Best practices for communication and community engagement

Transparent noise management and community engagement in Ljubljana airport area

Municipality of Kranj, Slovenia

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Background to noise and health and the importance of communication

The theory surrounding effective communication and engagement

Goals for the industry – how far can we go?

'Next' Practice

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Background: Annoyance and Health

- Annoyance can best be seen as a specifically noise-induced outcome that is used to estimate the adverse impact of noise on human health.

- ANIMA, and recent WHO report highlight the role of *annoyance* and *sleep disturbance* as mediators of key health outcomes - notably cardiovascular disease.

*"A comprehensive approach to noise management should address annoyance."*

ANIMA Deliverable 2.4

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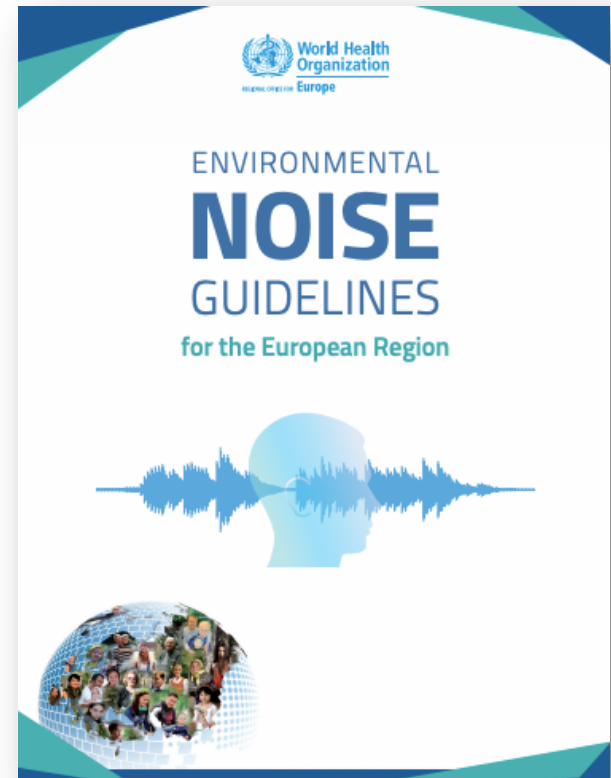
Background: Annoyance and Health

- Statistical analysis indicates that the noise level explains only about a part (**third)** of annoyance.

- Reducing noise although still important, may therefore not necessarily reduce annoyance.

We need to expand the focus of noise management beyond noise exposure reduction, and address impact directly… But How?

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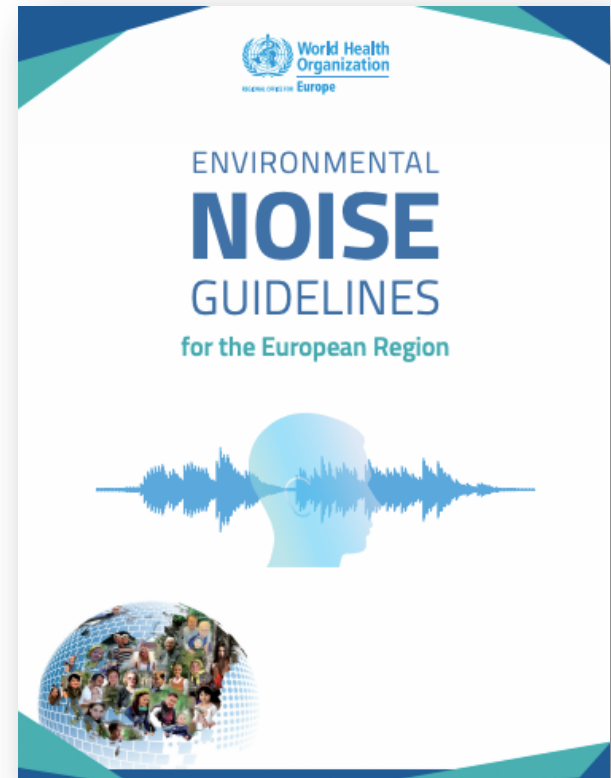
Annoyance and Non-Acoustic Factors

- The rest of the noise response is related to Non-Acoustic factors (and unknowns).

- Vader (2007) identified 31 NAFs able to influence noise impact, and categorised them by their strength as an indicator and the extent to which they could be modified by an airport.

