

Deliberative Democracy in the Netherlands:  
The G1000 Groningen put in Perspective

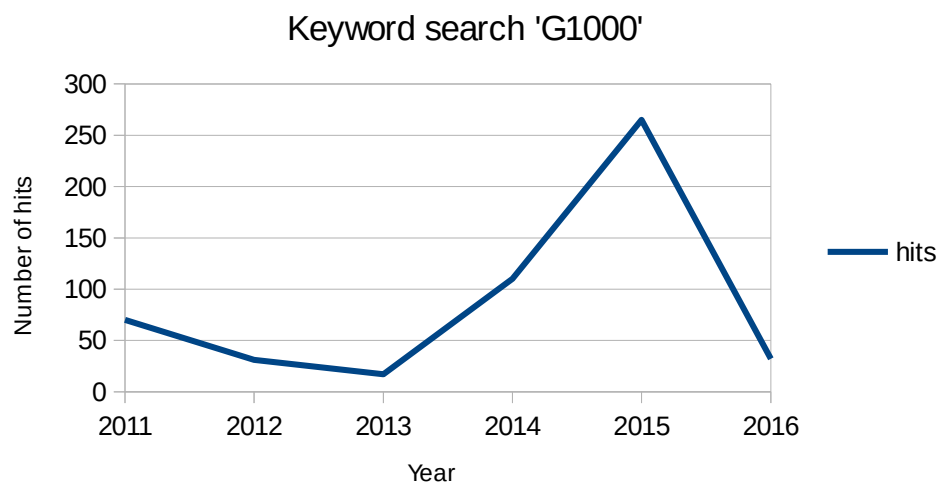
MA thesis History: Migration and Global Interdependence  
Gijs van Maanen (s1587781 | [g.van.maanen@umail.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:g.van.maanen@umail.leidenuniv.nl))  
Supervisor: prof. dr. Henk te Velde  
Second reader: prof. dr. Ton van Haften  
Word count: 32,991 (including footnotes, excluding chapter 8 and 9)  
April 2016  
Leiden University

## Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 Methods, methodology and materials.....	5
2. The Democratic Deficit.....	8
3. Deliberation in Belgium: a Short History of the Original G1000.....	12
3.1 A Deeply Divided Society.....	12
3.2 The G1000 Belgium.....	13
3.3 Evaluating the G1000.....	15
3.4 Van Reybrouck's Argument.....	17
3.5 Deliberative democracy: a Short Introduction.....	20
3.6 Conclusion.....	22
4. Citizen Participation in Groningen.....	23
4.1 The Harmoniekwestie.....	23
4.2. The Verkeerscirculatieplan.....	24
4.3 Groninger Museum.....	27
4.4 Grote Markt North-side.....	29
4.5 Tram.....	30
4.6 Grote Markt East-side.....	31
4.7 Conclusion.....	33
5. G1000 in the Netherlands.....	36
5.1 G1000 Amersfoort.....	36
5.2 G1000 Groningen.....	41
5.3 Results and evaluation.....	48
5.3.1 Informal results.....	49
5.3.2 Formal result.....	51
5.4 Conclusion.....	52
6. Evaluative chapter: putting the G1000 Groningen in its context.....	53
6.1 Citizenship.....	53
6.2 Democracy.....	55
6.3 Ideals and Criticism.....	57
7. Conclusion.....	60
8. Sources.....	63
8.1 References.....	63
8.2 Interviewees.....	67
8.3 Interview question list.....	67
9. Acknowledgments.....	69

## 1. Introduction

According to the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, 2015 was the year of the 'furious citizen'.<sup>1</sup> The newspaper cites part of a published letter by someone who did not agree with the fact that he had to pay the entrance fee to a swimming pool. Refugees, in contrast, were exempted from paying this fee. According to the newspaper, the angry letter was a symptom of widespread dissatisfaction with the functioning of Dutch government and democracy. The popular idea that there is something wrong with the functioning of our political institutions is not only proclaimed by Dutch citizens. For 27 Belgians the idea that there is something terribly wrong with democracy in general (and Belgian democracy specifically) was reason to write a manifesto, concluding that their democracy had become an electoral dictatorship in which a never-ending 'election fever' paralyzed the process of decision-making.<sup>2</sup> They were fed up with the fact that Belgium was lacking a functioning government for over a year and proposed a new democratic format: deliberative democracy. Instead of a political system in which elections and politicians are pivotal, deliberation between citizens and the active contributions by citizens to the process of democratic decision-making is central to this idea. To put it into practice, the founders of the manifesto organized a summit in 2011, where about 1000 Belgian citizens came together to discuss the democratic crisis they experienced. This summit, the 'G1000', was one of the first deliberative events ever organized in Belgium and did not go unnoticed. Apart from the attention it received in Belgium itself, the concept of the G1000 also made its way to the Netherlands. Graph (1) is indicative of the amount of attention the G1000 in Belgium and its Dutch equivalents received the last couple of years in the Dutch news.



*Graph 1: keyword search 'G1000' until February 17 2016 on Lexisnexis (<http://academic.lexisnexis.eu/>). I used the option to search for 'all Dutch news'.*

1 See: (<http://www.nrc.nl/next/2015/12/28/hoer-2015-het-jaar-van-de-boze-burger-werd-1572346>). Last accessed March 31 2016.

2 The manifesto itself can be found here: (<http://www.g1000.org/nl/manifest.php>).

Graph (1) shows the number of hits for the keyword 'G1000' in 'all Dutch newspapers' (according to Lexisnexis). A strong increase in attention given to the G1000 summit in Belgium is seen in 2011. In the Netherlands, in contrast, multiple smaller G1000s were and are being organized. From the city of Amersfoort, to that of Amsterdam, Apeldoorn, Groningen and Nijmegen, the focus of the Dutch G1000s appears to be local rather than national. This is also reflected in the sources of the hits seen in the graph: the peaks are mostly due to local newspapers that report on summits organized in their municipality. National newspapers paid relatively little attention to the different G1000 summits organized in Dutch cities. Thus instead of the Belgian attempt of bringing together a linguistically and politically torn apart nation, the Dutch summits are at first sight more local attempts to close the gap between citizens and policy-makers by means of deliberation and lot.

However, these recent attempts to revitalize local democracy through deliberation in the form of G1000s have not received thorough analysis. Apart from several unpublished working papers – which are part of a research project by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations on the G1000 in the Netherlands – and a recently published book by Evelien Tonkens, Margo Trappenburg, Menno Hurenkamp and Jante Schmidt<sup>3</sup>, no in-depth study of these 'mini-publics' has been made yet. The ministerial commissioned working-papers investigate the G1000s organized in Amersfoort, Uden, Kruiskamp<sup>4</sup>, Amsterdam and Groningen.<sup>5</sup> The papers, which vary in quality<sup>6</sup>, are a first attempt to characterize the Dutch G1000s. At the moment, however, they lack a satisfying theoretical underpinning and moreover, the authors do not try to put this relatively new development of citizen participation into a larger political and historical context. Besides these working papers, Tonkens et al.'s study also mentions the Dutch G1000. The book is an attempt to analyze municipal politics by categorizing different types of citizen participation. But one problem with the study is that it is lacking any form of historical analysis of this supposed democratic development due to the fact that Tonkens et al. anonymized the data of the summits they used. This is surprising, because to be able to really understand the functioning of such mini-publics, one needs to invoke the social-historic context of the political sphere it was enacted in.<sup>7</sup>

3 Evelien Tonkens et al., *Montesori Democratie: Spanningen Tussen Burgerparticipatie En de Lokale Politiek* (Amsterdam University Press, 2015).

4 Kruiskamp is a district of the city Amersfoort.

5 Harmen Binnema and Geerten Boogaard, "De G1000 Uden: Innovatie in de Verhouding Tussen Burger En Overheid?," *Working Paper*, 2015, 1–30; Geerten Boogaard and Harmen Binnema, "De G1000 Amersfoort: Reconstructie En Analyse Vanuit Politiek-Institutioneel Perspectief," *Working Paper*, 2015; Ank Michels and Harmen Binnema, "De G1000 in Groningen En de Burgertop in Amsterdam Vergeleken Met Andere G1000en: De Realisatie van Democratische Waarden," *Working Paper*, 2015, 1–20; Ank Michels and Harmen Binnema, "G1000 in Amersfoort, Uden En Kruiskamp: De Realisatie van Democratische Waarden," *Working Paper*, 2015, 1–30; Peer Smets and Marloes Vlind, "Diversiteit Als Uitdaging Voor de Nieuwe Democratie. Een Kijk Op de Burgertop Amsterdam Met Uitstapjes Naar Andere Burgertoppen," *Working Paper*, 2015; Peer Smets and Marloes Vlind, "Een G1000 Gun Je Iedereen. Participatiebevordering in Kruiskamp, Amersfoort," *Working Paper*, 2015.

6 Especially the two papers by Smets and Vlind are lacking a convincing and coherent theoretical underpinning. They do not explain why they introduce concepts taken from scholars like Habermas, Foucault and Fishkin, and how their ideas fit in their own argument. Moreover, the paper is full of stylistic errors and badly formulated sentences which is not advantageous for my understanding of their argument. One vague and question-begging example to be found in their second paper is: "Binnen een gemeenschap geldt dat er een houding ontstaat dat iets van 'ons' is, dat er rechten aan ontleend worden en dat er mee gewerkt wordt door diegenen van wie het is". Even if this argument is correct, they have to explain why they think it is relevant for their specific case study. I hope that the fact that the papers are still 'working papers' explains these confusing arguments. A more positive note is that the research done by the research group is yet the only specific research being done on the subject (apart from some essays by students).

7 John S. Dryzek, *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance* (Oxford etc: Oxford University Press, 2010), 176.

In this thesis I put the development of one of these G1000s (the G1000 Groningen) in the Netherlands in its much needed historic-political context. Moreover, by investigating this rise in the popularity of alternative democracy, it becomes simultaneously possible to question the status of our current democracy. What is the value of contemporary democracy? Do these deliberative mini-publics (as they can be called) form an alternative to it? And does *more* (local) democracy also lead to *better* (local) democracy? The G1000s also complicate our conception of citizenship: to what extent do citizens need to participate in public affairs? But most importantly, they put into question the relationship between democracy and its subjects: what is the actual role of citizens in a representative democracy? The main question that arises out of these considerations can be formulated as follows: *to what extent can a 'mini-public' like the G1000 Groningen improve local democracy by proposing a change in the relationship between citizens and local government?*

To be able to take the step towards a more contextualized analysis of the G1000, to answer the main question, and to really understand the G1000 as a historic-political phenomenon instead of just another democratic experiment, we first need to take multiple smaller steps back. As hinted at above, the initiators of the Belgian G1000 saw themselves as presenting a solution to their dysfunctional political system. The idea that there is something wrong with contemporary democracy is not uncommon but must be evaluated in order to find out to what extent we are really in a democratic crisis. Chapter 2 deals with the problems that contemporary democracy faces as found in academic literature. After the identification of various versions of the supposed democratic deficit, chapter 3 explains and evaluates the original G1000 in Brussels. Why was it organized? By whom? What were its results? And perhaps the most important question: what kind of event was it actually? To prepare our analysis of the G1000 Groningen, chapter 4 will give an historical overview of citizen participation in the city of Groningen. It is based on several case-studies which all tell us something about the changing relation between citizens and the local government. After bringing together the history of citizen participation and the notions of citizenship inherent in it, chapter 5 tells the story of the G1000 Groningen, which was held on the sixth of June, 2014. On the basis of interviews, I answer questions concerning (local) democracy, citizenship, participation and the relation of the G1000 to local and national democracy. At this moment, only for the G1000 Amersfoort an attempt has been made to place the event within its political context. This thesis makes a similar attempt for the one organized in Groningen. But to be able to understand the G1000 Groningen, we need to take a look at the G1000 Amersfoort as well. After our analysis of the G1000 Groningen, its historical background and relation to the G1000 Amersfoort, chapter 6 will take the last step and bring together the different strands to make it possible to answer the main question, presented in the conclusion of this thesis.

### 1.1 Methods, methodology and materials

But before we will start our journey to the North of the Netherlands, an explanation and justification of the methods, methodology and the sources that have been used is necessary. My argument is based on different types of sources which all necessitate their own approach. Chapter 2 functions as an introduction to the problems lurking in the background of the following chapters. It is based on a diverse set of books and articles which all emphasize different aspects of the problems our modern democratic societies seem to experience. I added the chapter because the initiators of the G1000 Belgian (Van Reybrouck) and subsequently that of Amersfoort (Van Dijk), implicitly refer to these types of analyzes. This is important because for both of them, an analysis of our democratic societies motivated them to think about alternatives to conventional democracy which they both found in the G1000. In the third chapter the first G1000 ever organized will be discussed. The chapter is divided

into a part about the G1000 itself and a part about Van Reybrouck's book which he wrote after the event. There is however, little literature on the G1000 Belgium. Most of the analysis that is being done has been written by researchers who were involved in the event themselves. This could have a negative impact on their credibility as scientists. Whether this is true or not (I do not think that their research is biased), their findings elaborate the manner in which the organizers of the G1000 Belgium interpreted the political situation in their country which formed the reason to think of alternatives in the first place. In other words: regardless of the quality of their research, their analysis tells us something about the manner the G1000 came into being, namely as a collection of individuals who were very unhappy about their democracy. Therefore I think that even though there is not that much literature on the G1000 Belgium, the literature that there is, contributes highly to the understanding of the event. I will end the chapter with a short introduction to the theory of deliberative democracy because I believe that a good understanding of it is needed to fully comprehend the phenomenon of the G1000. We will see that in contrast to Van Reybrouck and Van Dijk, most of the initiators of the G1000 Groningen were not that interested in theory. They basically wanted to have a nice day with their fellow citizens. For me, evaluating the G1000 Groningen *solely* on the basis of its capacity to realize some set of democratic values – as Michels and Binnema did in their working-papers – hence overemphasizes theory, and neglects the specific character of the initiative. It is difficult to evaluate an event if it did not try to do the thing that you measure for your evaluation. So, some caution here is needed when evaluating mini-publics, but I will elaborate on that in chapter 3. In chapter 4, I present an overview of citizen participation in the city of Groningen. There is hardly any literature on the political history of Groningen. Most of the research done on Groningen has a more economic or agricultural character, which might be interesting for others, but does not pertain to the topic of this thesis. I made use of two important sources: Hajema, and Duijvendak and De Vries.<sup>8</sup> Hajema in particular helps bring the Groningen political arena to life in his detailed investigation of local politics in Groningen. For the period 1970-2001 I depend for a large part on his meticulous work. Fewer academic literature about Groningen politics is to be found after 2001. I make some use of the work of the city's own historian Beno Hofman, and for two case-studies, research that had been done by Jan Lunsing and Boogers and Tops.<sup>9</sup>

After our historical sketch, chapter 5 follows in which I describe the G1000 Groningen. My main sources for this chapter are interviews I have done with about a dozen citizens of Groningen ('*Stadjers*') who were involved in the initiative. I have chosen to conduct interviews because I wanted to write a qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis of the event. I therefore needed a different set of data to be able to sketch the stories of the people who were involved. To do that, I contacted the organization to see who wanted to be interviewed. I managed to speak to twelve people in four days in November and December 2015. This group of people seemed to form the core of the G1000 organization. I let the interviewees choose the location in which we met and recorded the conversation and told the respondents in advance that I would send them a transcription of the conversation by email which made it possible for them to correct things or to mark 'sensitive' information.<sup>10</sup> In the

8 Luuk Hajema, *De Glazenwassers van het Bestuur : Lokale Overheid, Massamedia, Burgers en Communicatie : Groningen in Landelijk Perspectief 1945-2001* (Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2001); Maarten Duijvendak and Bart de Vries, *Stad van het Noorden : Groningen in de twintigste eeuw* (Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003).

9 Marcel Boogers and Pieter Tops, *Hoe het Referendum werd "gewonnen": een Evaluatie van het Groninger Referendum van 29 juni 2005* (Dongen: Pijenburg, 2005); Marcel Boogers and Pieter Tops, *De Toor'n van de Stad: een Essay over het Groninger Referendum van 21 februari 2001 en de Kwaliteit van de Lokale Democratie* (Dongen: Pijenburg, 2001); Jan R Lunsing, *De Besluitenguilotine: hoe het Lokaal Bestuur een Referendum kan winnen* (Den Haag: Lemma, 2008).

10 I did not say in advance that I would fully neglect statements which were marked as 'sensitive', but I neither wanted to

conversation I made use of a list (see below) of questions that were used as a guideline. In other words, I did not perform surveys. In-depth interviews might be a better description of the method. Moreover, Charles Morrissey explained to me the importance of asking examples and going into detail whenever that felt to be necessary.<sup>11</sup> I tried to phrase my questions as open-ended as possible, and one of the hardest things to do, was not to fill up the unavoidable silences which occur in almost every conversation. The goal was to let the respondent tell his or her story, to reconstruct the G1000 initiative on the basis of that story, and not to impose my story or my theory upon the other. Conducting the interviews was difficult but sometimes hearing “That's a good question” or “I have never thought about it in that way before” made it worth it. But for me the interviews were not finished after I turned off the recorder. They would continue in a digital form after I wrote down and constructed a readable version of the conversation, placed comments in it when things were not clear, or requested more information or other documents, and sent it to the respondent. The respondent could reply (not all of them did) and by doing so finished another moment of dialogue between me and the interviewee. Thus, the process was characterized by several different (unavoidable) moments of interpretation, translation, and construction which could ideally make both me and the respondent hopefully better understand each other. I conducted the interviews in Dutch, hence, I myself am responsible for the translation of the interviews in English whenever I found parts of it relevant to my thesis.

The stories based on the interviews were checked and grounded with other material such as the limited reports on the G1000 Groningen written down by the aforementioned research group, the digital archive (a Dropbox map I got access to) of the G1000, their website, Twitter account, Facebook account, the municipal archive, newspaper articles, and several other sources with which I could construct the history and context of the Groningen G1000. In my analysis and evaluation of the event, I make also use of a list of criteria for evaluating mini-publics as put forward by Caluwaerts and Reuchamps that makes it possible to place the event within its larger context. In chapter 6 I connect the preceding chapters, propose my findings, and when relevant connect these to the literature on citizen participation on a national level. Luckily, in contrast to the literature on Groningen, the amount of research being done on democracy on a national level is enormous. This makes it possible to connect questions on citizen participation in Groningen, to the ones we have on national levels, and propose an answer to my main question.

---

cause people to loose their jobs because they said to me that they disliked someone else. At this moment, no relevant information is marked as 'sensitive' by the respondents.

<sup>11</sup> Charles T. Morrissey, “On Oral History Interviewing,” in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (Routledge, 1998), 109.

## 2. The Democratic Deficit

The literature concerned with contemporary democracy is unanimous: there are severe problems with our democratic system. But what the precise problem actually entails is highly contested. Does it have to do with a lack of political trust? Are politicians incapable of recognizing the needs and wishes of their electorate? Do new media harm the quality of political discussion? Is there a gap between politics and the electorate?<sup>12</sup> This chapter does not intend to give a full overview of all the problems ascribed to contemporary democracy. Instead, it is sufficient to give a handful of examples of types of problems as an introduction to the more theoretical topics to be discussed in the chapters below. Four types of problems will be discussed, namely: a decline in trust in political institutions, a decreasing quality of the decisions being made in the political process, the related but separate problem of under-representation, and finally, a set of problems concerning populism, media and the political culture.

