

**Abstract of Presentation to the Meeting of National Focal Points on Ageing
Segovia, Spain, 13-15 November 2006 on**

Participation and Influence of Older Persons in Israel

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Monday, October 16, 2006

During the past few years there has been a significant increase in the participation and influence of older persons in Israel, on policy, planning and provision of services for the elderly. Working in close cooperation with representatives of senior citizens in Israel society, the Service for the Aged of the Ministry of Social Affairs has encouraged their participation and cooperation in policy making, legislation, definition of rights and privileges, budgeting, enactment of regulations and provision of services.

Examples of such cooperation are:

1. The Party of Pensioners

The political party of pensioners, that succeeded, for the first time, in winning seats (7) in the Knesset (Parliament) during the last elections, was instrumental in increasing budgets for services for the elderly, in discussions with the Ministry of Finance.

2. The Union of Retired Persons

The Union influenced the Labour Party, currently a member of the coalition government, to demand rights and budgets for elderly persons.

3. "Round Tables"

Permanent fora have been established for regular meetings between the Service for the Aged of the Ministry of Social Affairs and NGOs serving the elderly, in order to discuss the development, planning and implementation of services such as 'friendly neighbourhoods', day care centres and other innovative programmes. In addition, the NGOs are consulted on financing of programmes, and realistic financial participation of the elderly.

4. Association of Residents of Sheltered Housing

Members of the Association are participating in the formulation of legislation, together with the Service for the Aged of Ministry of Social Affairs, that will help preserve their rights, and give them protection against private owners and managers of sheltered housing.

5. Committees of Residents of Homes for the Elderly

Regulations governing the Supervision of Homes for the Elderly Law include the rights of the elderly persons living there to form a committee that can influence many aspects of living conditions in the home. The Service for the Aged ensures that such committees are established.

It is the view of the Service for the Aged that incorporation of the views of elderly persons, and engaging their full cooperation, in development, planning and delivery of services, leads to better provision of services and enhanced client satisfaction.