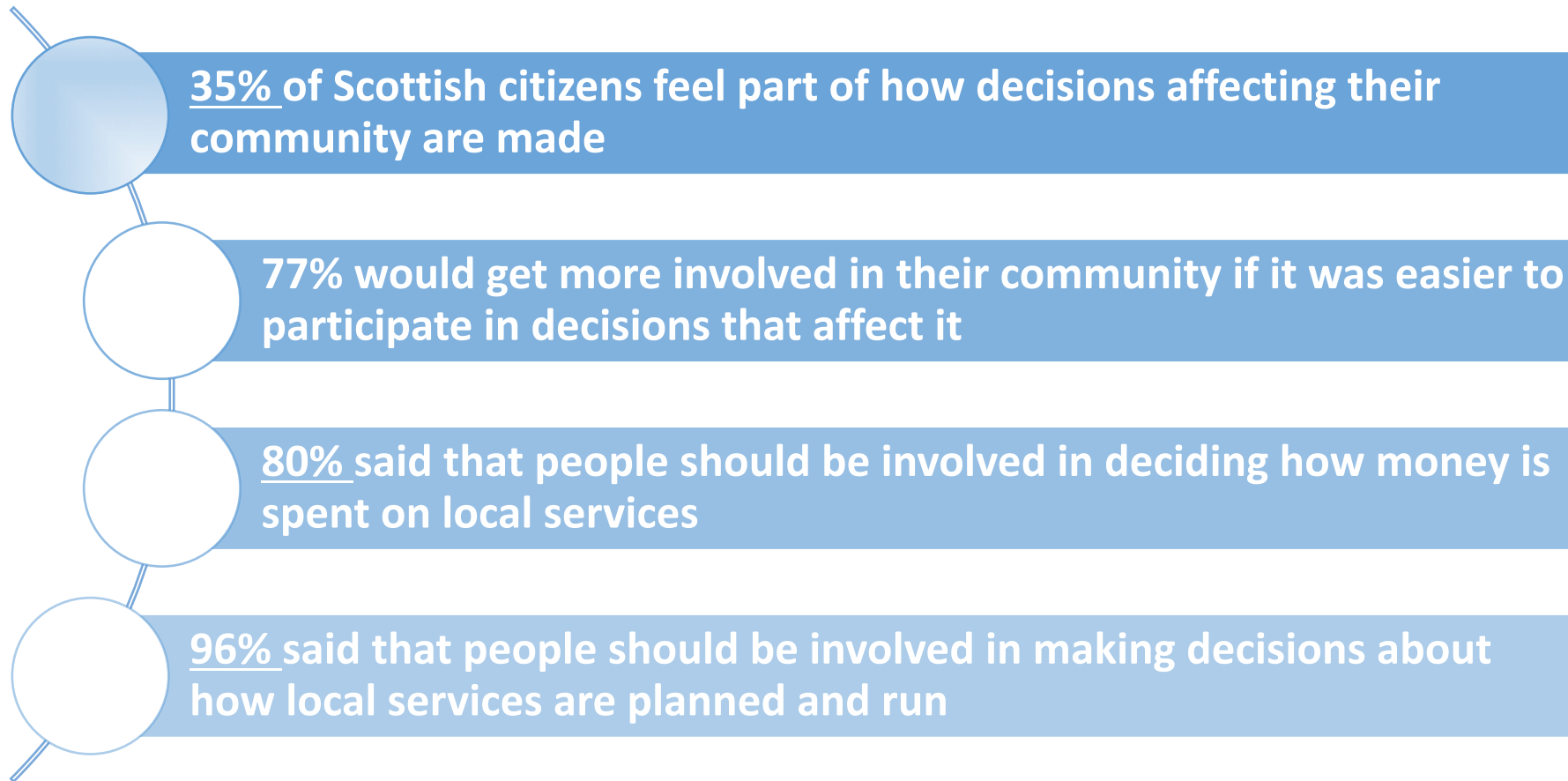


<http://participedia.net>



Participation in decision-making in Scotland deficits and aspirations

(Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2015 + Ipsos Mori 2014)



Scottish policy context for community empowerment and democratic innovation

- Local Governance Review (> *Local Democracy Bill?*)
- Review of Community Councils (2017-2018)
- Places, people and planning – Position Statement 2017
- Open Government Partnership
- Re-launch of the National Standards for Community Engagement (2016)
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- Participatory Budgeting national programme (2014-2018)
- COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy (2014)
- Parliamentary Local Government Committee (2013, 2014)
- National Planning Framework 3
- Christie Commission on Future Delivery of Public Services 2011
- Audits of Community Planning Partnerships (2011, 2013), Reviews of Community Planning (2012, 2016)

Community empowerment

- **Two sides**
 - **Community action** (grassroots, uninvited)
 - **Community engagement** (invited)
- **One spectrum**
 - From individual to collective

Empowerment and in/equalities

- Paradox of **growing opportunities for participation and growing inequalities** (Walker, McQuarrie & Lee 2015)
 - use of traditional consultation and lack of empowered participation
 - ‘self-selection bias’
- Inequalities in health, income, wealth, education... stemming from **inequalities of power and influence?**
- The participation gap (Dalton 2017) – **growing gap between the ‘politically rich’ and the ‘politically poor’**

*unless **corrective measures** put in place*

“participation of all varieties will be skewed in favour of those with higher socioeconomic status and formal education”

(Ryfe & Stalsburg 2012)