First of all, there seems to be a decline in trust in political institutions.<sup>13</sup> Citizens do not trust their government and political leaders anymore. They do not feel that their problems are being recognized by the political elite, nor that the political elite even cares about their interests, and they do not believe that they can influence the policy made in the high glassy towers in The Hague. In sum: political decisions seem to be losing their legitimacy. Arguments like these are often based on surveys like the Eurobarometer.<sup>14</sup> The Eurobarometer is a survey done by the European Commission and analyzes the attitude of European citizens towards topics like politics, the economy and democracy. Kristof Jacobs, however, explains that you need to be critical when interpreting such surveys. He argues – also using the Eurobarometer survey – that Belgian and Dutch citizens are relatively content with the functioning of democracy (respectively 61 and 75 per cent). Instead of a gap between citizens and their government, Jacobs nuances the problem by arguing that there actually exists a mismatch between the expectations of citizens and the ability of their government to measure up to their wishes.<sup>15</sup> Put differently, Jacob refers to the high expectations of citizens of what governments are capable of, and the inability of governments to satisfy these expectations. This mismatch is explanatory for the results of the survey according to him.<sup>16</sup> Besides Jacobs, other research criticizes the claim that a trust problem exists with regards to political institutions as well. In a so called 'democratic audit' edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, Mark Bovens and Anchrit Wille show that the bold claim that democracy is in a legitimacy crisis due to trust issues must be taken with caution.<sup>17</sup> Next to the fact that surveys on which such claims are based often do not explicitly analyze levels of trust, data show that it is better to talk of a slight plunge of trust instead of a structural decline in the trust in democratic government and its institutions. Although statistics show a slight decline in the trust in political parties, this must be considered nothing out of the ordinary. Moreover, Dutch citizens still are very confident

12 Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Vertrouwen in Burgers* (Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 21; *ibid.*, 27.

13 Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Vertrouwen in Burgers*, 21, 27; Bas Van Stokkom, *Rituelen van Beraadslaging: Reflecties over Burgerberaad en Burgerbestuur* (Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 18.

14 Sonia Alonso, John Keane, and Wolfgang Merkel, "Editors' Introduction: Rethinking the Future of Representative Democracy," in *The Future of Representative Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 8.

15 Kristof Jacobs, "Deliberatieve Democratie: Geen Panacee," *Res Publica* 54 (2012): 377–79.

16 See also an interview with political scientist Tom van der Meer in *De Groene Amsterdammer* who argues that Van Reybrouck's presentation of the decline of trust in institutions must be nuanced. Van der Meer accuses Van Reybrouck of cherry picking of the sources he used in his argument (Jenne Jan Holtland, "De Democratie Als Tombola," *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 2015, <http://www.groene.nl/artikel/de-democratie-als-tombola>).

17 Mark Bovens and Anchrit Wille, "Politiek Vertrouwen in Nederland: Tijdelijke Dip of Definitieve Daling?," in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 21–43.



about their democracy which makes it possible to still consider the Netherlands as a 'high trust' country when compared with other EU countries.

A second set of scholars argues that democracy is not capable of making good decisions anymore. Didier Caluwaerts, for instance, explains that the quality of decisions is dependent upon the diversity of the group in which they are made.<sup>18</sup> It is not that necessarily the smartest or most capable intellectuals are needed in processes of decision-making, but a large variety of different individuals who can think of creative solutions for difficult problems together. However, the current democratic system is dominated by a relatively homogenous group of intellectuals in which groups like women, migrants and the working class are underrepresented. Caluwaerts believes that a more inclusive process of decision-making in which a larger variety of individuals deliberate, will result in decisions which are better than decisions produced in a setting dominated by for example a group of old white males. One can reply to Caluwaerts by arguing that it is hard to imagine a period in time when his criticism was not applicable. Nevertheless, Caluwaerts has a point reminding us of the influence of type of persons participating in processes of decision-making. When discussing ideal theories like deliberative democracy (3.5) his conclusion is worth keeping in the back of our minds.

In a distinct, yet related way, Mark Bovens and Anchritt Wille argue that a problem of underrepresentation is fundamental to the supposed gap between citizens and politics. But in contrast to a gap between citizens and politics, Bovens and Wille state that a divide between citizens themselves causes problems for our democratic system.<sup>19</sup> They write about the emergence of a 'diploma democracy', in which a gap exists between a group of highly educated citizens who know their way around the political institutions, and a group of citizens with a relatively lower level of education who are unable to participate in political practices in a similar manner as their highly educated peers. This intellectual divide is problematic for the functioning of democracy because it can foster political dissatisfaction due to the lack of representation of all citizens within politics.<sup>20</sup> But not only the outcome of democratic decision-making matters. The authors explain that the manner in which the decision came to be is important. If a large part of the electorate does not feel as though it is being involved in this procedure, this lack of connectedness will lead towards an erosion of the intrinsic worth of being part of a political community.<sup>21</sup> In other words, under-representation can undermine the intrinsic worth of citizenship. If it is the case that there is a group of relatively low educated citizens who have a hard time participating in the political process, would educating this group be a solution? Interestingly enough, a higher education not necessarily lead towards a higher quality of political knowledge. Jan Vis and Wijbrandt van Schuur argue that this paradox of education and political knowledge can be explained by a change in the manner citizens use their media.<sup>22</sup> The large variety of media citizens can choose from does not only make it easier for citizens to miss the most informative sources, it became easier for citizens to structurally avoid informative news media as well. Thus, even though the average level of education in the Netherlands has risen, the different ways citizens can approach political media means that average knowledge about our democratic system has not

---

18 Didier Caluwaerts, "Van Representatie Naar Deliberatie," *Res Publica* 54, no. 3 (2012): 373.

19 Mark Bovens, *Diplomademocratie: over de Spanning tussen Meritocratie en Democratie* (Amsterdam: Bakker, 2011), 107.

20 *Ibid.*, 101–102.

21 Note that this implies a specific conception of citizenship. Citizenship consists according to Bovens of more than the regular vote every four years. Bovens uses a 'thick' conception of citizenship which means that you as a citizen are part of a large collective made up by other citizens and political institutions, and strive towards a collective good.

22 Jan Vis and Wijbrandt Van Schuur, "Politieke Kennis van Kiezers," in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 65–81.

improved.<sup>23</sup>

The fourth and final set of structural difficulties for modern democracy concerns arguments about the media dominated political culture.<sup>24</sup> Scholars argue that the combination of an increase in the influence of media like television and the Internet, and a decline in political interests (with phenomena like a decline of party memberships and voting turn-ups as result) resulted in a political culture in which the politician instead of the political party became the reason why citizens turn up at elections. And instead of political ideals propagated by parties, the presentation and appearance of the politician can nowadays be the decisive factor in elections. The most famous example of this development is the Kennedy-Nixon debate in 1960. The story goes that those who followed the debate via radio thought that Nixon had won but that the ones who watched them debating live on television collectively went for Kennedy.<sup>25</sup> Although Nixon performed better at the debate in terms of debating, Kennedy simply looked better. Sadly for Nixon, almost 90 per cent of the American households owned a television which made the radio listeners a minority. As we all know, Kennedy won the elections and the role of television is regarded as decisive for it.

The literature about the development of media and their influence on politics is vast. Some scholars argue that the political culture changed into an ‘emo democracy’, some say it is more of a ‘drama democracy’, and others describe it as an ‘audience democracy’. All of these typologies have to do with a fundamental change in the relationship between politics and citizens. Citizens are portrayed as dumb innocent beings who are disciplined by the smart media campaigns of ‘authentic’ politicians who not only want their *ideas* spread to convince their public, but also want their viewers to like *them* personally. A politicians’ paradox emerged in which ‘the public’ wants politicians to be ordinary enough to be a representative of us, but simultaneously extraordinary so that they can represent us.<sup>26</sup>

In sum: whether it has to do with trust, decision-making, representation, or the media governed public arena, it appears that a change in the political culture pretty much changed the relationships between citizens and politics in a significant way. But are we also justified in describing this change as a democratic deficit, a crisis? Regarding the supposed overall decline in trust in our democratic institutions we saw that this decline is less structural than the newspapers make us believe it is. In fact, the Netherlands is still a high-trust country. Regarding the quality of representation of our democratic system it is indeed the case that the political reality had become more difficult which makes it more difficult for politicians to produce apt policy and simultaneously represent the interests of their electorate. Moreover, political decisions are also being influenced by external factors like economic commitments to the EU.<sup>27</sup> But at least on the level of municipalities, worries about the functioning of

23 Jozef Willem de Beus et al., “Media En Hun Rol in de Nederlandse Democratie,” in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 387–405; Jan Kleinnijenhuis and Janet Takens, “Het Politieke Nieuwsaanbod van Dagbladen En Televisie: Objectief En Pluriform?,” in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 407–24.

24 Alonso, Keane, and Merkel, “Editors’ Introduction: Rethinking the Future of Representative Democracy,” 8–9; Jozef Willem de Beus, *Na de Beeldenstorm: een Beschouwing over de Werking van de Toeschouwersdemocratie in Nederland: Voordracht in het Kader van de Ety Hillesumlezing 2002* (Heerde: Langhout & De Vries, 2002); Caluwaerts, “Van Representatie Naar Deliberatie”; Tom Leijte, “Parlement Moet Naar Wilde Beesten Ruiken,” *De Volkskrant*, July 14, 2015; Van Stokkom, *Rituelen van beraadslaging*, 126–128.

25 See: (<http://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2021078,00.html>). Last accessed February 25 2016.

26 *Dramademocratie. De Reality Check* (Tegenlicht, 2010), <http://tegenlicht.vpro.nl/afleveringen/2009-2010/meestemmen-gelden/dramademocratie.html>; See also: Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

27 Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, *Van Afspiegelen Naar Afrekenen? De Toekomst van de Nederlandse*

democratic institutions need not be overstated. It is still the case that a broad spectrum of interests is taken into account by council members, which is, from the perspective of a consensus model of democracy, a pleasant conclusion.<sup>28</sup> Put differently, the idea that we experience a crisis of democracy might be considered more of a media produced exaggeration. This does not mean, however, that thinking about the structure of democratic institutions is a waste of time. In the first place, citizens still often think and act upon the idea that we are in great democratic troubles which is a reason to take this experience into account in our research. A second reason for studying the various interpretation of the democratic deficit is because it can inform you of the different normative positions on democracy underlying these interpretations. What does representation actually mean? What type of citizenship is recommendable? Is actual deliberation really that important? Is more democracy always a good thing? Fareed Zakaria, for example, thinks that more democracy does not necessarily lead to better democracy. He argues that the more people are involved in the process of decision-making, the higher the chance will be that the process gets disrupted or becomes dysfunctional. Chaos will ensue when everyone is invited to take part in the deliberation.<sup>29</sup> A similar position can be found in a recent ‘footnote’ in the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* by writer Arnon Grunberg:

“Een vriendin die voor een actualiteitenrubriek op televisie werkt, vroeg of ik dacht dat het aan de media lag dat de PVV zo groot was in de peilingen. Het is veilig de media de schuld van alles te geven; de kiezer zou slechts het willoze slachtoffer zijn van propaganda en massapsychologie. Slachtoffer is misschien wat overdreven, maar feit blijft dat het maatschappelijk debat voor het grootste gedeelte bestaat uit slordig geësthetiseerde propaganda. De politieke fakkeloptocht als middel om kiezers te winnen is uit de mode geraakt, maar het verbale equivalent van de fakkeloptocht is nog altijd courant. 'Democratie' of 'meer democratie' wordt daarbij als een panacee beschouwd. De expert kan zich natuurlijk vergissen, maar is de wijsheid van de massa altijd te vertrouwen? Democratie is verworpen tot een georganiseerde religie. Twijfel aan de god die democratie heet, is ten strengste verboden. Geen gunstige ontwikkeling. Ietsje minder democratie s.v.p.”<sup>30</sup>

Zakaria and Grunberg indicate that even if you agree about the problems democracy faces, the normative evaluation of this problem is a debate on its own. It is necessary to keep this in mind when studying ‘alternatives’ or ‘solutions’ to these democratic deficits like the G1000. What kind of democracy do initiators actually have in mind when referring to ‘deliberation’? In the next chapter we encounter Van Reybrouck's answer to this question.

---

*Democratie* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 58–59; Erik Van der Kouwe, Paul Pennings, and Hans Keman, “Tussen Mandaat En Resultaat: Problemen in de Vertegenwoordigende Democratie,” in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 364–365.

28 Bas Denters, Merel De Groot, and Pieter-Jan klok, “‘Staan Voor’ En ‘Gaan Voor’ ...: Vertegenwoordiging in de Lokale Democratie,” in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 381.

29 *Na de Democratie* (Tegenlicht, 2010), <http://tegenlicht.vpro.nl/afleveringen/2009-2010/meeste-stemmen-gelden/na-de-democratie.html>.

30 Arnon Grunberg, “Voetnoot: Democratie,” *De Volkskrant*, October 24, 2015.

### 3. Deliberation in Belgium: a Short History of the Original G1000

For one of the main public figures within the history of the G1000 it was clear that Belgian democracy was in a crisis. David van Reybrouck, famous for a history of Congo, explained in an interview in the Dutch television show *Buitenhof* that representative democracy needed to be transformed.<sup>31</sup> Hardly anybody votes anymore and fewer are members of political parties. These developments endanger the representativeness of contemporary democracy. Van Reybrouck thinks that the format in which representative democracy is cast – elections – is in times when hardly anyone votes problematic, and instead of a voting mechanism, he proposes a system in which the mechanism of lot plays an important role. By drawing lots instead of voting, representativeness is ensured because only then everyone has in principle an equal chance to be selected. The reason Van Reybrouck aired in *Buitenhof* was the publishing of his new book *Tegen Verkiezingen* (2013). The book was the result of years of “reading, traveling and listening”<sup>32</sup>, but most of all, his experiences with the G1000 which he and others organized two years prior to the book. This chapter introduces this experiment and to do that, it first sketches with the help of Caluwaerts and Min Reuchamps<sup>33</sup> the political culture of this 'deeply divided country'. It continues with the ideals of the G1000 and description of the structure of the event itself. And, thirdly follows an evaluation of the summit. I continue where I started this chapter: Van Reybrouck's critique on electoral-representative democracy and the solution for it he put forward in his 2013 work. The chapter ends with a short introduction into the theory behind Van Reybrouck's argument.

#### 3.1 A Deeply Divided Society

Caluwaerts and Reuchamps describe Belgium as a 'deeply divided society'. A deeply divided society is according to them (they refer to political scientist John S. Dryzek here) a society in which “elites and citizens refuse to engage in a meaningful dialogue with members of the other side”.<sup>34</sup> Communication in such a society is limited to the group you belong to and a dialogue with the members of the other group is nothing more than an “a game of discursive hand wrestling”. This divide as sketched by the authors is due to on the one hand a lack of a common language, and on the other hand deep economic cleavages between the Flemish and Walloon regions. This separation between a French and a Dutch Belgium is so entrenched within Belgian society that it presents itself according to the authors on three different levels: on the level of institutions, in the media system, and in the party system.

Since the 1960s, the institutional system is organized in such a way that the two linguistic groups physically and politically meet each other as little as possible. In for example the Belgian Parliament, there has to be an equal number of both Dutch and French speaking MPs. This arrangement reinforces the idea that each language group has got its own political arena. A second example is the procedure for changing the federal organization of the country. To be able to do that, you need not only two-thirds of the federal MPs but also a majority of votes within each language group. Although large numbers of political decisions are being made at the federal level, the public political debate is increasingly organized within each language group, resulting in a complete lack of any (meaningful)

---

31 See: (<http://programma.vpro.nl/buitenhof/afleveringen/buitenhof-29-september-els-borst—david-van-reybrouck---de-pvv.html>). The show aired on September 29 2013.

32 David Van Reybrouck, *Tegen Verkiezingen*, 8th ed. (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2015), 155.

33 Both scholars were part of the Belgian initiative themselves.

34 Didier Caluwaerts and Min Reuchamps, “Deliberative Stress in Linguistically Divided Belgium,” in *Democratic Deliberation in Deeply Divided Societies: From Conflict to Common Ground*, ed. Juan Esteban Ugarriza and Didier Caluwaerts (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 35.

national public sphere.<sup>35</sup> The Belgian media split themselves according to these language groups. The groups tried to be as autonomous as possible and considered a divide of the media landscape into Flemish and Francophone media therefore as a necessary prerequisite. See for instance the national news agency which is divided into a French and Dutch-speaking department, even if the service itself is based in the exact same building. Caluwaerts and Reuchamps argue that the language-divide has led to a regionalization of the public sphere which fosters 'us vs. them' thinking, a lack of knowledge about the other language, and prejudiced, one-sided media coverage. Not surprisingly, a harsh split between different political parties is also noticeable. Since the deconstruction of the nationally organized party system in the 1970s, two regionally organized systems are active. Because of the regional orientation of the parties in both of the public spheres, it is not really necessary to reach the electorate of the other language group which makes it neither necessary to start a dialogue with the other group. A second reason for the deepening of the gap between the two groups as described by the authors is the fact that before the deconstruction of the national party system in the 1970s, the political elite within these former national parties functioned as a bridge between the two language groups. After the demolition of this bridge in the 70s the two groups stopped having contact with each other, leaving only the federal government as a possible bridge. However, this last option is ignored by elites for the fear of being labeled traitor of the regional interests. In sum: "Belgium is a very elitist type of democracy, arguably in order to guarantee democratic stability, but these elites have neither the desire nor any incentive to reach out to the other side when reaching out is penalized electorally".<sup>36</sup>

#### 3.2 The G1000 Belgium

This short analysis describes the situation Belgium was in when Van Reybrouck and his companions were thinking about finding a solution to the democratic impasse of their government. But next to the division into two different public spheres based on language, Belgium democracy was lacking a stable functioning government since 2007 as well. According to the G1000's own evaluative report, the feeling that Belgium democracy needed a drastic transformation was the motive of Van Reybrouck and Paul Hermant to start to exchange ideas about the democratic deficit they both experienced and the possible solutions for it.<sup>37</sup> Van Reybrouck and Hermant continued their conversations with dozens of other interested scientists, journalists, and thinkers and these conversations accumulated in the publishing of the G1000 Manifesto on June 11 2011. The Manifesto (which was published in several national newspapers) consists of a short analysis of the experienced democratic crisis, and a part in which they present their idea of the G1000 as an alternative to the current political order. Democracy, in the Manifesto, had become an electoral dictatorship in which media driven elections steer the political process in such a way that there is no room left for the actual governance of the country. Instead, politicians are in a constant political campaign which makes them unable to also make good policy. The alternative? Deliberative democracy! A democracy in which deliberation is valued can enrich the democratic experience of citizens, it can make bridges even in societies as deeply divided as Belgium, and hence, can in the words of the authors of the Manifesto, be a supplement to their representative format of democracy. The Manifest proposes a citizen summit (the G1000) as a practical way to implement such ideas about deliberation. The idea was that a randomly chosen group of 1000 Belgian citizens would convene about the status of their democracy. The principles which guided the summit were the following: independence, openness, dignity, optimism, complementarity,

---

35 Ibid., 39–40.

36 Ibid., 43.

37 Christophe Bell et al., "G1000 Eindrapport: Democratische Innovatie in de Praktijk" (Benoît Derenne, 2012), 13.

participation, transparency, diversity, opportunity and dynamics. I summarize and explain them in table (1).