- 7 NAFs were identified as being **modifiable** by industry stakeholders as well as playing a **strong role** in the response to noise. These are:

    - Attitude towards the source

    - Choice in insulation

    - Choice in compensation

    - Influence, voice (the opportunity to exert influence)

    - Perceived control

    - Recognition of concern

    - Trust

- All of these can be influenced by through airport-community dialogues.

- Thus, airports need to continue to manage down noise exposure through the Balanced Approach, but they can also play an active role in addressing NAFs.

- They are essentially in a negotiation with communities for a 'license to operate'.

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Traditional academic perspectives on 'knowledge'

	'Public Understanding of Science' – Deficit Model	Traditional Airport Model of Communication
Aims	To increase public appreciation for science by telling people more about science	Tell stakeholders 'what' is happening
Ownership	Scientific output is owned by the scientific community	Important data and knowledge owned by aviation stakeholders.
Methods	One-way – tells people about science	One-Way (Airport -> Resident)
Scope	Narrow – considers issues only within the scientific paradigm. Traditionally quantitative.	Narrow - only considers noise data so as to describe the 'what'.
Starting position	Science is expert – people just need to understand and accept their wisdom	Airport is Expert. Data is data.

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Changing perspectives

	'Public Engagement with Science and Technology' – Dialogue Model	Required Airport Model of Communication
Aims	To stimulate and inform discussion and to increase public awareness of scientific processes	Tell stakeholders 'why' things are happening and obtain their input to inform decisions.
Ownership	Scientific output is owned by society	Important data and knowledge owned by society.
Methods	Two-way – encourages feedback and discussion	Two-Way (Airport <-> Resident)
Scope	Broad – considers science issues within various social contexts and allows values and feelings to be included. i.e. qualitative.	Wide - considers a range of socio-economic and cultural factors to explain the 'why' and understand the 'what then'.
Starting position	Open minded – different parties will come with different views and a consensus will be reached	Open minded - different stakeholders offer their own expertise and views to be shared. A consensus can be reached.

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What does the theory say?

- Engagement must be meaningful, consistent, and comprehensive.
  - NOT -> tokenistic, an afterthought, or sporadic.
- There is lots of theory, but ultimately it takes you towards to concepts: **competence** and **fairness**.
- Competence
  - The ability of the participation to provide participants with the tools and knowledge needed to make best possible decisions, to 'understand' noise and what the airport is doing about it.
    - Use of lay language, relevant metrics and dissemination tools.
    - No complicated noise metrics that do not describe noise in the 'here and now'.
- Fairness
  - Make people feel like they are being listened to, spoken to honestly and treated fairly.
    - Two-way dialogues are essential.

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Two-Way Dialogues

- Airport-Community engagement is all too often a one way process.

