

Thibauld Moulaert et Suzanne Garon (sous la direction, 2016), *Age Friendly Cities and Communities in International Comparison. Political Lessons, Scientific Avenues, and Democratic Issues*, New York: Springer Editor, 329 p.

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- 1 It is always difficult to synthesize the main message from a collective book, given the diversity of issues and countries mentioned in the book. This book is no exception. However, many important themes are covered, and many countries, which make the diversity interesting. One of the main dimensions to be noted here is the comparison between Europe and North America, including Canada. With the European Union financing, there are more and more European comparisons, but as the world goes beyond Europe, it is a good thing to see America, Asia and Australia considered and analyzed in this book.
- 2 The international comparison is not really present, or at least the readers have to do it largely themselves as most chapters are in one zone or country (France, Belgium, Québec, New York City...) so the analysis cannot readily be considered comparative, although there is a lot of information on various places, and a few more general articles.
- 3 There is also an excellent index at the end, which helps find specific information easily. So the book is an interesting addition to all the works on Active Ageing.
- 4 The first part of the book on “Age-Friendly Cities and Communities: From Ideas to Practices” is an excellent contribution to research, but can also be used in teaching, as

it gives the history of the implementation of the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities concept from the World Health Organization to more recent European Lessons. Alan Walker is amongst the main contributors to the analysis of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, and his contribution presents a Global and Theoretical Perspective, as well as European Lessons on Active Ageing. This first part, with four articles, is thus very useful to better understand the history of the concept, but also the theoretical underpinnings.

- 5 The second part of the book is centered on the idea of “One Model, Many Programs”, and it is here that the reader has to do a bit of work, to compare the various situations, understand the various contexts for the implementation of the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities concept in various countries, regions or cities. There is a diversity of levels of government involved in this and surely this makes the international comparisons interesting, while being somewhat more difficult as the policy issues and options vary whether we are considering a city, a region or a whole country. The diversity of countries or regions is impressive, but it is not always clear why these zones are considered, or considered interesting: Hong Kong, Argentina, New York City, Québec and Waterloo in Canada, France, Belgium, Victoria and Australia, and finally the European Union is analyzed.
- 6 While the analysis is not always exactly on the same themes and builds on different methodologies (some based essentially on documentary analysis, others more oriented towards research and lessons learned), some articles present interesting elements that could possibly be transferred to other countries. This part II of the book is largely descriptive (context, program, lessons...), but Part III leads to more elements of comparison, by highlighting the challenges and issues that arise in this context. The articles are not overly critical of the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities concept and programs, as many authors seem close to the implementation, but there are a few questions posed here and there, on the interrelated nature of Age-Friendly domains as well as the differential needs and priorities of various groups and stakeholders (Andrew Scharlack), the possible confusion of terms (Active and Healthy Ageing) and the issue of empowerment (in a very interesting article by Moulaert, Boudiny and Paris), the issue of spaces for All Ages (Biggs and Carr). These last articles in Part III bring together some elements of the previous case studies of cities, regions and countries, to lead us to a more general questioning of the concept and implementation of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.
- 7 All in all, a very interesting book for researchers and professors teaching on these themes. The book is surely an important addition to all the works of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, and has the quality of bringing together a series of case studies and also more general perspectives on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

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