Principles	Explanation (summary)
Independence	The G1000 as independent bottom-up initiative based on scientific research.
Openness	The G1000 is procedural: it does not restrict any possible topics or outcomes.
Dignity	Participants agree to disagree and hence respect others opinion.
Optimism	The G1000 want to be positive and constructive; it is looking for solutions.
Complementarity	The G1000 is not anti-political. It believes it is complementary to representative democracy.
Participation	Everyone is welcome to contribute (also via Internet).
Transparency	The G1000 believes in crowd funding and avoids being financially dependent upon others.
Diversity	Citizens decide how large the G1000 will be. The more citizens, the better.
Opportunity	The democratic crisis must be seen as a chance to start something new.
Dynamics	It can give a 'new feeling of dynamics' to citizens (abroad).

Table 1: list of principles as mentioned in the G1000 Manifesto.

The principles in table (1) give an overview of the type of citizen summit the G1000 wanted to become. Some of the principles are related to the conditions of deliberation (openness, dignity, participation, diversity), a couple of them are related to more organizational aspects of the summit (independence, complementary, transparency), and some are more general ones which characterize the atmosphere of the summit (optimism, opportunity, dynamics). By declaring these values as important for their initiative, the organization of the G1000 tried to present itself as a viable and optimistic alternative to current Belgian democratic practice. After publishing the Manifesto, Van Reybrouck and his fellow organizers<sup>38</sup> continued to work on the format of their would-be citizen summit and decided to structure it in three different phases (a public consultation, a citizen deliberation, and a policy preparation).<sup>39</sup> The idea of the first phase was to ask anyone who was interested to send in topics for the discussion via the G1000 website. This resulted in 'a couple of thousand' entries which were reduced on the basis of the times they got mentioned, and their rating to a more manageable 'top 25'. Subsequently, this top 25 was reduced to a number of three subjects which could be discussed on the summit itself. The voting

38 It is important to note that 'the' organization consisted only of volunteers without clearly defined positions and hierarchy (at least in ideal). Hence, the term 'organization' does not refer to a clear-cut group of people.

39 See for some evaluations: Bell et al., "G1000 Eindrapport: Democratische Innovatie in de Praktijk"; Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, "Deliberative Stress in Linguistically Divided Belgium"; Didier Caluwaerts and Min Reuchamps, "Strengthening Democracy through Bottom-Up Deliberation: An Assessment of the Internal Legitimacy of the G1000 Project," *Acta Politica* 50, no. 2 (2015): 151–70; Min Reuchamps and Didier Caluwaerts, "The G1000. Facts, Figures and Some Lessons from an Experience of Deliberative Democracy in Belgium," in *The Malaise of Electoral Democracy and What to Do About It* (Brussel: Re-Bel E-Book, 2012), 10–33.

options during this first phase of selection were published on the G1000 website in a randomized order to avoid a bias towards any subjects.

After it had become clear which subjects would be the topics of discussion, the task was to gather a representative group of citizens that would be there to actually discuss them. According to the evaluative G1000 report, the selection of the method to select candidates caused fierce discussion between the members of the organization. But in the end, they managed to bring together a group of 704 citizens at the same time (November 11 2011) on the same location (Brussels), by means of telephonic recruitment.<sup>40</sup> After an introduction of the topics by scientific experts, the participants – divided over 81 tables – all could talk about the chosen subjects and were during the day assisted by a trained facilitator. They also had the opportunity to make use of translators if necessary. Simultaneously, it was possible for citizens at home or at locations elsewhere in Belgium to follow the discussions and participate in them via Internet. In sum: the G1000 tried to include as many citizens as possible.

The goal of the deliberation was to let citizens talk about how they thought about the chosen issues. The attempt to reach a consensus about them was not the main goal. The result of these deliberations are in the evaluative report on the G1000 divided into four groups: equality, originality, reasonableness and balance.<sup>41</sup> According to the authors, the participants were inclined to think 'egalitarian'. Equal access to health services received for example 45 per cent of the votes during the day. 'Originality' can be found within the proposal made by the participants to implement a guaranteed basic income (15 per cent). 'Radical' ideas to open up all borders or to exile foreigners were not collectively supported. The 'balance' of the opinions put forward can be illustrated with the results of the topic 'redistribution of wealth during financial crisis', which received a variety of answers ranging from the implementation of a 'Tobintax' (31 per cent), to the idea to lower the 'vennootschapsbelasting' (43 per cent). These and the other results are for the authors of the evaluation reasons to conclude that it is for citizens perfectly possible to argue in a reasonable manner about difficult subjects, and within processes of decision-making, transcend their own particular interests and opt for the common good. In other words: the evaluation wants to show that citizens are not stupid apathetic subjects but are capable of sophisticated forms of deliberation.

After this deliberation day, the G1000 entered into the third phase in which one topic was chosen to be discussed more extensively during multiple and smaller summits. It was possible to request to be part of these events on November 10 and 491 citizens applied for it out of which the organization randomly selected 32 people. Three weekends, a group of 30<sup>42</sup> Belgian citizens came together to discuss a topic they wanted to discuss ('How to deal with work and unemployment in our society') which resulted in an extensive report which can be found within the final G1000 report itself.<sup>43</sup> This report of the third phase consists of a detailed description of the discussions held during these weekends and the manner in which these deliberations led to the final policy propositions. A long list of recommendations is included as well. It goes beyond the scope of this essay to discuss these recommendations here. Instead we will continue with the evaluation of the G1000.

#### 3.3 Evaluating the G1000

But how to evaluate such a summit? One method is by analyzing the extent of which the event

---

40 Bell et al., "G1000 Eindrapport: Democratische Innovatie in de Praktijk," 27.

41 Ibid., 45.

42 Two of the randomly chosen participants did not take part in the participate after all.

43 Bell et al., "G1000 Eindrapport: Democratische Innovatie in de Praktijk."

succeeded in fulfilling the requirements of a deliberative democracy. Table (1) gave an idea about the type of democratic values the G1000 was keen to promote. To what extent did they succeed in bringing about these values? The organization of the G1000 tried to give an answer to this question themselves in the evaluative report. This report also includes a second evaluation done by an independent group of scholars, invited by the G1000. Other sources are the work of Caluwaerts and Reuchamps who both contributed to the more methodological aspects of organizing the G1000 in different papers. But in the first place it is interesting to see how the G1000 organization evaluated itself. The organization argued that the G1000 that their main goal – fueling the debate on democratic innovations – succeeded (Bell, et al., 2012, p. 40). The G1000 had led to a large amount of different local initiatives and (political) attention in Belgium, the Netherlands and other European countries. Prizes were awarded and one of the scientists who founded the methodological groundwork of the G1000 (Caluwaerts) received a scholarly award for the PhD he wrote about the project. The G1000 also succeeded in setting the agenda for a public debate about the topics distilled out of the large amount of issues sent in by citizens. The group of academics that were invited to analyze the G1000 evaluated different aspects of the ranging from the role of the participants, the experts and facilitators during the day itself, to the third phase in which 32 citizens continued working on the topics chosen on the summit itself. In sum, they argue that the G1000 succeeded in satisfying the requirements of these kind of large-scale deliberative summits (Bell et al., 2012, p. 106).

However, one of the most important problems that occurred was that there was not enough time for participants to fully discuss all topics thoroughly. Another difficulty arose in the second phase when participants had to vote for topics to be able to construe the 'top-25'. The process in which they reached this list was insufficiently 'open' and understandable for all participants. Caluwaerts and Reuchamps confirm these findings and evaluated the G1000 with help of three different dimensions (input, throughput and output).<sup>44</sup> The input dimension concerns the manner in which participants were approached and the manner in which the agenda was set. Because of the fact that citizens could choose which topics should have been included in the discussion (via the voting on the G1000 website), the input dimensions is valued by the authors as positive. Also the manner in which the participants were selected satisfied deliberative standards according to the authors.

The throughput dimension is evaluated less positively which has to do with the already mentioned manner in which the 'top-25' had been made. An element of aggregation was noticeable here because participants had to vote for topics instead of deliberating about them (voting is an aggregative methodology; it collects individual interests). However, the problem was not necessarily the aspect of voting, but more the fact that the process in which the topics which were put to the vote were chosen behind the scenes. The topics which later on were put to the vote, were selected by means of aggregation without any involvement of the participants themselves. A possible solution put forward by Caluwaerts and Reuchamps could be to make the selection process more transparent to all participants. A second problematic aspects of the throughput phase was the political orientation of the experts introducing the topics of discussion. According the Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, and the invited scholars, these experts were orientated towards the political left which biased their introductions of the topics. This bias was however compensated by the script in which the deliberation itself was put, and which got structured by the facilitators at the tables. The script was designed to be as inclusive as possible. The facilitators were instructed to support controversial opinions of participants to make sure everyone had a say in the discussion.<sup>45</sup>

---

44 Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, "Strengthening Democracy through Bottom-up Deliberation."

45 It is unclear to what extent the facilitators succeeded in doing so in practice.



Finally, the output dimension of the G1000 received a negative evaluation of Caluwaerts and Reuchamps. The G1000 did not succeed in transporting the results of their deliberation to a wider public which diminishes the legitimacy of these conclusions and recommendations. Paradoxically, this lack of legitimacy had to do with the fact that the G1000 tried to be as independent as possible. Because of the fact that politicians were excluded from the organizational aspects of the G1000, they did not have any commitment to the project and its results as well.<sup>46</sup> Next to this lack of a formal connection with the political elite, the design of the G1000 as a 'town hall meeting' in which citizens share their thought with each other, made the recommendations which resulted out of the last phase of the project not directly related to any form of implementation whatsoever. Or, in other words, the design of the project was so open-ended that it lacked any connection with the political establishment. Moreover, the G1000 was seen as an anti-political and anti-party initiative which led to great skepticism by politicians and thereby only reinforced the reluctance of politicians to do something with the results of the deliberation. In sum: the G1000 did not create the formal bridge between the language groups they wanted to build.<sup>47</sup> Caluwaerts and Reuchamps even suggest that it deepened the divide between the groups due to the fact that the different media reported about the G1000 in an 'us versus them' rhetoric. However, tentative results of surveys held before and after the summit seem to show that participants have less negative attitudes towards citizens of the 'other group' after the summit. Also, these do surveys indicate that the face-to-face deliberation made participants feel they learned something from this experience. Although the summit did not have any kind of formal results in terms the adaptation of recommendations by politicians, it thus might have influenced the participants themselves and hence could have fostered a sense of community between them.<sup>48</sup>

#### 3.4 Van Reybrouck's Argument

The experience of organizing such an event was for Van Reybrouck one of the reasons he wrote his pamphlet *Tegen Verkiezingen*. To fully understand the Dutch versions of the G1000, we need to take a short look at the book itself. Because, as we will see, initiators of the Dutch G1000s refer back to the Belgian summit and Van Reybrouck's essay. For Van Reybrouck two criteria are fundamental to every type of political organization: efficiency and legitimacy.<sup>49</sup> He argues that contemporary democracy fails to take these two criteria into account in a satisfactory way. Both the criteria of efficiency and legitimacy are in severe problems which he summarizes in the following paragraph:

“De resultaten zijn ernaar. De symptomen waaraan de westerse democratie lijdt zijn even veelvuldig als vaag, maar wie keizersverzuim, kiezersverloop, leegloop van de partijen, bestuurlijk onvermogen, politieke verlamming, electorale faalangst, rekruteringschaarste, compulsieve profileringsdrift, chronische verkiezingskoorts, afmattende mediastress, achterdocht, onverschilligheid en andere hardnekkige krampen naast elkaar legt, ziet de contouren opdoemen van een syndroom, het Democratisch Vermoeidheidssyndroom, een aandoening die nog niet helemaal in kaart is gebracht maar waaraan niettemin talrijke westerse

---

46 Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, “Strengthening Democracy through Bottom-up Deliberation,” 15.

47 Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, “Deliberative Stress in Linguistically Divided Belgium,” 47.

48 The results of these surveys are not part of published research yet and thus need to be taken with caution. Later research done by Caluwaerts and Reuchamps shows that the influence on participants is to be neglected Didier Caluwaerts and Min Reuchamps, “Does Inter-Group Deliberation Foster Inter-Group Appreciation? Evidence from Two Experiments in Belgium,” *Politics* 34, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 101–15.

49 Van Reybrouck, *Tegen Verkiezingen*, 13.

samenlevingen onmiskenbaar lijden.”<sup>50</sup>

This 'democratic fatigue syndrome' can be diagnosed in four different ways, Van Reybrouck writes. It is in the first place possible to blame politicians themselves for creating an elitist political institute in which 'the people' are not represented anymore. This populist interpretation seeks the solution to this problem of underrepresentation in the inclusion of 'the voice of the people' within the parliament – whatever that actually means in practice. The second interpretation blames democracy for its inefficient way of decision-making. Instead of democracy, technocratic rule is the solution to the problem. This solution prioritizes efficiency over legitimacy by focusing on good policy *for* the people, instead of policy *by* the people.<sup>51</sup> The third interpretation is linked to the Occupy-movement and blames *representative* democracy because it does not represent satisfactorily anymore. But instead of arguing that 'the people' should be in charge, it looked for solutions within the realm of direct democracy. All of the three interpretations and solutions put forward are in the eyes of Van Reybrouck dangerous for different reasons: populism harms the minority, technocracy endangers legitimacy, and the anti-parliamentary movement is lacking because it does not propose a viable solution.<sup>52</sup> In contrast to these positions, Van Reybrouck argues that *electoral representative democracy* is defective. He writes that we all have become 'electoral fundamentalists' who praise an institution which does not fit into our current world anymore.<sup>53</sup> Van Reybrouck argues on the basis of an historical analysis of the development of democratic elections that elections did have a functional place within society, but that because of a decline of the importance of civil organizations as unions, a gap grew between citizens and politicians.<sup>54</sup> Simultaneously, the influence of mass media grew and the political culture developed into something which Colin Crouch called 'postdemocracy' wherein:

“(…) verkiezingen zeker nog bestaan en tot een andere regering kunnen leiden, is het publieke verkiezingsdebat een zorgvuldig gecontroleerd spektakel geworden, dat gemanaged wordt door rivaliserende experts in overredingstechnieken, een spektakel dat slechts over een beperkt aantal onderwerpen mag gaan dat op voorhand geslecteerd is door die teams. Het gros van de burgers speelt een passieve gedweeë en slechts apatische rol die louter bestaat uit het reageren op die signalen die zo voorgeschoteld krijgen. Achter de schermen van het electorale spelletje krijgt die echte politiek vorm tijdens discrete contacten tussen gekozen regeringen en elites die bovenal zakelijke belangen vertegenwoordigen.” (As quoted by Van Reybrouck<sup>55</sup>)

Crouch sketches a public sphere which is, in the words of Van Reybrouck, in a permanent 'election fever'.<sup>56</sup> It should not be necessary to say that this development of democracy is incapable of satisfactorily balancing efficiency and legitimacy. In other words, Van Reybrouck argues that our electoral representative democracy is in a deep crisis. He thinks that the concept of lot can help to counter this crisis. On the basis of a historical analysis of different voting mechanisms in Athens, Venice, Firenze and Aragon done primarily by Bernard Manin, he shows that the method of choosing representatives by means of lot leads to less conflicts between citizens, it fosters the involvement of

---

50 Ibid., 21–22.

51 Ibid., 29.

52 Ibid., 38.

53 Ibid., 41.

54 Ibid., 52.

55 Ibid., 52–53.

56 Ibid., 55.

citizens, it was always combined with other mechanisms as elections, and that the states which used such methods were relatively stable political unions.<sup>57</sup> Subsequently, he continues by writing that the method of elections as we know it today, is an aristocratic relic of the past and never intended to be a democratic instrument.<sup>58</sup> Elections were used by political elites to sustain a system of self-chosen 'intern colonialism' by implementing a fundamentally unequal system of politicians and citizens. This self-sustaining gap between elite politicians and the electorate is the mechanism that keeps democracy ill.<sup>59</sup>

Under the motto 'everything you do without me, you do against me', Van Reybrouck proposes a revival of lot as a much needed democratic innovation. He places the method within the literature on deliberative democracy and refers to James S. Fishkin, who can be seen as the inventor of the deliberative poll which is used to measure the influence of deliberative summits on the basis of the attitudes of participants. Van Reybrouck describes deliberative democracy as a democratic format in which collective deliberation has a central place and wherein the participants try to find rational solutions for problems.<sup>60</sup> He also explains that deliberative summits are not something completely new<sup>61</sup>, but that these are often ignored by politicians and the media, because they can be 'dangerous' and are due to their relatively long time span not considered as news.<sup>62</sup> Van Reybrouck argues that a 'bi-representative' model in which lot is combined with elections can help to cool down the democratic fever. This model combines the advantages of both the skills of politicians and the freedom of citizens who do not wear the burden of the need to be chosen again.<sup>63</sup> Other advantages of lot are for example the fact that it is a neutral procedure in which the risk of corruption is minimal. He argues that his ideal model, based on principles of deliberation and democratic lot, can meet the demands of the populists, the technocrats, and the anti-parliamentarians without falling prey to their disadvantages by improving representativeness through lot, and efficiency through the usage of non-chosen professionals in processes of for example law-making.

For Van Reybrouck, deliberative democracy can help to improve democracy on many fronts. He seems to emphasize the advantages of actual deliberation between citizens for democratic processes of decision-making. What we have seen in this chapter that this ideal can be brought to practice. The results of the Belgian G1000 showed that citizens value the possibility of deliberating about issues which are important for society as a whole. They might even like the process of talking about these issues because they got the feeling that their voice was recognized. But besides these advantages for citizens, the Belgian G1000 still had a hard time of being recognized as a real viable political alternative by politicians themselves. The summit did not lead to policy change, let alone a change of the problematic political culture it was reacting against. Now that we have a slight idea about what it means to organize a G1000, it is time to move forward into the direction of the Dutch version in Groningen. But before we do so, we take a little theoretical break to be able to place the theory of deliberative democracy in its own historiographical context so that we can fully understand the theoretical basis of the G1000s in Belgium and the Netherlands.

---

57 Ibid., 74.

58 Ibid., 89.

59 Ibid., 100.

60 Ibid., 103.

61 Some examples are ones held in Canada (Citizens's Assenmbly on Electoral Reform, 2004; Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform 2006-2007), The Netherlands (Burgerforum Kiesstelsel, 2006), Iceland (Constitutional Assembly, 2012-2013) and Ireland (Convention on the Constitution, 2013).