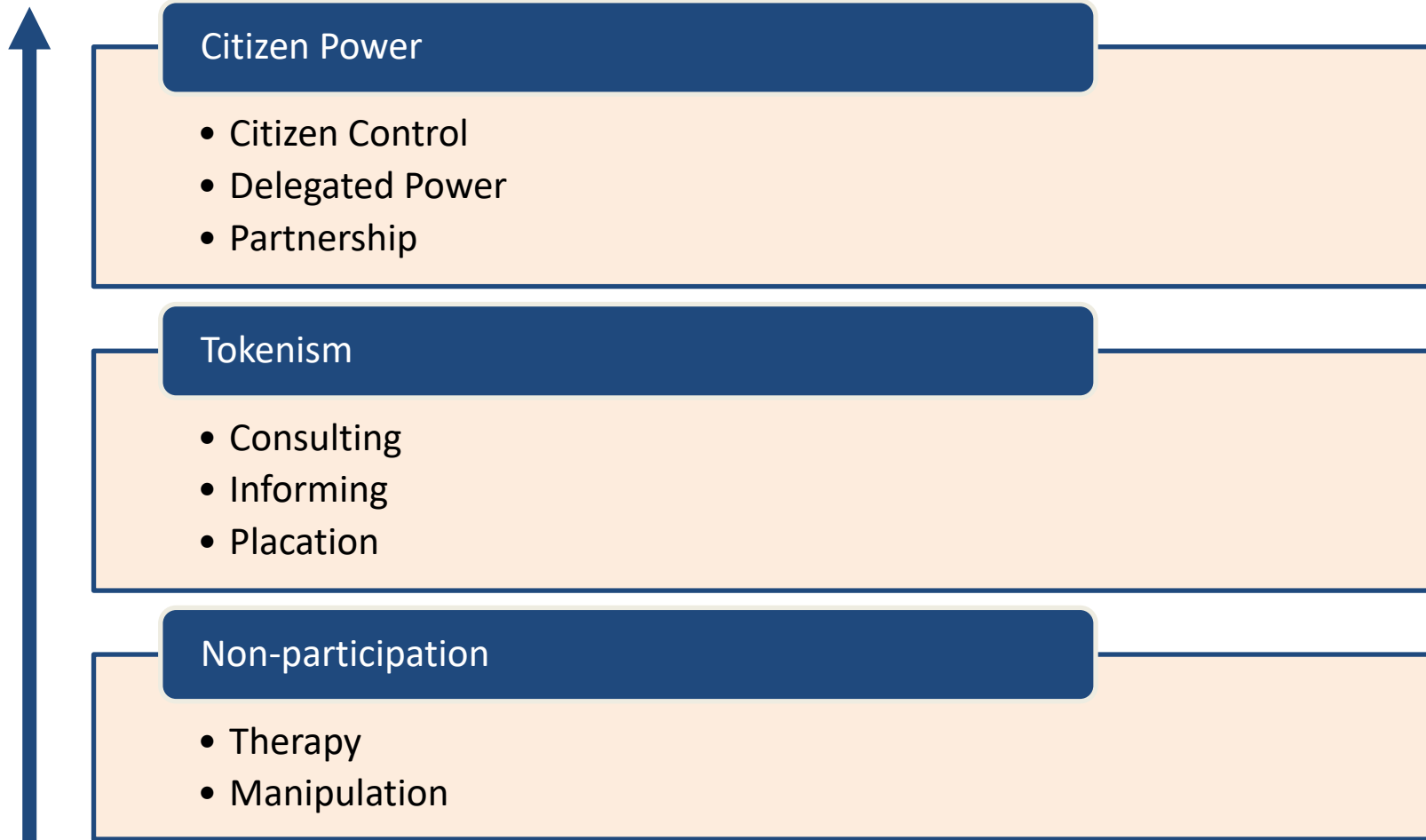| Airport	Information →	Public

- Although arguably better than no communication, one-way dialogues leads to voiceless, disinterested and discouraged audiences (Illingworth and Jack, 2018).

- Hierarchies must be levelled, allowing non-experts and experts to take part in meaningful dialogue, and through which the understanding and opinions of non-experts are not only fully expressed, but also considered in decision making.

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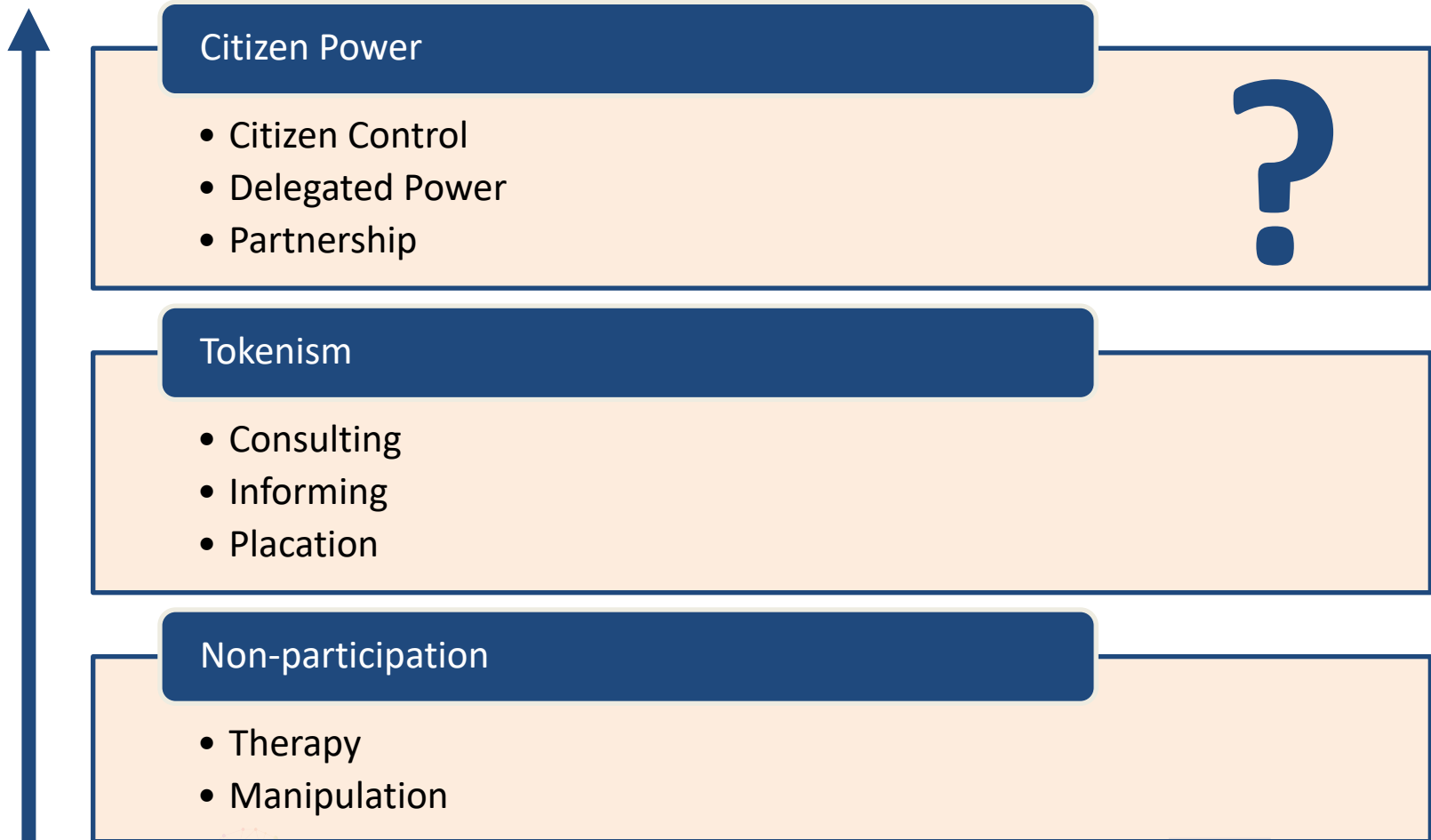
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Case Study: Vienna Airport