62 Van Reybrouck, *Tegen Verkiezingen*, 117.

63 Ibid., 145.

### 3.5 Deliberative democracy: a Short Introduction

In the preceding chapter we encountered pleas for democratic renewal based on ideas about deliberative democracy. The G1000 can be seen as an important implementation of innovations in the realm of democratic theories. But why deliberation? What is so valuable about it? What is deliberative democracy? Van Reybrouck based his ideas on deliberative democracy primarily on the work of scholars like Fishkin. Also my respondents and the authors of the working papers mentioned in the introduction seem to take Fishkin as their theoretical starting point.<sup>64</sup> But to be able to understand why his deliberative polls are interesting and relevant in the first place we need to go back to Jürgen Habermas who construed – to the best of my knowledge – one of the most systematic accounts of the deliberative model. Habermas took theories in the fields of sociology, psychology, ethics and law, and combined them into his deliberative model of democracy. He contrasts this theory with liberal models, in which democracy is merely a matter of aggregating votes, and republican ones, in which an already existing ideal of community is important.<sup>65</sup> An important part of this ethics is the manner in which moral norms are being justified. Moral norms are only just, according to Habermas, when the procedure in which they have been formulated is as impartial as possible. Habermas argues that true impartiality can only be reached through a process of 'ideal role taking' in an actual discourse.<sup>66</sup> This means that human beings who want to check whether a proposed norm is morally justified need to undergo a process of communication in which all the relevant participants really try to understand each other and take each others interests into account.<sup>67</sup> An important aspect of this process is called communicative action. Communicative action is, by definition, communication in which the other participant is treated as a free autonomous being, or in Kantian terms; an end in itself. Communicative action is distinguished from strategic action in which not mutual understanding, but some other goal is the reason you talk with the other person. In strategic action you do not regard the other as an end in itself but as a means towards another end. Inherent in the idea of strategic action is the unjust use of unequal relations of power. In other words: to be able to make morally justified decisions, it is for Habermas necessary to include every possibly affected participant in a real process of decision-making. This emphasis on actual discourse is advantageous for a number of reasons. In the first place, a process of real argumentation is the best way to prevent individuals from distorting their own interests. Norms are secondly in a discursive situation open to the criticism of others which is important if you notice the ultimate goal of deliberation: consensus. But maybe the most important reason is, is that only in a discourse freed from relevant unequal relations of power, you regard the other as an autonomous being.

Habermas thus proposes a rule with which you can decide moral questions in a rational way.<sup>68</sup> Only when taking into account the freedom and autonomy of your fellow citizens who are possibly affected by the decision you are about to make, it is possible to make legitimized decisions. Similarly,

---

64 James Steven Fishkin, "Deliberative Polling: Reflections on an Ideal Made Practical," in *Evaluating Democratic Innovations: Curing the Democratic Malaise?*, ed. Ken Newton and Brigitte Geissel (London: Routledge, 2012), 71–89; Bruce Ackerman and James Fishkin, "Deliberation Day," *Journal Of Political Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2002): 129–52.

65 Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge etc: Polity Press, 1996), 296–302; Jürgen Habermas, "Three Normative Models of Democracy," in *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, ed. Ciaran P. Cronin and Pablo De Greiff, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998), 246.

66 Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, ed. Christian Lenhardt and Shierry M. Weber Nicholsen, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 66.

67 *Ibid.*, 65–66.

68 Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, 110.

legal norms are valid only when the processes in which they came about, are approved by all citizens in similar processes of communicative action.<sup>69</sup> Hence, political institutions (which are in a sense legal norms) are only morally valid when they got approved in equal conditions. I summarized the requirements of the deliberative process<sup>70</sup>:

1. Deliberation take place in an argumentative form which includes reasonable and critical discussion.
2. Deliberation is inclusive and public: in principle everyone has an equal chance to enter the discussion.
3. Deliberation is free of external coercion.
4. Deliberation is free of internal coercion. Everyone has an equal opportunity to be heard. Only the “force of the better argument” is allowed.
5. Political deliberation must be concluded by majority decision.
6. There are no limits to the topics to be discussed.

One needs to be aware of the minium, proceduralist conception Habermas argues for. He merely gives us these requirements and does not argue for a specific type of policy, or a specic procedure: everything is open to reasonable debate.<sup>71</sup> It is secondly, interesting to compare above deliberative requirements with the principles put forward by the Belgian G1000 previously stated. Both theory (discourse ethics) and practice (the G1000) share their emphasis on an open dialogue between free participants. In principle, no topics or participants are excluded from the debate. Although Habermas' requirements are still quite minimal and do not tell us anything about the goal of deliberation, those of the G1000 are related to the democratic crisis Belgian was experiencing. A free and reasonable debate is therefore combined with the idea that the G1000 should be seen as a new start which possibly can spread to other countries in democratic troubles.

Organzing events in accordance with deliberative criteria is not uncommon. Such events are to be filed under the term mini-publics. Mini-publics are deliberative events organized by citizens that often have lot as recruitment method.<sup>72</sup> Deliberations are often facilitated by a facilitator or moderator

---

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid., 305–306.

71 A less minimal and more 'substantive' interpretation of deliberative democracy can be found in Gutman and Thomson (2004). I however, do not think that substantive theories on moral democracy are convincing. In contrast to more procedural ones, they beg the question of what it means to make a morally justified decision. For critique on deliberative democracy in general, see for example Carol C. Gould, “Diversity and Democracy: Representing Differences,” in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, ed. Benhabib Seyla (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 171–86; Sarah Maddison, “When Deliberation Remains out of Reach: The Role of Agonistic Engagement in Divided Societies,” in *Democratic Deliberation in Deeply Divided Societies: From Conflict to Common Ground*, ed. Juan Esteban Ugarriza and Didier Caluwaerts (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 189–205; Chantal Mouffe, “Democratic Politics and the Dynamics of Passions,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Politics of Democratization in Europe: Concepts and Histories*, ed. Tuija Pulkkinen and José Maria Rosales (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), 89–100; Ian Shapiro, “Enough of Deliberation: Politics Is about Interests and Power,” in *Deliberative Politics: Essays on Democracy and Disagreement*, ed. Stephan Macedo (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 28–38; Iris Marion Young, “Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy,” in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 120–35..

72 Dryzek, *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance*, 155; Graham Smith, “Deliberative Democracy and Mini-Publics,” in *Evaluating Democratic Innovations: Curing the Democratic Malaise?*, ed. Brigitte Geissel and Ken Newton (London: Routledge, 2012), 90; Archon Fung, “Survey Article: Recipes for Public Spheres: Eight Institutional Design Choices and Their Consequences,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 11, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 338–67.

and the result of the deliberation might consist of a report or list of recommendations. Dryzek explains that by studying such mini-publics, one could get a sense of the conditions necessary for implementing deliberative methods in larger political systems. But a thorough analysis of mini-publics necessitates a good understanding of its social, historical and political context because these context have a major impact on the structure, role and influence of the deliberative event itself.<sup>73</sup> It is for example imaginable that the Groningen municipality reacts in a different manner to a G1000 organized in the city than the municipality of Amersfoort would do because, both cities have different ways of dealing with citizen participation.

Moreover, Habermas and Thompson warn us for the degrading quality of the research done on deliberative democracy when reading deliberative evaluations.<sup>74</sup> On the one hand are scholars inclined to neglect the normative theories underlying deliberative democracy. Definitions of what deliberative democracy means are mistaken or based on a superfluous understanding of the theoretical framework. Often is assumed that there is one correct version of deliberative democracy. This leads on the other hand to inadequately justified empirical research, or unjustified dismissals of empirical research in which too fast is concluded that the deliberative experiment was not successful. Thompson argues that it is better to avoid a extensive conception of what deliberation should mean, and instead to focus on what the theory wants to solve, namely: how to reach a legitimate decision in a state of disagreement? Instead of trying to answer this question by means of doing isolated experiments with a small group of people, scholars should invoke the large, encompassing political structures as well in their research.

### 3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we investigated the first every organized G1000. We have seen how Van Reybrouck and his fellow organizers tried to present a solution to the democratic crisis the country was in. They organized a large deliberative event in and invited 1000 Belgian citizens to discuss the status of their state. The event was strongly influenced by theories of deliberative democracy and focused on democratic renewal. No clear ideal of citizenship was however noticeable. In the end, this mini-public did not lead to formal political change. It was not taken seriously by the relevant political institutions and the ideas put forward by the participants were soon forgotten. But as we will see below, this was not the end of the idea G1000. The idea managed to get foothold in the less divided city of Amersfoort and even traveled further North to the city of Groningen. But just as there is no 'right' version of deliberative democracy, as Habermas and Thompson explained, we also have to be cautious when analyzing and comparing ideas. Moreover, we have to fully take into account the context in which such an idea in the form of a mini-public takes root. To be able to do that, we simultaneously move 400 kilometers to the North and go 50 years back in time until we are in the Groningen of the 1960s.

---

73 Dryzek, *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance*, 170. See for a similar approach: Mansbridge, Jane et al., "A Systematic Approach to Deliberative Democracy," in *Deliberative Systems: Deliberative Democracy at the Large Scale*, ed. John Parkinson and Mansbridge, Jane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–26.

74 Jürgen Habermas, "Concluding Comments on Empirical Approaches to Deliberative Politics," *Acta Politica* 40, no. 3 (2005): 384–92; Dennis F. Thompson, "Deliberative Democratic Theory and Empirical Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 497–520.

#### 4. Citizen Participation in Groningen

Groningen is the largest city in the North of the Netherlands with around 200.000 inhabitants. Almost one fourth of its inhabitants are students studying in the city at its university or at one of its schools of higher education. Until 2014, the social democratic party Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) dominated the city council of Groningen for decades.<sup>75</sup> In 2014, it lost this position to the social-liberal party D'66 which is currently with nine seats the largest faction in the city council. To be able to understand the relationship between the citizens and the local government in Groningen, and the place of the G1000 in it, we need to go back to the days of the young Jacques Wallage and Max van den Berg; PvdA-members who since the 70s have been trying to change the political culture of the local Groninger government by arguing for an 'opening up' of it for the citizens of the city, the '*Stadjers*'. Especially at times when the Groninger municipality came up with large infrastructural projects, Van den Berg and Wallage tried to make the processes in which decisions were being made as open to the *Stadjers* as possible. I will sketch the manner in which citizens were (or were not) included in processes of political decision-making since 1970 on the basis of several of these large projects. An analysis of the extent to which citizens were involved can help us to get an idea about how the relationship between Groningen and its *Stadjers* developed these last four decades and hence, to what extent the G1000 fits in this development (chapter 5).

The first paragraphs of this chapter present six small case-studies which illustrate the manner in which the local institutions of Groningen dealt with citizen participation. I choose these projects on the basis of the scarce amount of literature about the political history of Groningen, the interviews I had with the G1000 organization, and on the basis of my own experience as a former student living in Groningen. All of the chosen infrastructural projects had led to discussions in not only the city hall (the realm of politicians) but also outside of the hall, where *Stadjers* defended their interests. I think that choosing these specific case-studies can tell us more about the changing relationships between the local political institutions and the citizens of Groningen than giving a broad historical outline of Groninger politics as to be found in for example Hajema and Duijvendak and De Vries.<sup>76</sup> In 4.7 I present my findings based on the six case-studies which form the historical background of the G1000 to be analyzed in the sixth chapter.

#### 4.1 The Harmoniekwestie

The first infrastructural project in Groningen which I will discuss here was the so called 'Harmoniekwestie'. The Harmonie, a music hall in the city center, was in 1963 put on the list of to be destroyed buildings so that it could make place for new modern university buildings. However, the university and municipality did not expect the involvement of the architect P. Reijenga. Reijenga wanted to stop the demolishing of the 19<sup>th</sup> century building because it had according to himself an important social-historical significance.<sup>77</sup> To strengthen his position, Reijenga formed the 'Studiegroep Binnenstad' and proposed a renovation instead of a demolition of the building.<sup>78</sup> The response of the

<sup>75</sup> Bart De Vries, "Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling," in *Stad van Het Noorden: Groningen in de Twintigste Eeuw*, ed. Maarten Duijvendak and Bart De Vries (Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003), 401.

<sup>76</sup> Of course, I did not include every possible architectural project in my analysis. For reasons of space and/or the availability of sources, I did not, for instance, elaborate extensively on the referendum about the Noorderplantsoen, and the renewal of the Waagstraat at the West of the Grote Markt, both in 1996. What can be said without going into detail here is that both projects 'fit' within the development I sketch in the concluding paragraph of this chapter (4.7).

<sup>77</sup> Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 179.

<sup>78</sup> Elles Bulder, "Het Sociale En Culturele Leven in de Verzorgingsstaat," in *Stad van Het Noorden: Groningen in de Twintigste Eeuw*, ed. Maarten Duijvendak and Bart de Vries (Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2001), 339.

'college van burgemeesters en wethouders' (executive board of the municipality, or college van b en w, abbreviated as *college*) was that because of the fact that the discussion about the future of the building had a history dating back to 1945, the *Stadjers* were given more than enough time to send in possible objections to the plans being made. Hence, Reijenga's request was too late to take into account and dismissed by the municipality.

The PvdA as largest political faction in the city council agreed with the decision of the *college*. Until 1966, the leadership of the party was in the hands of a generation of old white man. In 1966, young academics like Wallage and Van den Berg started proclaiming the importance of contact between the *college*, the civil servants and the *Stadjers*, and of the actual participation and involvement of citizens in political processes. An example of this development is the electoral program proposed by a diverse group of politically active youngsters (and two older men) in which they spoke of a growing widespread dissatisfaction with the city council and the importance of citizen participation.<sup>79</sup> Simultaneously with the renewal of the PvdA party in Groningen, the 'Groningen Studentenraad' (Groningen student council) handed in another argument for the calling off of the demolishing of the building. Similarly to Reijenga, the group argued for a renovation of the building so that it could function as a meeting place for students and citizens. One subdivision of the PvdA party supported this plea which placed the PvdA party in the city council in a very difficult position due to their initial decision to support the municipality. A vote regarding the position of the PvdA faction was organized and the initial decision to support the demolishing won with a number of six votes. After the voting chaos ensued: a group of youngsters stormed the meeting and simultaneously the lights went out in the room. Mayor Berger decided to end the meeting and yelled that "this was a black day for democracy".<sup>80</sup>

The tensions within the PvdA grew higher, and eventually caused a rupture within the former structure of the party. The candidate list for the elections reflected this: Van den Berg was third on the list; Wallage fifth. The young economist Jan Postma even reached the second place. Young academics in their twenties took the seats of the old white man. Hajema describes the change as one in which a political culture in which trust and compromises once were pivotal, was discarded and replaced with a new polarizing style of doing politics with a complete set of new political opinions, as put forward in the *Harmoniekwestie*. But, in the end, resistance against the demolishing appeared futile. Five years after the demands of Reijenga in which local and national media further heated up the debate<sup>81</sup>, the *college* decided to continue the plans of building a new music hall 'De Oosterpoort' and definitely started the demolishing of the old, historical Harmonie building.

#### 4.2. The Verkeerscirculatieplan

Although the Groninger municipality did not change their plans regarding the Harmonie building, ideas about participation and involvement did not go by unnoticed. Plans had to be made about the infrastructure of the city center and in November 1966, the municipality organized an informal meeting in which the city council received a lecture by traffic expert H. M. Goudappel.<sup>82</sup> This *lecture* was presented by the mayor as a form of public discussion to increase the quality of the decision-making process.<sup>83</sup> The plan, as presented by Goudappel, proposed a radical transformation of the infrastructure

<sup>79</sup> Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 186–187.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 203.

<sup>83</sup> Note that these meetings were held at the same time when Reijenga's demand was turned down because the time for participation was over according to the municipality.



of the city Groningen in which neighborhoods should be demolished to make room for roads and canals. Because the mayor also wanted to make participation of citizens possible, he organized three moments (*inspraakavonden*<sup>84</sup>) during which *Stadjers* could give their opinion about Goudappel's ideas. A couple of hundred citizens attended the meetings and gave their opinions. Besides individual *Stadjers*, organizations did also attend and gave their opinion about the proposal. The already mentioned Studiegroep Binnenstad was one of them and responded very critically towards the project. It argued that the historical city center should be treated as a whole and thus not be divided by roads and water into multiple different sections. The result of these moments of *inspraak*? A slightly changed traffic plan two years later in 1969. The construction of roads and the development of new houses still demanded the demolishing of large parts of the old city center.<sup>85</sup>

Another clash between citizenry and administration occurred when Wallage – who as chairman of the Groninger Studentenraad – demanded that the student population needed to be represented in a recently enacted architectural advice committee.<sup>86</sup> This committee was officially installed in 1968 with *inspraak* as its formal function. The committee's first objective was to improve the quality of infrastructural projects. The second objective was emphasizing the importance of participation. Wallage's demand was being heard and he became a member of the committee himself. But, soon after his admission to the committee, Wallage started to criticize the fact that the committee did not meet and converse in public. Wallage argued that he thought it was his duty to enlarge the influence of the citizenry by demanding the meetings taken place in public. He, against the regulations, reported extensively about what was being discussed in the meetings which in October, after six months, resulted in the decision to be make the meetings public.

The slightly adjusted plan to transform the city center was only the start of a long and harsh discussion between multiple parties in Groningen which came to an end seven years later in the night of September 18 on 19, 1977. That night, hundreds of civil servants changed traffic flows, bicycle lanes and put bus lanes into place.<sup>87</sup> These years of talking and discussing are for our purpose an interesting example of a clash between the administrative wish to work out a plan and the political or civil desire for genuine involvement. Especially since the ideas put forward by these different parties about the importance of participation and involvement of citizens tell us something about the relationship of the municipality and its inhabitants. This paragraph will follow the events which resulted in the large governmental operation of September 18 and 19.

As we have seen above, tensions between the extent to which citizens should be included in processes of decision-making, were already visible in Goudappel's presentation of the *Verkeerscirculatieplan* that took place before Wallage's little revolt. But Wallage continued his crusade for participation in 1970, when he was elected member of the council as front-man of the PvdA faction.<sup>88</sup> 1970 was the first year when it was not mandatory anymore to vote during elections which

---

84 Translating the Dutch word 'inspraak' is difficult. 'Inspraak' is usually used in contexts where someone's opinion regarding a specific matter is being asked, whereas the English word 'participation' signifies a more active and equal relationship between subject and object. I will use the word 'inspraak' in situations where citizens are for example asked for their opinion regarding a specific subject, and 'participation' where citizens were more actively involvement and where decisions were made collectively. Of course, the difference between *inspraak* and participation is a gradual one.

85 Peter Groote, "Van Groot Naar Klein En Weer Terug?," in *Stad van Het Noorden: Groningen in de Twintigste Eeuw*, ed. Maarten Duijvendak and Bart De Vries (Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003), 389; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 206.

86 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 201.

87 De Vries, "Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling," 414.

88 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 208.

resulted in a decline of a third of the voters who turned up at the elections.<sup>89</sup> Wallage responded to this decline in his *maidenspeech* by arguing that “Velen voelen dat zij geen direct deel hebben aan ons publiek besluitvormingsproces. Ze zeggen 'ze zoeken het op het stadhuis maar uit,' of 'ons soort mensen heeft toch niets te vertellen.’”<sup>90</sup> This statement can be read as a predecessor of the statements we have seen in chapter 2 about the defects of democracy. And just like contemporary deliberative democrats, Wallage argued forty years ago for an opening up of the municipality: meetings should have been made public, governmental documentation should be made accessible, and political disagreements should be made understandable for the public so that citizens can understand how decisions are being made by local politicians. Moreover, Wallage convinced the *college* to postpone Goudappel's plans until further notice.

For newly appointed city councilor (*wethouder*) Max van den Berg, the postponing of Goudappel's project motivated him to present his own idea about the city center in the *Doelstellingennota*.<sup>91</sup> For Van den Berg the experience of the inhabitants of the city should be the main point of attention in thinking about the organization of the center of Groningen. The ideas of the *Verkeerscirculatie* plan were left out of this document and other plans like the construction of a large university complex North of the Harmonie building were dismissed by Van den Berg. This provocative statement of this 'Raspoetin of the North'<sup>92</sup> led initially to harsh reactions of his fellow *wethouders* but these gradually softened and could eventually be described as moderately positive. Moreover, the core of his argument – thinking about citizen participation – was taken over in a “*integrale beleidsvisie*”, produced by the *college* as a tool to confront the financial problems the municipality was in.<sup>93</sup> The *college* wanted that infrastructural projects in the future should be planned in such a manner that different experts but also citizens were involved in the procedures. Citizens should be involved in such a way that a possible change of direction of the project was still possible. The municipality hoped to save on its expenditures by promoting this special way of planning large architectural projects. Also, it hoped to improve the quality of the decisions being made, and the quality of the relationship between the subjects and objects of these decisions by actively involving the objects in the process.<sup>94</sup> This special manner of making policy, this *integrale* manner of working starting with Van den Berg's *Doelstellingennota* became in the words of Hajema the heart of the new progressive local politics since 1973.<sup>95</sup>

After a major victory of the PvdA in the local elections in 1974, the new PvdA dominated *college* presented a program which fitted perfectly in the line of development towards a more open administration. In it, the *college* explained that policy-making is a matter of politics which demands the making of *political* choices. These political choices ought to be made according to these new ideas about planning where openness, transparency, and an emphasis on a more horizontal instead of the classic vertical organizational structure were pivotal.<sup>96</sup> This openness was reflected in the since then annual publishing of municipal policy plans and justifications.<sup>97</sup> Parallel to the first one (the *Integraal beleidsplan 1975-1979*) the *college* presented four measures which all were meant to improve the

89 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 402–403.

90 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 208.

91 *Ibid.*, 209–210.

92 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 405; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 228.

93 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 234.

94 *Ibid.*, 235.

95 *Ibid.*, 236.

96 *Ibid.*, 238.

97 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 412.

relationship between the administration and the *Stadjers*.<sup>98</sup> In the first place the *college* wanted to promote neighborhood councils (*wijkraden*). Secondly, by appointing special civil servants which helped these councils to organize themselves (*opbouwwerkers*). Thirdly, by implementing so called “*bestuurscontacten*” whose task it was to function as an intermediary between the municipality and the neighborhood councils. Lastly, the *college* presented the social councilor (*sociale raadsman*). The social councilor was burdened with the task of making the lives of the *Stadjers* a little bit easier by being a walking administrative oracle which could explain all kinds of local governmental regulations to the *Stadjers*. The result of all these measurements? A tighter connection between the *college*, the administration, and organized neighborhood councils, but not necessarily between citizens and the local government.<sup>99</sup>

In the meantime, the plans to transform the city had been hidden in such deep drawers that no progress was made yet. But the municipality wanted to continue, opened their drawers, and decided on the basis of advice of their own newly appointed *stadsandrogog* to make the process as transparent as possible by publishing their findings in two publications in which a large variety of data was gathered. The idea was that citizens could give their opinion about these findings which resulted in a new version in 1975, and after a second round of participation in 1976, to an even newer version, which gave reason to change more things. Finally, in the summer of '76, the *Bestemmingsplan Binnenstad* was ready and presented by the council. For Van den Berg, these endless rounds of participation were frustrating and caused a clash with Roel Vos, the appointed *stadsandroloug*, who wanted to wait for the results of these deliberations. In contrast, Van den Berg had received a large sum with which he wanted to make the Grote Markt and the Gedempte Zuiderdiep car-free, along the same lines as written down in the original *Verkeerscirculatieplan*.<sup>100</sup> After fierce debate between advocates of participation and Van den Berg, the city council nevertheless choose the side of Van den Berg by voting for the *Verkeerscirculatieplan* in September. The plan included the transferring of the bus station to the Gedempte Zuiderdiep, the prohibition of cars in a certain area in the center, and a freeway around the old city center.<sup>101</sup> After one last round of fierce debate, the plan was accepted by the city council under the name of *Stedebouwkundig Plan* in May 1976. Finally, the plans for Groningen's 'living room' were finished and in the night of September 18 on 19, 1977, the municipality changed the interior of the city of center.<sup>102</sup> Local officials presented flowers to *Stadjers* who got stuck in the chaotic traffic situation on the Friday morning thereafter.<sup>103</sup>

#### 4.3 Groninger Museum

In September 1987, the city of Groningen received 25 million guilders from Gasunie, the company responsible for the extraction of gas in the province of Groningen.<sup>104</sup> The gift was meant to promote the

---

98 Roel Vos, an 'andraloug' (a kind of social scientist) was payed to advise the city council in this manner. On the basis of research done in fifteen Groninger neighborhoods, he concluded for example that it was important that the participants in the communication of local government and citizens trust each other. One of his other advices was to implement *opbouwwerkers* who could help citizens organize themselves. Many of his conclusions can be found in the plans presented by the *college* in 1973. (Also: Ibid., 415.)

99 Groote, “Van Groot Naar Klein En Weer Terug?,” 373; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 244.

100 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 256.

101 Groote, “Van Groot Naar Klein En Weer Terug?,” 389; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 256.

102 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 414; Groote, “Van Groot Naar Klein En Weer Terug?,” 389.

103 Beno Hofman, *De Vaart erin!: van Trekschuit tot Tram* (Assen: In Boekvorm, 2010), 79.

104 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 422; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 267. 25 million guilders is about 11,34 million Euros.

image of the Northern parts of the Netherlands by means of building a new museum in Groningen. For the city of Groningen the gift was a nice present. For twenty years they had been looking for a new museum and with this sum they were finally able to realize it. The successor of Max van den Berg, Ypke Gietema, was as *wethouder* city development responsible for the development of the plan for the new museum. He put forward an island in the *zwaaiikom* (winding hole) of the *Verbindingskanaal* as the new location of the museum, a choice not left undisputed because the *college* initially favored another location for the reason that the *zwaaiikom* was reserved for another large project. But Gietema managed to convince the *college* which came around in May 1988. The proposed location of the museum led to a heated discussion in local newspapers like the *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* and *De Groninger Gezinsbode*, and interests groups like society 'Behoud Waardevol Stadsgezicht' and 'De Bond Heemschut'.<sup>105</sup> The *Gezinsbode*, for instance, argued that the decision for the location had already been made behind the scenes without any form of *inspraak*. Both papers published letters of concerned citizens, did polls regarding the location, and on the day of the decisive meeting of the city council, the *Gezinsbode* denounced the absence of a real opportunity to discuss the location of the new museum for *Stadjers*.<sup>106</sup> The newspaper was right: the municipality had done nothing to discuss their plans with the inhabitants of Groningen. There was a debate about the subject, but it was being held in newspapers and bars and never did any politician contribute to these discussions.

But Gietema did not need the public to support his plans. He already gathered the necessary political support behind closed doors. According to him, an 'open' decision-making process did not have anything to do with participation or *inspraak*. 'Openness' – in contrast to the definition given to it by his predecessors Wallage and Van den Berg – had to do with the opening up of the administration for the market in the form of companies and investors.<sup>107</sup> Hence, the city council decided in November 1988 that the new location would be the *zwaaiikom* in the *Verbindingskanaal*. By doing so, they ignored any form of public input. For the second phase of the project the council made a 'concession'<sup>108</sup> towards the criticism put forward in the newspapers by publishing an advertisement in which reactions to the architectural plan for the museum were asked to send in.<sup>109</sup> Then these would be discussed in two open meetings. The plan itself could be inspected in the museum itself or be bought from the municipality. Nevertheless, the major decision was already made: the location on the museum. After all, genuine *inspraak* was still not the prime interests of the local officials. Gietema explained his position in an interview done by Hajema as following: “Vind je het erg dat die *inspraak* me nooit heeft geïnteresseerd? (...) Ik vind dat je besluiten over dit soort stedelijke voorzieningen in de raad moest nemen. Daar moet je niet met iedereen over in debat gaan.”<sup>110</sup> Needless to say, Gietema's controversial political style led regularly to resistance in the local media.<sup>111</sup>

After two surveys – initiated by a group of concerned *Stadjers* helped by researchers of the Hanzehogeschool – which showed the percentage of *Stadjers* who were against the location (60 and 46), the council sped up the process and voted for the slightly adjusted plan on the fifth of April, 1989. But this vote was not the end of the preparations of this architectural project. The council needed to vote one more time for the definitive building plan but did not succeed in doing so before the new

---

105 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 422.

106 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 282.

107 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 420; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 271, 275.

108 The council was legally required to do so.

109 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 30–304.

110 *Ibid.*, 304–305.

111 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 420.

elections of the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1990. Then the PvdA lost seven seats in the council which positioned the council regarding the museum in quite a tense position.<sup>112</sup> One VVD member even proposed holding a referendum regarding the museum on which the director of the Groninger Museum responded that the building of a museum was not the task of the people of Groningen, “Het is een specialistische aangelegenheid. Vergelijk het eens met een dokter die zegt dat ik geopereerd moet worden. Waarop ik reageer met: “Dat kan je nu wel zeggen, maar ik zal het eerst de buurt vragen”.”<sup>113</sup> This reheated discussion, again initiated by local media, reached the national ones again when *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad* spend their pages on the subject. But in the end nothing changed for the location of the museum. Despite the renewed attention in the media and the loss of the PvdA, the old council decided to accept the building plan. The case was finally closed.

#### 4.4 Grote Markt North-side

Two years after the opening of the new museum by the Dutch queen, the Groninger municipality thought it was time for another large project approximately 500 meters from the Groninger Museum: the Grote Markt (the central market).<sup>114</sup> Because the municipality did not own the ground on which it wanted to renovate buildings, it had to work together with real estate developers who only wanted to collaborate in exchange for a parking garage on the location. Without support of the real estate developers and investors, it was not financially possible for the municipality to start a renovation of the North-side of the Grote Markt. Although the city council had for decades tried to ban cars out of the city center, they hesitantly agreed with the terms put forward by the investors if and only if the parking spots that would arise at the Grote Markt would disappear from other locations in the city. In 1997, an 'exploratory' study on the plans was published causing a stream of negative reactions in the media. Also, the interest group 'Geen Gat in de Grote Markt' came into being and the Socialist Party (SP) proclaimed that they would organize a referendum about the plans. Already in 1994, a referendum took place about the idea to ban cars from the Noorderplantsoen.<sup>115</sup> In this first referendum the *Stadjers* supported the decision to restrict the park for car traffic. Having experience with referendums, the municipality tried to present itself as if taking the interests of the *Stadjers* into account by organizing an 'inspraakenquête' in which 1600 *Stadjers* could vote for different aspects of the plans for the Grote Markt. In contrast to similar surveys held in Amsterdam, the Groninger survey did not include alternatives but only presented one idea, developed by the civil service 'Ruimtelijke Ordening en Economische Zaken' (RO/EZ).<sup>116</sup> The results of the survey were diverse: the respondents were quite positive about the idea to renovate certain building on the North side of the Markt (7,5/10). A small majority gave the idea to built a parking garage in the middle of the city center more than a 5,5, but because of the fact that a large part of the respondents rated the idea very poorly, the average ended at a miserable 5,2.<sup>117</sup>

The results of the survey were for the *college* no reason to abandon the idea of the parking garage which made it necessary to avoid the possibility of a referendum about the subject. Groningen had experiences with referendum since 1994 after an electoral victory of D'66 that demanded this legal

112 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 307.

113 Ibid.

114 Groote, “Van Groot Naar Klein En Weer Terug?,” 385; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 342.

115 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 437; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 329; Hofman, *De vaart erin!*, 96.

116 Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 344.

117 The number of respondents was with 1600 less than one per cent of the electorate. The number of people which actually participated in the survey was less than fifty per cent Ibid..

possibility. But a clause was built into the regulation which stated that it was only possible to organize a referendum within a certain starting phase of large infrastructural projects. To be able to avoid starting all over again, it was the task of the *college* to make progress with the project as fast as possible to avoid a possible referendum that could endanger the whole project. At the same time did *wethouder* Willem Schmink (PvdA) succeed in changing the referendum regulations in such a way that the threshold of a legal referendum became much higher than it was before. He, in other words, changed the rules of the game in the middle of the game itself. After years of talking with investors, real estate developers, owners and architects the official starting point of the plans was published in 2000, the *Voorontwerp stedenbouwkundig plan*. Immediately Geen Gat in de Grote Markt proclaimed taking the initiative of organizing a referendum. Side-stepping several difficult regulations, the group managed to gather the amount of signatures necessary to organize the referendum. On February 21 2001, the referendum was held. The results? A number of 56 per cent of the electorate turned their votes in and 81 per cent of them voted against the plans of the *college*.<sup>118</sup> The chairwoman of the PvdA, and three other councilors resigned. Smink ignored the results of the referendum and remained on his post.

#### 4.5 Tram

Next to the museum and Grote Markt projects two other large infrastructural plans were in development. Since 1996 people had been talking about reintroducing a tram in the city center. The idea was that a combination of light trains, trams, buses and a park & ride would connect Groningen to its periphery. The plan consisted of different, somewhat independently developed projects, of which the first result was the building of a new train station (Groningen Europapark).<sup>119</sup> More difficult was the idea of a tram straight through the city center. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Groningen did have tram lines running through the center but they were replaced by buses in 1949. In 1997 the municipality presented the plan of connecting the North and South of Groningen by means of a tram “before 2005”. Although citizens did get the opportunity to request a referendum, none was being held and in 2007 the council decided to introduce the tram in Groningen.<sup>120</sup> 'Project Regiotram' was enacted together with a special newspaper *Tramkrant* with which the organizers wanted to create public support for their main task: realizing the tram line.<sup>121</sup> The Project Regiotram was an independent work group formally not related to the council. It tried to create support from the *Stad* by organizing a long 'inspraakprocedure' starting in February 2007 with an official starting point ('startnotitie') which made it possible to request a referendum on the subject. After the starting point, several 'participatierondes' and 'inspraakrondes' followed until the summer of 2010.<sup>122</sup>

Joost Imhof, who discussed the project in his thesis, interviewed *wethouder* Karin Dekker who after a study trip to Montpellier became enthusiastic about the idea to reintroduce a tram in Groningen. She explained to him that after Groningen received a large compensation for the failure of establishing the *Zuiderzeelijn*<sup>123</sup> (a never realized train connection from the Randstad to Groningen) it became easier

118 De Vries, “Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling,” 447; Hajema, *De glazenwassers van het bestuur*, 348.

119 Hofman, *De vaart erin!*, 104–105; Joost Imhof, “Op Het Goede Spoor: Een Actor-Netwerk Perspectief Op de Succes-En Faalfactoren Bij de Ontwikkeling van Tram En Light Rail,” *Master Thesis Utrecht University*, 2011, 56.

120 Stefan Nieuwenhuis and Beno Hofman, *Vertrek & Aankomst: Regiotram in Stad* (Groningen: Kleine Uil, 2012), 11.

121 Marjolijn van Andel, “Een Tekstanalytische Case Study Naar de Schriftelijke Communicatiemiddelen van Projectgroep Regiotram Voor Omwonenden Tijdens Een Interactief Beleidsproces,” *Master Thesis Rijksuniversiteit Groningen*, 2010, 9.

122 *Ibid.*, 10; Gemeente Groningen, “Bestemmingsplan: Regiotram - Tracédelen I En II,” 2012, 113; Hofman, *De vaart erin!*, 11.

123 Council member Maarten van der Laan (PvdA) confirmed this in a conversation I had with him.

to 'think big' and instead of merely one tram connection, construct two.<sup>124</sup> Imhof also interviewed the director of Project Regiotram who explained that they deliberately choose a long process of participation to not only create public support for the large project but to also make use of ideas produced by *Stadjers* themselves. After one of the participation rounds, an alternative line was for example proposed by *Stadjers* which was implemented in revised versions of the plan.<sup>125</sup>

*Stadjers* were informed about the project in numerous ways: the *Tramkrant*, advertisements in local news papers, letters, meetings, e-mails, a website, *et cetera*. Marjolijn van Anandel, who analyzed the different communicative methods Project Regiotram used, concluded that the information distributed was often one-sided, colored and difficult to follow. It also did not stimulate any further participation or debate about the project: the plans, in other words, were presented as if they were already finished. However, *Stadjers* were always being informed about the development of the project through the different media the Project Regiotram used. In sum, according to Van Anandel the manner in which the organizers of the plans invited citizens to participate in the project did not support the goal of participation due to the fact that it was too much steered towards a realization of the project.<sup>126</sup>

And the attempts to further create and stabilize support did not seem to be successful either. In surveys done by the local newspaper *Dagblad van het Noorden*, the initial high support of the project declined substantially.<sup>127</sup> André Buikhuizen, whom Imhof spoke as well, thought that this decline had to do with the economic situation of Groningen and the 'Not In My Backyard' (NIMBY) effect. The more you know about the plans, he explains, the more you become aware of the influence such a line will have on – for – example, your garden. Shop owners in the Oosterstraat were for instance afraid of the possible consequences for their income of a tram line through their street. In the end, the attempts of the municipality to create public support by stimulating the involvement of the public in the project by means of appointing the Project Regiotram did not succeed: after the falling of the *college* in 2012 due to unsolvable discussions about the project, Project Regiotram was canceled. A combination of a lack of public and political support had become fatal for another prestige project of the Groninger council.<sup>128</sup>

#### 4.6 Grote Markt East-side

Four months after the failed attempts of renovating the North-side of the Grote Markt in 2001, and simultaneously with the development of the tram project, the Groninger council decided to start a new attempt of renovating the Grote Markt under the banner of '*Grote Markt Beraad*'. This time, forty interested *Stadjers* were asked to join under the name of 'Forum Advies Grote Markt' and were supported by another team which largely consisted of civil servants working at RO/EZ. Different meetings were held, surveys done, and *Stadjers* could even participate with the project via the internet. The council seemed to have learned something from their previous attempt to transform the Grote Markt.<sup>129</sup> Different from the previous plans, the council did not have to deal with the owners of the

---

124 Imhof, "Op Het Goede Spoor: Een Actor-Netwerk Perspectief Op de Succes- En Faalfactoren Bij de Ontwikkeling van Tram En Light Rail," 58.

125 See for example also: Gemeente Groningen, "Bestemmingsplan: Regiotram - Tracédelen I En II."

126 Anandel, "Een Tekstanalytische Case Study Naar de Schriftelijke Communicatiemiddelen van Projectgroep Regiotram Voor Omwonenden Tijdens Een Interactief Beleidsproces."

127 Imhof, "Op Het Goede Spoor: Een Actor-Netwerk Perspectief Op de Succes- En Faalfactoren Bij de Ontwikkeling van Tram En Light Rail," 60.

128 See: (<http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/groningen-is-40-miljoen-kwijt-door-regiotram~a3333271/>). Last accessed March 30 2016.