- Dialogue Forum
  - Created in response to third runway objections.
  - Independently lead – not by the airport.
  - Involves all stakeholders (industry, local authorities, communities).
  - Based on a agreed vision/mission statement in which the communities acknowledged the importance of the airport to the local region.
  - Data provided on request by dedicated person from National Air Space Provider, in person.
  - All communities consulted when a change is happening no matter where or how the change is taking place.
  - Annual reports reduced from almost 200 pages to approximately 30 to ensure only relevant information is given.

- The result: no changes to airspace made without consulting communities for over 10 years. All ultimately approved.

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Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

Citizen Power

- Citizen Control
- Delegated Power
- Partnership

Tokenism

- Consulting
- Informing
- Placation

Non-participation

- Therapy
- Manipulation

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How high up the ladder can we realistically go?

Citizen Power

- Citizen Control
- Delegated Power
- Partnership

?

Tokenism

- Consulting
- Informing
- Placation

Non-participation

- Therapy
- Manipulation

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Take Home Message

- There is no right answer on how to do communication and engagement perfectly.
  - Every airport is different and faces different challenges.
  - Every community is different and has different needs.
- The key thing is to listen, speak and engage with communities to find out what their their specific communication needs and wants are and to work to satisfy them.
  - What information do they want?
    - Lmax? Nx? Lden?
  - When and where do they need it and what what is the best medium they can be given it through?
    - Website? Mobile App? Leaflets? Annual Reports?
  - How much do they want?
    - Don't give them information overload.

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Example Questions

When implementing a noise management intervention airports should ask themselves:

- Do we identify the individuals or groups that are potentially affected?
- Are they given the opportunity to suggest issues to be discussed? Are their specific needs and concerns understood?
- Are all groups given an equal chance to participate (even those who on paper are not affected)?
- Does the process ensure that all terms, definitions and concepts are made explicit, open to debate and agreed upon?
- Where expert knowledge is brought to the discussion, there is opportunity to challenge this knowledge?
- Is anecdotal evidence and intuitive knowledge held by communities considered?
- Are stakeholders given a genuine opportunity to influence decisions?

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What is next for ANIMA

- Working with airports to help understand and implement this work in more detail.
  - What has been the impact of previous communication engagements?
  - What issues are important to communities? What information do they need? What is relevant to them? What means of communication are most effective?
  - How can science communication and engagement experts inform the process?

- We have to be mindful that the local characteristics of each airport are completely different. What works in one area might not work in another.

- Understanding the underpinning processes that can take airports towards best practice is the most important key element.

- This is a key component of the ANIMA Best Practice Portal.
  - Any views or perspectives on this would be welcome.

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Thank You