129 Boogers and Tops, *Hoe het referendum werd "gewonnen,"* 15; Beno Hofman, *Grote Markt Oostzijde: van oud Stadshart tot nieuw Bouwplan* (Assen: In Boekvorm, 2005), 63; Lunsing, *De besluitenguilotine*, 83.

ground of the North-side of the market anymore. Instead of the demand of an underground parking garage, the council had to work with the fraternity Vindicat which were housed at the Grote Markt.<sup>130</sup> Initial plans (a music theater) were quickly discarded and in 2004 the Groninger Museum, the Noorderlijk Scheepvaart Museum (naval museum) and the Openbare Bibliotheek (the public library) joined forces and presented their idea, a 'Huis voor Informatie en Geschiedenis', or later 'Groninger Forum'.<sup>131</sup> The to be erected building would be a combination of a library, a museum, a cinema, and a place to get a drink after you watched a movie or visited the museum. In the words of Lunsing “a very ambitious plan”. As we have seen before, a referendum could only be demanded after the presentation of a certain starting plan, or *startnotitie*. Smink who did not resign after the poor results of the previous referendum on the Grote Markt, quickly and unexpectedly presented a rough *startnotie* based on the plans made by the museums and the library.<sup>132</sup>

The SP experienced quite some difficulties in organizing a coalition against the plan. Next to the fact that the plan was not clear at all – which made it quite hard to object against it<sup>133</sup> –, did the citizens of Groningen already vote for another referendum in 2005 on the European Constitution. Thereby ignoring the vagueness of the plan and the possibility that the public was tired of referendums, the SP decided to collect signatures and convinced the Stadspartij to join him in this quest.<sup>134</sup> But in contrast to the previous referendum campaign, the opposition was lacking any form of organization which made it hard to attract others and enlarge the group. Despite internal party struggles both parties experienced, they managed under the name of 'Meer Doen met 40 Miljoen' (the expected costs of the Forum) to attract the Buurtcentra Besturen Overleg Groningen (BBOG); an organization concerned with the interests of districts in Groningen. Other organizations like Milieudefensie (environmentalists) were asked to join but refused. In contrast to the opposition, the advocates of the plan managed to organize themselves quite professional. The PvdA joined forces with the Jonge Socialisten (JS), and the Groninger Museum also moved to the side of the proponents.<sup>135</sup> And last but not least the initiative 'Grote Markt Ja' (GMJ), initiated by Smink, popped up. The network of GMJ grew larger and eventually encompassed a politically broad range of persons ranging from left (SP, GL), mid-right (D'66), to right (JOVD). The advocates united in a committee and simply began a campaign in which it was the goal to sell a product and to argue that the opponents were politically motivated to criticize the plans.<sup>136</sup> The committee even decided to gather votes for the referendum, though these were not valid due to the fact that the group deliberately used the wrong documents, not valid in the procedure. The gathering of votes was simply meant to spread their word and to convince the public of their cause. Lunsing, who himself was also part of the GMJ-network, made a diagram in which all the different actors of the network are shown. Not only did it consist of the JS, the JOVD, the VVD, CU, CDA (apart from PvdA and GL), and mayor Wallage, but there was also contact with the *college*, the RO/EZ and the Public Library. In sum: all political relevant parties of Groningen.<sup>137</sup>

All these different actors at the side of the proponents independently organized campaigns to convince the *Stadjers* of their cause. Songs were written, balloons were handed out, campaign videos were produced and even Beno Hofman's (Groninger historian) popular television show was used to

130 Lunsing, *De besluitenguilotine*, 81.

131 Boogers and Tops, *Hoe het referendum werd “gewonnen,”* 25; Lunsing, *De besluitenguilotine*, 82.

132 Boogers and Tops, *Hoe het referendum werd “gewonnen,”* 29.

133 Ibid., 38–39.

134 Ibid., 30; Lunsing, *De besluitenguilotine*, 85.

135 Lunsing, *De besluitenguilotine*, 86.

136 Ibid., 89.

137 Ibid., 92.



present the location of the new building. But according to Jan Lunsing, the opposition simply did not have a coherent story to tell. Sometimes the opposition argued that the problems with the plan were the height of the building; sometimes they argued it were the costs. But their argumentation fluctuated too much to make a solid story that convinced the public to vote contra the project. Both Lunsing and Boogers and Tops more or less agreed that the proponents of the plan were, for the most part, the first in forming a solid organization, with their campaign, and with the formation of a large and diverse network which could reach an even diverse and broad range of *Stadgers*. This made it very hard for the opposition, which had internal organizational problems and presented itself as a collection of political parties, to reach a larger amount of people who would vote 'no' in the referendum. The results of the referendum organized in 2005: 38,6 per cent voted against the project. 53,4 per cent agreed with the plans as put forward by the council. Thus, the project could finally start.

But even though the council won the referendum, the development of the project would be haunted by various problems. One of these can be related to the owners of the ground: Vindicat. For over a decade, the municipality discussed the demolishing of the fraternity, and its relocation on the East-side of the Grote Markt.<sup>138</sup> For over sixty years, the fraternity was housed at the Grote Markt on the location of the former 'Scholtenhuis', in which people were tortured during the Nazi regime. The Scholtenhuis was destroyed after the War and on that location, Vindicat raised a new building because now one else wanted the 'corrupted' ground on which crimes against humanity were committed. One of the important conditions Vindicat demanded was that everything that was available in the old building should be moved to the new one on the costs of the municipality. And so this happened. After some financial struggles<sup>139</sup>, the start of the renovation of the East-side started in 2011<sup>140</sup> and at the time of writing, Vindicat moved to their new building facing the Martinitoren. But no sign of the new Forum can be seen yet. The construction of it is temporary halted due to the recent increase of earthquakes in the region.<sup>141</sup>

#### 4.7 Conclusion

After our little excursion to the North of the Netherlands we now have to answer the question which moved us to one of the 'happiest cities in Europe'<sup>142</sup>: how did the relationship between Groningen and its *Stadgers* develop the last couple of decades? In the first two paragraphs we saw young PvdA members who fought for an opening up of the institutional decision-making processes for regular citizens. Wallage and Van den Berg argued for the importance of genuine connections and contact between the *college*, the council, civil servants, and the *Stadgers*. Wallage managed to change the rules of the student council of his city and Van den Berg, in collaboration with the city's own *stadsandoloog*, proposed the implementation of neighborhood councils and specifically appointed officials who could help citizens finding their way around in the dense web of governmental regulations. These examples show that the seventies were a period in which young politicians tried to

138 See: (<http://www.ukrant.nl/magazine/eindelijk-dan-het-paleis-is-klaar>). Last accessed February 18 2016.

139 See: (<http://www.nrc.nl/handelsblad/2010/12/15/gronings-forum-gaat-niet-door-11979954>). Last accessed February 18 2016.

140 See: (<http://www.gic.nl/nieuws/groninger-forum-nog-50-dagen-en-dan-starten-de-bouwactiviteiten>). Last accessed February 18 2016.

141 See: (<http://nos.nl/artikel/2056778-nam-trekt-68-miljoen-uit-voor-steviger-cultuurforum-groningen.html>); (<http://www.dvhn.nl/archief/Vertraging-Groninger-Forum-kost-tot-8-miljoen-20850597.html>). Last accessed February 25 2016.

142 See: (<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/datablog/ng-interactive/2014/jul/24/most-satisfied-city-europe-residents-pollled-healthcare-noise>). Last accessed February 20 2016.

democratize the local government of Groningen by insisting on the openness of procedures and the possibility of *inspraak* and participation of the public. That these kinds of demands were unheard and quite radical for these days can be exemplified by Van den Berg's struggle with his own *stadsandoloog* who could not stop his deliberations, whereas Van den Berg needed to move on with the implementation of the traffic renovations.

In the nineties, when Gietema replaced Van den Berg and the Groninger council wanted a new museum, a different kind of 'openness' was noticeable. Although the municipality knew about the importance of *inspraak*, citizens were not asked to contribute, but companies and investors. This different interpretation of being open to the public led to heated discussions between citizens of Groningen in the local newspapers. The institutional reluctance to take the input of *Stadgers* into account can be exemplified with the fact that they presented the possibility of organizing a referendum about the project. The council wanted to avoid the situation in which citizens dismissed the project in a referendum which meant it had to start all over again. Similar tensions between the council and the oppositions were also noticeable in 2001 when the opponents of the plan to renovate the North-side of the Grote Markt managed to convince the public to vote against it in this second referendum of Groningen. Smink, who did not resign after the failure of 2001, learned from his faults and won his second attempt to change the Grote Markt in 2005. He outplayed the SP in a well-organized campaign and received the majority of the votes of the third referendum organized in the city. Simultaneously, after a long debate and process of preparation, another infrastructural dream was demolished in 2012 when the *college* fell over the tram project (which consequently also fell).

Next to the fact that the Groningen municipality seems to like large and costly infrastructural projects<sup>143</sup>, a difficult tension between participation and decision-making can be distilled from our case-studies. When do you, as a councilor, need to take the possible interests of your citizens into account? Based on these case-studies a first point which can be made is that the Groningen government often has a different conception of participation or *inspraak* than proponents of participation like Wallage and Roel Vos, the *stadsandoloog*. Not only do councilors (and museum directors) sometimes argue that citizens should not be involved in large projects because they simply do not have the knowledge to give meaningful input, the case of the Grote Markt and the tram tell us that participation is often not desired at all. This attitude towards the involvement of citizens and interests groups fits within the literature about citizen participation in the Netherlands which describes the 80s and the 90s as the period in which the idea of 'New Public Management' (NPM) developed.<sup>144</sup> The development of NPM can be characterized as a rationalization of policy-making, in which citizens are seen as consumers who are to be helped and who do not know what they themselves exactly want. Hence your task, as a government is to help your citizens out by making solutions for their problems. Because they do not know what they need, there is little use in deliberating with them about the solutions you invented. One example of such a mentality which came forward in two interviews<sup>145</sup> I did was the mowing of a lawn in a neighborhood. Usually, the municipality mows the fields in the neighborhoods because the grass grows

143 Recently ideas about building a railway were presented by the organization FlyoverGroningen. See: (<http://nos.nl/artikel/2081333-met-de-kabelbaan-naar-de-grote-markt-in-groningen.html>). Another large project, the Infoversum, was declared bankrupt in November 2015. It had cost the municipality 2.5 million Euros. See: (<http://www.dvhn.nl/groningen/3D-theater-Infoversum-bankroet-21077881.html>). Both last accessed February 25 2016.

144 Lawrence Pratchett, "New Fashions in Public Participation: Towards Greater Democracy?," *Parliamentary Affairs* 52, no. 4 (October 1, 1999): 618; Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Vertrouwen in Burgers*, 188; Adriana Hendrika Boele and Paul Dekker, *Burgermacht Op Eigen Kracht?: Een Brede Verkenning van Ontwikkelingen in Burgerparticipatie*, SCP-Publicatie 7 (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2014), 24, 33.

145 Gijs van Maanen, interview with Maarten van der Laan and interview with Mark Sekuur.

too high. But, it is also possible to ask whether the *Stadjers* living nearby the field want the grass to be mowed in the first place. Children, for example, like to play in a field with high grass which can be a reason for not mowing it.

A second point worth noting at this moment is the fact that already in the 70s, worries about the quality of democratic representation existed. Wallage put forward the problem of the gap between politicians and the electorate which we have seen in the works of Boven en Wille and can be described as a problem of underrepresentation. As we will see below, Wallage and others never stopped proclaiming this message in Groningen and they thereby indirectly influenced the thinking and work of council members and civil servants until today. Thirdly, we saw that the possibility of organizing a referendum gave rise to interesting processes of political decision-making. Even though a referendum ideally is a method which makes it possible for citizens to present their opinion regarding governmental projects in a more formal manner, we saw that the methodology was being hijacked by politicians who transformed the process into a media campaign. These media campaigns further stimulated the divide between not only two different groups of citizens, but more importantly, between two different political groups. Instead of a sense of *inspraak* in governmental projects, the referendum became a tool with which political parties could position themselves in the political landscape. A final point which I want to address at this moment concerns the citizens who in the described discussions did want to have a say in the decision-making process. These can be roughly divided between on the one hand political parties or interest groups like Studiegroep Binnenstad or Geen Gat op de Grote Markt, and on the other hand individual citizens as in the case of the museum and the tram. Questions about the preferred type of citizen participation arise when looking at these case-studies. Is it preferable to give your voice in the form of a statement of an interest group or do you want yourself to take part in the discussion? And, to what extent is it a problem that the type of participation noticeable in 4.6 is basically divided up into two semi-political interest groups who use marketing techniques instead of dialogue to 'win' the argument? And, to what extent is that *citizen* participation anyway? These (normative) questions will be postponed until chapter 6. First, we fast forward to 2014, the year the first G1000 was introduced to the Netherlands.

## 5. G1000 in the Netherlands

In our second chapter we encountered Van Reybrouck who with his fellow political renovators invented and organized the G1000 Belgium. One of the reasons for organizing the event was the motivation to change the political situation Belgium was in at the moment. Although they managed to gather hundreds of citizens at the same time in Brussels, the political influence the G1000 had is quite unclear. It did not seem to have any formal political results but it might have had a limited influence on the attitude or feelings of the participants towards deliberative democracy. We also saw Van Reybrouck explaining his book in *Buitenhof*. Harm van Dijk, initiator of the G1000 Amersfoort also watched Van Reybrouck talk about the problems modern democracy is facing and became interested in organizing a G1000 in his own city, Amersfoort.<sup>146</sup> Van Dijk was fascinated by the idea of a G1000 because it could construct and foster what he calls 'common ground' or a 'constructive culture'. For him, organizing events in which people freely talk about what they think is important creates a sense of 'community' and caused the members of the discussion to bring the results of their deliberation in to practice because they bound themselves to these results in during the conversation.<sup>147</sup>

In the first paragraph of this chapter we deal with the first G1000 organized in the Netherlands: the G1000 Amersfoort. The paragraphs form part of the background of our own subject, the G1000 Groningen which was primary influenced by the Amersfoort one. None of my respondents related their own G1000 with other G1000s than the one organized in Amersfoort. Therefore, I do not elaborate on the G1000 organized elsewhere in the Netherlands (for instance Amsterdam and Uden). For more information about these events, see the papers written by the research group I mentioned earlier. In the second and third paragraphs of this chapter we deal with the G1000 Groningen and come to a better understanding of the why, how and when of the event. I summarize our results in the final paragraph of this chapter.

### 5.1 G1000 Amersfoort

Van Reybrouck's *Tegen Verkiezingen*, was an important source of inspiration for organizing a G1000 in Amersfoort, Van Dijk explained to me in October 2015. Van Dijk points out that he agrees with the first part of Van Reybrouck's argument: the part in which he presents his analysis of modern electoral representative democracy and explains the idea of drawing lots to counter the election fever. Van Dijk, in contrast, dislikes the second part of the book, which is according to him characterized by a "deadly tediousness". In this part, Van Reybrouck starts with the construction of alternative democratic institutions based on the concept of lot. And institutionalization, according to Van Dijk, is something that needs to be avoided at all costs because in his experience, people working in institutions are inclined to prioritize power above content, above the 'inspiration' which initially led to the formation of the collective itself. For Dijk it is essential that a renovation of the defective democratic institution can only occur when means are being used which are significantly different from the institutions which need to be transformed.

Van Dijk, who has a background in counseling and developed his own approach towards processes of 'co-creation' (the 'Van Harte-aanpak'<sup>148</sup>), believes that initiatives should develop out of

---

146 Boogaard and Binnema, "De G1000 Amersfoort: Reconstructie En Analyse Vanuit Politiek-Institutioneel Perspectief," 7.

147 Gijs van Maanen, interview with Harm van Dijk. For a summary of the event not written by 'our' research group see Marcel Ham and Jelle van der Meer, *De Ondernemende Burger: De Woelige Wereld van Lokale Initiatieven* (Utrecht: Movisie, 2015), 120.

148 See: (<http://www.vanharthe.nl/>). Last accessed February 17 2016.

processes that create a sense of community between participants. These processes of 'community building', 'common ground' and 'co-creation' transform a group of randomly selected individuals into one which can come up with their own rules, 'constructive culture', 'boost' and 'potential'. In other words: Van Dijk strongly favors an approach which emphasizes the power of a group that through *dialogue* – in contrast to *debate* – constructs a sense of community and functions as totally new form of decision-making alongside, and preferably instead of, the “technocratic complex of civil servants and government”. Organizing the G1000 was for Van Dijk an attempt to present an alternative to this system.

Although Van Dijk explicitly states that he wanted to avoid an institutionalization of this project, this does not mean that his project was not political. Boogaard and Binnema, who evaluated the G1000 Amersfoort, related the G1000 initiative with a common dissatisfaction in Amersfoort with the functioning of the (local) party politics.<sup>149</sup> They base their argument on the fact that Van Dijk as organizer (and father according to some) of the G1000, stated on the fourteenth of March 2014 (eight days before the G1000) in a local paper that he did not feel any connection with the local politics of Amersfoort anymore. Amersfoort just experienced a turbulent period of vehement party politics in which the *college* had fallen in 2012 and in which individual councilors left their parties, or even committed suicide because of financial mismanagement.<sup>150</sup> In other words: Amersfoort experienced quite some political turmoil in the period 2010-2014. However, the opinion of citizens of the city regarding the political and institutional situation did not change. In contrast, they experienced the possibilities of *inspraak* as more positive during the period. Boogaard and Binnema suggest that this development had to do with the local project 'Het Nieuwe Samenwerken' ('the new cooperation'), a project which was meant to further stimulate discussing topics like innovation, participation, communication between citizens and the local government.<sup>151</sup> One result of this project was the Elisabeth Groen foundation which independently, but in cooperation with the municipality, developed ecological projects for the city of Amersfoort. Although this foundation still positioned the municipality as the primary owner of the city that needed to – in conversation with citizens – set the frameworks in which citizens could develop their own project, it suggested to experiment with a citizens council like the G1000.

For Van Dijk it was important to look for allies because he did not want to do it on his own. In the conversation I had with him he explained that this was sometimes quite difficult. Initiators of already existing initiatives did not want to collaborate with him. According to him because they saw the G1000 as a threat to their own ideas. But Van Dijk did not give up and managed to convince Jos van Winkel (head of the strategic department of the municipality), Lucas Bolsius (mayor, CDA) and Wil van der Vlies (clerk of the council) of the importance of organizing a G1000. He, in other words, managed to gain support of the political institutions which was needed to for example receive access to the local personal database. This database could be used to send the letters to all possible participants. Van Dijk also convinced jurist Nicole Estejé to join the initiative. Estejé, in contrast to Van Dijk, did like the second part of Van Reybrouck about the institutionalization of citizens councils by means of lot.<sup>152</sup> Although they both had different interpretations of the idea of the G1000, they decided to continue and presented in December 2013 the 'Stichting G1000 Amersfoort' with as main goals

---

149 Boogaard and Binnema, “De G1000 Amersfoort: Reconstructie En Analyse Vanuit Politiek-Institutioneel Perspectief,” 5.

150 Ibid., 3.

151 Ibid., 4.

152 Ibid., 8; Gijss van Maanen, interview Harm van Dijk.

organizing a citizens summit (the G1000) and a citizens council.

The idea of the G1000 was to invite 600 citizens and 400 politicians, civil servants, entrepreneurs, artists which are assisted by a number of table hosts.<sup>153</sup> The group of politicians, civil servants, entrepreneurs and artists are invited to make sure 'the complete system' was present during the deliberation.<sup>154</sup> A total number of 675 people eventually showed up at the event which took place March 22 2014. The day was structured in three rounds. In the first 'café-round', the goal of the participants was to form an agenda. In rounds of twenty minutes, where after each round the participants changed places, participants were invited to think about what they thought to be important for Amersfoort and how they themselves could contribute to the city. Participants could send in words with their smart phone which were gathered by the table hosts<sup>155</sup> and put in a *word cloud* on a large screen which was made visible for everyone. After setting the agenda for the day, it was time for the second round, the 'Stadsgesprek'. In this round the participants had to choose a theme which they were required to work out by means of starting with the 'dreams' they had about the theme, followed by the feasibility of these dreams, and ending with the development of concrete proposals to develop these dreams. After working out the themes proposed in round #1, the participants were supposed to decide which plans they favored. Although initially the idea was to make the decision after several rounds of deliberation, because of some technical problems it was decided to vote on the formulated initiatives of round #2 by means of sticking sticky notes on the initiative. Important to note here is that only citizens chosen by lot were given access to the location the voting took place. After everyone placed their sticky notes on their desired initiatives, the 400 politicians, artists, et cetera, were invited to pick an initiative themselves. In this final phase of the day, all of the participants could commit themselves to a specific initiative by moving to a certain area in the room which was connected to it. All the persons who committed themselves to an initiative exchanged contact information which made it possible to develop and work out their chosen initiative together.

Although they both bear the same name, the G1000 Amersfoort did have a completely different structure than the one organized in Belgium. In contrast to the Belgian format, no agenda was made prior to the deliberation, participants switched places during the day, and Amersfoort opted for the inclusion of several specific groups of citizens. This led to a different structure and a different experience for those invited. To make a comparison and hence a sketch of the development of G1000s possible, I follow the evaluative methodology of Caluwaerts and Reuchamps and ask how the G1000 Amersfoort fared in terms of input, throughput and output (see table 2 for a summary). I depend for my data on several Dutch G1000s on the work done by the research group and especially Michels and Binnema's article. The research group evaluated the different G1000 initiatives on the basis of the extent to which they realized a set of 'democratic values'. These were inclusiveness, influence, deliberation, citizenship, transparency, efficiency and legitimacy. I agree with them that these are important – though not always necessary – requirements for a valid deliberative mini-public. This methodology is however limited in the sense that a deliberative event is reduced to a list of numbers. By merely evaluating the realization of certain variables one is less able to take into account the historic-political context. By using the method as used by Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, one emphasizes the fact that the G1000 is an *event* with a beginning and an end, and one does not pin it down on a set

---

153 Ibid., 12–18.

154 Ibid., 9.

155 The table hosts were instructed to facilitate the discussions at the table and by no means influence or dominate the conversation. The group was owner of the ideas they themselves put forward and the hosts should not take that ownership away from them.

of democratic values which might not be the most interesting and important aspect to be found in the G1000. Moreover, by doing so, it is easier to take the goals of the initiators themselves into account because you on the one hand use less criteria, and on the other hand use criteria which emphasize the more procedural aspects of deliberative democracy.<sup>156</sup> A final pragmatic advantage of the chosen evaluative method is that it becomes easier to compare the evaluation of the G1000 Amersfoort (and Groningen) with the G1000 Belgium. The analysis of the G1000 Amersfoort and that of Groningen below hence will be structured according to the method of Caluwaerts and Reuchamps. They evaluated the G1000 with help of of the following criteria:

#### Input dimension

- Quality of representation: to what extent is the selection of participants representative?
- Openness of the agenda: to what extent is the agenda open?

#### Throughput dimension

- Quality of participation: to what extent is the deliberation open for all?
- Quality of decision making: to what extent are deliberation and aggregation balanced?
- Contextual independence: to what extent is the deliberation free from external pressure?

#### Output dimension

- Public endorsement: to what extent are the results justified for the larger public?
- Weight of the results: to what extent did it have a formal political impact?
- Responsiveness and accountability: to what extent do the results reflect initial problems and to what extent are the participants responsible for the results?

Although I prefer using these criteria, this does not mean that the evaluations of Michels and Binnema are not valuable anymore. To be able to evaluate the event I 'translated' their conclusions into the input-throughput-output framework. Did the G1000 Amersfoort succeed in satisfying these criteria? The input-dimensions concerns the manner in which participants were recruited. Interesting in this respect is the division between citizens and 'non-citizens' (the civil servants, etc.). By both recruiting citizens and specific citizens, the G1000 Amersfoort tried to include not only citizens but also the relevant societal-political actors in the process of deliberation. From a theoretical point of view this might seem odd: who are these relevant actors and why did they receive an invitation? What's left of the value of impartiality we found in Habermas' ethics? However, from a more practical point of view (theirs) in which the political aspirations of the initiative are taken into account as well, the decision can be justified. If you want to have political influence, it is a good idea to include politicians and civil servants into the deliberative process as well. Boogaard and Binnema explain that by doing so, the G1000 Amersfoort combined conceptions of a citizens *summit* and a citizens *council*.<sup>157</sup> Both ideas can be traced back to Van Dijk and Estejé's interpretation of Van Reybrouck's book and summarized with the question 'how intimate should the relation with the political institutions be'? The structure of the

---

<sup>156</sup> I think that the values of citizenship and efficiency are not that important for evaluating mini-publics as Michels and Binnema seem to think. I also think that the values of transparency and legitimacy as described by the authors focuses too much on the subjective experience of the participants. These are all important aspects of a mini-public, but not necessary to make the decisions made during the day morally valid. I therefor favor the methodology of Caluwaerts and Reuchamps.

<sup>157</sup> Boogaard and Binnema, "De G1000 Amersfoort: Reconstructie En Analyse Vanuit Politiek-Institutioneel Perspectief," 19.

G1000 can thus be seen as a compromise between both initiators. Thus, when you take the political aspirations in terms of influence into account and regard the very open agenda beforehand, I think that the input-dimension should be evaluated as positive. This brings us directly to the throughput-dimension. Although politicians, civil servants, entrepreneurs and artists were invited to the tables to deliberate with 'normal' citizens, they were excluded from the voting process in the third round of G1000. Regarding the throughput it is understandable from the point of view of a citizens summit that you exclude the 'non-citizens' from parts of the deliberative process. The downside from the point of view of a citizens council is however that you by doing so create a divide between these two groups by which the values like 'openness' and 'equality' are in danger. Thus, combining two perspectives simultaneously has advantages and disadvantages which makes making an unambiguous evaluation of the throughput-dimension difficult.

The output of the G1000 is equally difficult to evaluate clearly. Boogaard and Binnema distinguish between three different results of the G1000 Amersfoort. In the first place, they write that a "common and abstract impact of the G1000 on the political process is noticeable".<sup>158</sup> Interviewees told the authors that the city experienced the G1000 as a positive, passionate and optimistic turning point. Problematic, however, is the fact that the G1000 did not result in any form of policy change. No policy had been made which referred to the G1000. Neither did the new coalition agreement mention the initiative. In sum: *if* the G1000 caused political change, this must be looked for in informal spheres and not in formal policy changes. We saw that after the G1000 participants could join specific initiatives. How did these initiatives develop? Two examples of relatively successful initiatives are a group of citizens who wanted to organize a 'WijkG100' (district G1000) and the 'Buurtweter', a group that stimulates neighborhood relations. Both initiatives succeeded in what they wanted to do (organizing a smaller and more local G1000 and bringing together citizens) and are the groups which are most directly related to the G1000 itself.<sup>159</sup> To some extent, the G1000 Amersfoort hence succeeded in stimulating new types of citizenship participation and dialogue in Amersfoort.<sup>160</sup> After the direct formal political consequences, and the more indirect and informal societal ones, Boogaard and Binnema evaluate the influence the G1000 had on ideas about democratic innovation in Amersfoort. The most interesting ones are ideas about (a) including randomly chosen citizens into the city council, and (b) redesigning the municipal decision-making progress by implementing different types of citizens councils.<sup>161</sup> In these proposals (at this moment still underdeveloped) are the ideas of Van Reybrouck and Estejé noticeable who wanted to solve the democratic crisis by means of restructuring the political process itself. Unfortunately for Estejé and her collaborators, no progress has been made yet and policy change is still absent. The ambitious and ambiguous goals of the G1000 Amersfoort might be the reason for the inability to have direct formal political influence. Is it really possible to emphasize the 'boost' and 'daadkracht' of individuals citizens which can be translated into local initiatives as the Buurtweter, and simultaneously argue that politicians should do something with the results of the deliberative day? The fact that the result of the G1000 was a list of initiatives did not help either, Boogaard and Binnema suggest. Such a collection of ideas is easier to ignore than a more concrete and

---

158 Ibid., 22.

159 Ibid., 24.

160 Survey data tell that for example 26,4 per cent of the participants felt more connected to the neighborhood since the G1000, 43,9 per cent felt more connected to the city since the G1000, and 19,6 per cent said that since they since the G1000 were more active in the positive development of their neighborhood.

161 Boogaard and Binnema, "De G1000 Amersfoort: Reconstructie En Analyse Vanuit Politiek-Institutioneel Perspectief," 27.



detailed political agenda. Even though political change in Amersfoort as a result of the G1000 was not to be found, what can be said is that it has led to the organization of numerous other G1000s in the Netherlands. From Uden and Amsterdam, to the North of the Netherlands in the city of Groningen, our research subject. But, the Groningers wanted to do it differently and we start their story on a morning in the early Spring of 2014.

Dimension	Arguments	Evaluation
Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open agenda</li> <li>• Random selection citizen</li> <li>• Selective selection 'non-citizens'               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Justified by political aspirations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Positive
Throughput	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured in such a way that strong unequal power relations were avoided</li> <li>• No external pressure</li> <li>• Exclusionary voting mechanism</li> </ul>	Neutral
Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal implementation of ideas</li> <li>• Informal citizen initiatives</li> <li>• Informal spread of ideas regarding democratic innovation</li> </ul>	Negative

Table 2: summary of the evaluation of the Amersfoort G1000.

## 5.2 G1000 Groningen

In the early morning of March 24 2014, Marian van Voorn traveled with a colleague to her work. The day before, both of them watched a broadcast of the television show *Tegenlicht*. The show – which was aptly titled 'We zijn het zat' (We are tired) – told the stories of people who wanted to do something about the political impasse they experienced.<sup>162</sup> Jerry Agema was one of those citizens who was fed up with politicians who according to him did not listen to the public anymore. He decided to bring attention to this supposed democratic deficit by calling up for a blockade of all the important Dutch highways. This time his voice was being heard and on March 7, he and a convoy of friends and like-minded citizens – escorted by the police – drove the Dutch highways with an agonizing slow speed and by doing so, frustrated fellow travelers. His little revolt reached the national news and he even was asked to come and join the Dutch talk show *Pauw & Witteman*. Another Dutch example that could be seen in the *Tegenlicht* broadcast was the G1000 Amersfoort. For Van Voorn, this Sunday was the first time she heard about the concept and ideas of the G1000 and immediately became enthusiast for the idea. Also her colleague found the show interesting and the subject worth talking about on Monday morning: “Woh, that's really cool!”.

In December 2015 I spoke to Van Voorn in a small, trendy coffee bar next to the new Harmonie building in the center of Groningen. At that moment, she was in between jobs. She left her former job as an intermediary between municipalities and citizens in which she for example helped citizens to adopt their local swimming pool for which the local government did not want to take care anymore. For her, the job was all about 'burgerkracht' or citizen power, which for her is the ability of citizens to take control over their own lives. She, in other words, helped citizens organize themselves and functioned as a sort of guide through the dense web of governmental regulations. Van Voorn usually encountered in her work and other networks a set of roughly the same people. But the G1000 Amersfoort introduced

<sup>162</sup> See: (<http://tegenlicht.vpro.nl/afleveringen/2013-2014/we-zijn-het-zat.html>). Last accessed February 20 2016.

her to the idea of lot which could make it possible to also reach the typical 'Truus op de hoek'<sup>163</sup> and thus, to talk and deliberate with people normally left out of the picture. She asked herself: “Why aren't we doing this in Groningen?” and continued spreading her enthusiasm for the idea. After her colleague in the early Monday morning in March, Joost Engelhart was the next 'victim' of her enthusiasm.

Van Voorn and Engelhart both study psychology at the Open University and regularly talk about the relationship between changes in society and the role and functioning of the government. Engelhart works as a consultant. He inspires and motivates people to do new things and helps them in their contact with governments. His initial response to Van Voorn's story about the G1000 was “Well, that's nice. But what do we have to do with it?”. But he knew by chance someone who helped organize the G1000 Amersfoort and was intrigued enough to arrange a meeting. But even after a meeting in the summer with Jeroen Koning, responsible for the logistics of the G1000 Amersfoort, they still were not sure: “Well, it is nice, but still, what do *we* have to do with it?”.

But Van Voorn could not forget the enthusiastic and inspiring story of Koning and decided after the summer of 2014 to get in touch with Harm van Dijk, organizer and basically father of the idea of the Dutch G1000. For Van Voorn, three minutes of talking with Van Dijk was enough to convince her that Groningen needed a G1000 and made her spread the idea to more and more people around her. Subsequently, the group of G1000 enthusiasts grew larger and larger. Friends, colleges, fellow students and friends of friends joined the network and in October, Van Voorn, Engelhart, Mark Sekuur, Annette Barelds, Paula Kuipers, and Theo Adema sat together and decided to simply pick a date on which the G1000 Groningen would take place: the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, in the summer of 2015.<sup>164</sup> Van Voorn knew Barelds and Sekuur from previous initiatives in Groningen. They together organized Parking Day, a day where parking places are 'hired' and transformed into places where you can organize a meeting, play games, or have a lunch. Annette Barelds, an architect, heard Van Voorn's story and thought that “it would be very cool if you can mobilize the city in such a way”. For her, it was a fun way to contribute to the city. Barelds knew Sekuur from another initiative about neighborhood development in which connections were made between companies, the municipality and the citizens living in the concerned districts of Groningen.

Soon after establishing the date of the G1000 the group of '*aanjagers*', as they called themselves, organized a meeting with Van Dijk and Donner who helped the group to get their priorities straight. They, for example, quickly needed connections in the municipality and knew that Liesbeth van de Wetering and Wieke Paulusma, civil servant respectively member of the council (D'66), were working on a method to implement a new form of participatory decision-making in the council called Synthetron. Paulusma agreed to join the initiative and also became an '*aanjager*'. Van de Wetering became the central contact with the municipality of the group. For the initiative it was important to have good connections within the local government because they needed to make use of the registrations of who was living in Groningen to be able to send letters to potential participants. Another reason for not organizing the event in complete isolation from the institutions was the fact that they wanted to invite civil servants and politicians to the event, and to mentally prepare them for the possible results of their deliberative day. Van de Wetering and her college Frank Brander (who was also involved in the organization of the initiative) could help with these letters and functioned as central nodes within the Groninger governmental organizations.

---

163 Hard to translate reference to the normal, average person who does not show up at neighborhood meetings and is not interested in politics.

164 Paula Kuipers and Theo Adema are hardly mentioned in the interviews and both left pretty quick after the initial formation of the G1000 organization.

Van de Wetering and Brander, “whose job it is to support and stimulate citizenship participation”<sup>165</sup>, are also responsible for the organization of Let's Gro, an annual 'inspiration festival' organized by the municipality to bring together innovators, entrepreneurs, scholars and artist to work and think about the future of the city. After discussing the G1000 with Van Dijk and Donner, the *aanjagers* thought it was time for their 'coming out' which they planned on that festival in November 2014. Simultaneously with the festival, Van de Wetering and Brander also worked on something else: the annual LPB congress 2014 which took place in the same weekend as Let's Gro. LPB or 'Landelijk Platform Buurt- en Wijkgericht Werken', organizes events for professionals working in municipalities and Van de Wetering, Brander and the *aanjagers* decided that besides the exposure on Let's Gro, the G1000 Groningen needed a presentation on the LPB congress. They, by doing so, reached two audiences in the same weekend: the *Stadjers* of Groningen and its institutions.

Both audiences were quite skeptical. The audience was not sure what kind of event it actually was, what its value should be, and how it was related to the political institutions. Also the question was asked how the G1000 could bind the municipality to the decisions and ideas put forward during the day. But, as Van Voorn explains, that was not the idea of the event: “We did not want the municipality to do something with the results. We want the participants of the G1000 to do something with them!”. People also asked why the municipality organized such an event. But again the *aanjagers* had to explain that they were being misunderstood: “This is not being organized by the municipality. We are volunteers!”. Van Voorn thinks this reaction is symptomatic for a certain widespread idea that you, as a citizen, can not and should not organize such large events for yourself and your fellow citizens. According to Van Voorn (and also other *aanjagers*), people are not used to taking initiative, organizing themselves, or trying to solve problems by themselves.

In the mean time the G1000 Groningen could be found on Twitter, Facebook, on the WWW, and in 'old' media like newspapers. The first introductory meetings were planned in January and February and got communicated through these different media. The open meetings were held in the Let's Gro building at the Grote Markt. Frank Brander had helped the organization in the building which was scheduled to be demolished in the light of the renewal of the Eastern side of the Grote Markt, and the building of the already mentioned Groninger Forum. The meetings were meant to enlarge the team, gather more volunteers, and further work out the plans for that summer. And the team grew larger indeed. Nephtis Brandsma, who I first met during one of these meetings and later interviewed in a coffee bar in the Brugstraat, found out about the idea via Twitter, joined the organization and became responsible for the scientific justification of the project due to the fact that she as philosophy student was graduating on the theory of deliberative democracy. Brandsma did have experience with the application of deliberative theories in practice and could help explain the structure of the day. Marjan de Vreugt also joined. De Vreugt found out the existence of the G1000 via Facebook and brought in her experience in the field of producing large events. Marleen Vreeswijk, our last organizational example here, was convinced by Brander – a friend of her – to volunteer for the G1000: “Nice! You should do it!”, he wrote down in an 'app' to her. Around February the key-functions within the G1000 team were more or less filled and the real work could begin.

None of the volunteers I spoke to had any real experience with organizing such an event and hence did not have a good idea of the amount of work they brought down on themselves. Some people did already in an earlier phase of the process left the team. Others – like Sekuur, who's wife was calculated to give birth on June 6 – did not have the time to fully contribute to the project. But all the other individuals I interviewed spent enormous amounts of time in the preparation of this mini-public.

<sup>165</sup> Quote by Nephtis Brandsma, interview by me.

Because a mini-public it should have been.<sup>166</sup> An event in which a randomly selected group of *Stadjers* could deliberate with each other about what they thought was necessary to talk about. For many of the *aanjagers*, having a nice deliberative day was also the *goal* of the G1000. Others emphasized the importance of *burgerkracht*, or the ability of *Stadjers* to organize themselves without institutional support. Some of them spoke about political or democratic goals of the G1000. Although the main focus of the G1000 according to Van Voorn, for example, laid in the attempt to let the citizens of Groningen deliberate with each other so they experienced a sense of community, the G1000 could also function as an attempt to connect the passive non-voting electorate with local politics again. For Sekuur starting a process democratic renewal was an important aspect of the G1000, besides the organization of a nice, pleasant day full of dialogues between random *Stadjers*. And Brandsma, as a final example, was more fond of the manner in which the Belgian G1000 was organized: a quite radical attempt at democratic reform in which the agenda was chosen beforehand instead of the Dutch version which she described as “a kind of large meeting to recruit volunteers”.

Thus not everyone had the exactly similar idea about the goal of the G1000. Nevertheless, they all more or less agreed on the structure of the day itself which made it possible to divide the volunteers into different teams with different tasks and responsibilities. One subgroup did the organization of the event, one the production, and there was a group responsible for communication. The group of *aanjagers* (the 'founders' of the G1000 Groningen) formed an overarching management layer who supervised the progress of all the subgroups. The *aanjagers* divided themselves over the different subgroups which meant that Engelhart joined team organization, Paulusma and De Vreugt team production, and Van Voorn and Barelds communication. These different teams worked independently and reported their progress to the *aanjagers* which could then make the important decisions. But within the *aanjagers* team itself, no one had the final responsibility, or in the words of Engelhart “We actually were five captains on one ship, which was not that clever”.

Although everyone agreed upon the goal of organizing a nice day in June, the enormous amount of work to be done, the different interpretations of the meaning and methods of the G1000, and the different personalities led to some clashes between the different volunteers. Van Voorn, Barelds and Paulusma were people who wanted to do things, to work and organize the event in a fast, easy and practical manner. Others, like Engelhart, were also interested in the theoretical background of the event and hence wanted to thoroughly justify every methodological step in a harmonious manner, whereas Barelds and Paulusma accepted that knots needed to be cut in sometimes less harmonious (or deliberative) ways. One example of such a clash between these different work ethics occurred when a volunteer communicated about the G1000 in the website of his neighborhood. For Engelhart, this was an instance of an enthusiast volunteer who spread the word of the G1000. But, for team communication, the communication on the website did not satisfy the communicative rules they formulated, hence should be forbidden. Another example of such a clash between two different

---

166 In a power-point file to be found in the digital Dropbox archive of the Groningen G1000, Brandsma explains the concept of deliberative democracy. Although it is unclear whether the file is actually used, it gives a nice impression of the interpretation of the theory by Brandsma, as the one responsible for the scientific underpinning of the event. Mentioning Fishkin, the file includes a table in which Brandsma elaborates on the different values underlying deliberative democracy. From aspects of inclusion (everyone who is affected by the to be made decision), freedom (no internal and external pressures on the participants), to diversity (a large variety of opinions should be included); all conventional deliberative values are presented and explained. These values highly influenced the manner in which discussions were being organized and facilitated by the table hosts. Each table host, to give one example, received a training in which the importance of these different values was emphasized. This was all meant to make the participants as free and autonomous as possible and thereby genuine owners of the ideas made collectively.

approaches towards organizing the event was told to me by Vreeswijk. Klaas Postma, another volunteer, was responsible for all of the safety regulations of the building in which the G1000 took place. For weeks he was asking the *aanjagers* what the status was of the traffic controllers and guards which had to be organized for the event. But for weeks, he did not get a response. Vreeswijk eventually decided to arrange these people herself, but without consulting the *aanjagers* who responded afterwards that she could have talked to them before doing it herself. This was one of the instances in which communication between at least Vreeswijk and the layer of 'management' of the G1000 failed to do its work. For her, but also for others, this was reason to immediately stop volunteering for the G1000 on the seventh of June, after the event.

Other clashes occurred with Van Dijk's national G1000 Platform. After prioritizing and the help of Van Dijk and Donner with their 'coming out' on Let's Gro and the LPB congress, it was unclear how exactly the Platform could support the Groningen initiative. There was a methodology, but did the Platform also have a script which they could use in Groningen? For the *aanjagers* it remained unclear whether they could use the scripts of the G1000 Amersfoort or not.<sup>167</sup> Also difficult was the usage of television screens and computers. For the methodology of Van Dijk, screens were needed for every table on which the host of that specific table could minute what was being said in the discussion of the participants. But where to get in a short amount of time and without significant resources 100 television screens and computers? The Platform could help them but only for a couple of thousand Euros which was, for an initiative without money, simply too much. They decided to not use screens but flip-overs instead, which from a methodological point of view changed the role of the hosts significantly. This change did not please Van Dijk, to put it mildly. The G1000 was more or less Van Dijk's child, according to the people I spoke, and any alteration of the methodology he formulated was very hard to accept for him. For him, the hosts of the tables during the day should have a supportive role, they were *gespreksbegeleiders*, Brandsma explained to me. In contrast, the G1000 Groningen by using flip overs instead of a computer screen on which the host summarized the conversations in real life – which made it possible for the participants to also correct them if necessary – changed the role of the host into one of a *gespreksleider*; a chairman. For Van Dijk, a chairman promotes a hierarchical relationship between the participants. These kinds of hierarchies could possibly damage the freedom and autonomy of the people discussing and by changing the specific manner in which the day was organized, the openness and accessibility of the dialogues were in danger. In other words: the collaboration between the national Platform and the G1000 Groningen was ironically being characterized by misunderstanding and discussion.

As explained above, the G1000 Groningen from the outset on collaborated closely with the municipality in the person of Van de Wetering and Brander. To further strengthen the relationship with the official institutions of Groningen, Engelhart went on a little 'tour' around several departments of the municipality to explain their initiative. He received positive reactions in which civil servants said that they really liked the idea. Others, were more skeptical and argued that they had seen similar events for

---

167 I could however find a document translated as 'G1000 for dummy's' into the digital Dropbox archive of the G1000 Groningen. Although the archive seems to be an unsystematic sloppy collection of documents related to the G1000, the G1000 for dummy-document seems to be a manual for organizing a G1000 written by Van Dijk and clearly meant to help other initiators. It explains what a G1000 is and what it should look like, when you should start preparing, who you should invite, the structure of the day, or in other words: it forms a complete how to organize a G1000 (Amersfoort style) manual. One reason for the answer I received could be that the G1000 Groningen initiators received the manual too late. An other reasons could be that even though the manual is quite clear in explaining how *in general* you should organize a G1000, it does of course not specify how you should organize it in Groningen, neither does it give detailed examples of how it worked out in Amersfoort.

over twenty years and that these never had significant results. Engelhart estimates on the basis of his tour that around twenty per cent of the civil servants are open for such initiatives and like to support them, sixty to seventy per cent are neutral towards them, and ten to twenty per cent is simply negative but can and do influence the neutral group. In a similar fashion, Sekuur presented the idea of the G1000 to the members of the council. Not surprisingly, the D'66 faction was quite enthusiastic about the idea. Groen Links (GL) as well. In contrast, the PvdA was a bit worried about it, and downright skeptical were the factions of the SP and the Stadspartij. But, nevertheless, Sekuur explains that he did not experience parties who simply stated to “piss off”. The overall experience of the volunteers I interviewed about the council was that it was in general more positive than the civil servants who in the words of Van de Wetering are all brought up with the model “We know what is good for you”, which explains their worries about an initiative that could for instance result in the conclusion “cancel the building of the Forum”. But the idea was not that the results of the G1000 were meant to directly change policy, Barelds explains. The council does not have to worry because “it is an experiment and what will result from it is not something *for* you, but something from the city itself”. In contrast to the Belgian G1000 which presented a 'to do list' to its government, the G1000 Groningen was in the eyes of the *aanjagers* meant to be a fun day not necessarily related to political change. Hence, presenting such a 'to do list' was simply out of the picture. In her analysis, the questions asked by members of the council and the civil servants they encountered are due to a fear of doing things wrong and not being able to directly influence the initiative.

The *college* was in the experience of all the most positive. According to Van de Wetering, in the *college* in which the PvdA, D'66, GL and the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD) take seat, a different mode of thinking is noticeable. With *Voor de Verandering* as the title of their program, the current *college* wants to position itself *in* the city and not *above* it, Van de Wetering explains. It wants to foster a policy in which the municipality is open, transparent and accessible to its citizens. One example of this proposed mentality change is the quite recent implementation of so called 'wijkwethouders' since October 2015. All of the Groninger *wethouders* are linked to one of the four districts in Groningen and their goal is to connect these districts with the governmental institutions. Although the concept of a *wijkwethouders* is not something never seen before, the idea is new in Groningen and it is meant to counter the relative top-down style of policy-making to be found in Groningen. Engelhart's experience with the new *college* are positive as well. He relates this open mentality to the political color of the *college*. Barelds experienced a similar open attitude of the *college* when she were were invited in April by Paul de Rook and Roeland van der Schaaf to present their ideas. During the conversation, De Rook and Van der Schaaf declared that the G1000 received the support of the *college*.

Simultaneously with their presentations of the different institutions, the G1000 needed more publicity and decided to present themselves on the 'Bevrijdingsfestival' (Festival of Freedom) on the fifth of May. Their appearance was part of a larger campaign in which posters were spread, balloons were handed out, and the Stadhuis was turned blue by means of a light installation. Blue was the color of the logo of the G1000 which they – contrary to the wishes of Van Dijk – adjusted and made their own. Moreover, they did not present themselves as 'G1000' but used the slogan 'Samen maken wij stad', which emphasizes their (apolitical) attempt to do something fun and nice in Groningen. After their campaign it was time to send the invitations around. The idea was to invite besides 'normal' Stadjers, politicians, civil servants, entrepreneurs and a number of 'frisdenkens' or 'dwarsdenkers'. Brandsma explained to me that the G1000 Groningen used the structure of the one that was held in Amersfoort. Instead of simply sending around a couple of thousand invitations the G1000 tried to create a diverse

group of people by inviting *Stadjers* and specific *Stadjers* (in the proportion 600/300) to take part in the deliberation to further enlarge the public and institutional support of the initiative. For Van Voorn, however, the reason to invite such a diffuse category as 'friskijkers' is still unclear. During the preparations of the day it was still not clear who belonged to this group but in the end, who was considered to be a 'friskijker' was often an innovating entrepreneur. The difficulties of explaining the choice is for Van Voorn reason to exclude the group in the hypothetical G1000 Groningen 2016.

After their campaign in May, the sending of the invitations, and one stressful last week in which the last things had to be prepared and problems had to be solved, the first participants started arriving at 9 pm on June 6 2016 in the former press of the local newspaper *DvhN*. The day was structured in a similar fashion as the Amersfoort G1000. The first part consisted of multiple 'cafe' rounds in which the participants discussed what they thought was important about the city of Groningen. Participants changed placed regularly and at the end of the morning, gathered topics in 'Wordclouds' which would form the basis of the afternoon sessions.<sup>168</sup> After the lunch, the participants were divided into smaller groups and under the assistance of a table host, further discussed their chosen topics in a 'dreams' and a 'to do' session in which they clarified and specified their ideas. After another break and a rearrangement of the location itself, it was time for the last and final round in which it became possible to vote on the worked out dreams. Over 80 different ideas were presented which were in the voting rounds reduced to a top-10. This list is shown below (table 3) and I will elaborate on it in the next chapter. Similarly to Amersfoort, participants were at the end of the day 'matched' with ideas which would ideally lead to smaller groups of people who developed the concerned idea.

Everyone I interviewed considered the day as a success. Even though small things did not go as planned, the participants did not notice them and had a pleasant day. This is being reflected in surveys done by research company MarketResponse on behalf of the governmental research project introduced above. Michels and Binnema explain that the respondents of the survey praised the enthusiast, open and solicitous atmosphere that they experienced that day. They were also positive about the G1000 organization. After the sixth of June, the participants who said that they wanted to continue develop their chosen ideas were invited to four meetings which were meant to help them start their own initiative. After the meetings, the G1000 organization would stop actively helping the different initiatives, and would only give support when asked to do so. But, what were the results of the G1000 Groningen? Similarly as done above with the Belgium and Amersfoort G1000, I distinguish between the input, throughput, and output dimension to see how the initiative fared as a deliberative mini-public.

---

168 Next to the interviews, I used the following sources: Michels and Binnema, "De G1000 in Groningen En de Burgertop in Amsterdam Vergeleken Met Andere G1000en: De Realisatie van Democratische Waarden," 7; Draaiboek G1000 Groningen; Werkvorm The World Cafe. Last two files are to be found in the digital archive of the G1000.

#	Idea	Number of votes	Summary
1	Basisinkomen	101	Further research on the effects of implementing a basic income.
2	Samen groen doen	98	Stimulating the cultivation of edible plants.
3	De buurtapp	61	Organizing an 'app' to stimulate connections between Stadgers.
4	Fontein & online	51	Central meeting spot to relax and connect with others in combination with an 'app'.
5	De diepenring als ontmoetingsplek	51	Meeting spot at Diepenring to relax and connect with others.
6	Centrum met allure	48	A decent city center with for example enough green, a fountain, and an aerial tram.
7	Wijk G100	47	Local district G1000.
8	Ecologische Hoofdstructuur	47	Green zones which connect the city with its periphery.
9	De bonte buurt	39	Emphasizing a lively neighborhood by implementing a neighborhood cooperation.
10	De dromenmakelaar	?	A civil servant 3.0 who connects citizen with the municipality.

Table 3: results voting rounds G1000 Groningen. Sources: ([www.g1000groningen.nl](http://www.g1000groningen.nl)), last accessed March 22 2016. However, the file 'Stemmen tellen', in the digital archive, and a post on the G1000 Facebook show slightly different lists. On Facebook, the 'Diepenring als ontmoetingsplek' is on place 4; 'Fontein & online' on place 5; 'Ecologische hoofdstructuur' on place 7, and 'Wijk G100' on place 8. Moreover, the file 'stemmen tellen' does not include 'De Dromenmakelaar'. I assume this discrepancy has to do with the fact that the file was last edited around 4.30 pm on the day and that was hence, not the final version. I interpret the number of votes as shown in the file therefore as indicative for the total number of votes and not regard them as the definitive number of votes.

### 5.3 Results and evaluation

We have seen above that the *aanjagers* managed with help of Van de Wetering and Brander to get their hands on the citizen registration which made it possible to send around their invitations to a random number of potential participants. Next to this number of citizens, the G1000 Groningen invited a number of 'other' citizens including council members and civil servants. The reason they invited members of the 'institutions' was to create public support for their initiative and to let the 'system' get used to the idea of deliberation. This would hopefully make it easier to talk with them about the results although implementing ideas was not the main goal of the G1000. Because citizens were still in the majority (by far) and the agenda was very open, the input dimension is evaluated as positive (see table 4). The G1000 Groningen used the same structure as the Amersfoort apart for the slightly different function of the moderator. In theory, the moderator in Amersfoort should have been less present which would stimulate feelings of community building and ownership. The surveys do not reflect this difference. As noted above, the participants in Groningen were quite content with the structure of the day (even though this was not always clear) and had the idea that their voice was being heard. The throughput dimension is therefore evaluated positively. Evaluating the results of the G1000 is more difficult. To make such an evaluation easier, it is helpful to distinguish informal results like the development of initiatives by citizens themselves, from more formal results like the implementation of



policy based on the outcomes of the G1000. As explained above, it should be firstly noted that the goal of the *aanjagers* of the G1000 was not necessarily to implement the outcomes of the G1000. In a recent statement in the *DvhN* Paulusma and Van Voorn underscore again that the G1000 was not meant to radically change local democracy.<sup>169</sup> Nor was the motivation to start with the initiative in the first place political inspired. It was according to them about having a good day and maybe spread their positive *energy, boost* to the participants and foster a level of *common ground*. Secondly I do not think that the G1000 can be evaluated solely in terms of an input, throughput and output-analysis. By doing so, a large amount of relevant context is being neglected. This does not mean that such analysis is invaluable, it is simply one of the components of the answer to the main question presented in the introduction. I start with the results which could be characterized as informal, and continue after these with the more formal ones.

### 5.3.1 Informal results

It is in the first place good to take a look at the results of the surveys done by MarketResponse and included in the article by Michels and Binnema. Previously, I elaborated on the results of the survey for the participants of Amersfoort. In comparison with these results, the ones of Groningen are slightly disappointing. 10,9 per cent of the participants of the G1000 Groningen felt more involved in the neighborhood afterwards versus 26,4 per cent in Amersfoort. One reason for the difference might be that participants of the G1000 already felt involved in the neighborhood before the G1000, which can explain why the event itself did not stimulate this feeling that much. 44,1 per cent of the participants did feel more related to their place of residence, a result which is quite similar to that of Amersfoort. Lastly, the *Stadjers* who participated were slightly less busy with the actual development of their neighborhood since the G1000 in comparison with Amersfoort (17,1 per cent versus 19,7 per cent). I summarized the results in the underlying table 4:

Subject	Amersfoort	Groningen
Neighborhood involvement	26,4	10,9
Place of residence involvement	43,9	44,1
Involved in neighborhood development	19,6	17,1

Table 4: percentage of participants of the Amersfoort and Groningen G1000 who felt more involved or connected to their neighborhood/place of residence since the G1000.

These first results show a change in the relationship of the participants with their neighborhood and/or place of residence. Is this also being reflected in the manner the participants took up the outcomes of the G1000 (the top-10)?

A second category of results which can be attributed to the G1000 are the initiatives who since the G1000 are been developed on the basis of the results of the top-10. The deliberations resulted in a list of ideas emphasizing the importance of development in the fields of sustainability, ecology, cohesion and solidarity. A result not to be found at other G1000s is the basic income which reached place #1. It was interesting to see that many of the persons affiliated with the G1000 organization I spoke did not have a good idea what was happening with the initiatives which resulted from the G1000. One reason for this lack of knowledge about these projects might be the fact that after the sixth of June,

169 See: (<https://www.dvhn.nl/plus/Opinie-Het-succes-van-de-Groninger-burgertop-21102756.html>). The article is now behind a pay wall but a readable version can be found via LexisNexis.

the G1000 organization disintegrated. Engelhart, Vreeswijk and De Vreugt decided to stop with their work for the G1000. For them, it was all about organizing a nice event and because the collaboration with the other *aanjagers* did not always go that smoothly, they did not feel the urge to continue with their work either. This in contrast to others like, for example Sekuur, Van Voorn and Paulusma, who continued volunteering and organized several meetings in which they helped the initiatives start up. Another reason for the lack of knowledge about the initiatives is more simple: the initiatives are on their own now. They are not being followed by the G1000 organization and it is up to them how they develop.

The respondents were not that surprised about the results of the G1000 itself. Basic income on number one is sometimes explained with the leftist political environment of the city of Groningen (Van de Wetering), and sometimes by referring to the relative poverty and isolated culture of the city (Brandsma). The other results which were combinations of solidarity, ecological and cohesion could often be related to the countless other initiatives thriving in Groningen. Sekuur, for instance, made a map in which thirteen local initiatives are presented. This map, titled 'Groningen Zelf doen!', shows a number of initiatives which have a 'special' function for the city of Groningen. One example is 'Broedplaats' EMG Faktors in which festivals, a haunted house, and the first bit-coin bar are being organized. A second example is 'Tuin in de stad', a social city garden under the guidance of the first citizen who is receiving a basic income in the Netherlands, Frans Kervers.<sup>170</sup> A third example would be VanHulleys, a company that makes underwear from shirts and recently became second (after photography giant Canon) in an international circular economy award program.<sup>171</sup> But how do the G1000 initiatives develop? This is a difficult question to answer due to the fact that the G1000 organization does not keep track of them. But what my respondents could tell me is that the participants who were matched to the basic income initiative, were being included in already existing initiatives focusing on the basic income (see Mieslab.nl). The 'buurtapp' was still looking for ways to start their initiative, also because there already existed a number of app-groups in Groningen. The 'dromenmakelaar' initiative seems to have found someone who wants to function as an intermediary between citizens and municipality. The 'ecologische hoofdstructuur' initiative recently organized a first walking tour as to give an idea as to how their concept should work out in practice. Lastly, the initiatives related to the development of the city center became part of a sounding board for the municipality who was already working on the renovation of the city center. They, in other words, were included in the institutional framework and were asked for their views on the projects being developed by the local government. The formation of this sounding board is also the only result of the G1000 that more or less directly relates to the formal democratic process.<sup>172</sup> Did the G1000 not have any formal

170 A digital version of the map can be found here ([http://vanziltebodem.nl/?page\\_id=14](http://vanziltebodem.nl/?page_id=14)). Last accessed February 24 2016. Next to the map, Brander gave me a document he is working on for the municipality in which he makes an overview of citizen participation in Groningen. In it, a large number of initiatives of the past, the present, and possible initiatives for the future are to be found. The document is part of a municipal policy named 'wijkgericht werken', or district-orientated policy making. Brander sketches a development in which in the past, the municipality emphasized *inspraak*. The government decided what was being done and citizens could – if the government decided so – gave their opinion. The future would, in contrast, be characterized self-ownership of citizens, deliberation, and democratic renewal in the form of for example citizens councils. The document describes a development from initiatives like a G1000 or a Let's Gro, to a cooperative council or even a citizens budget. See: (<http://www.nrc.nl/next/2015/12/23/frans-kerver-eeen-sympathiek-experiment-1570487>) for an interview with Kerver about the basic income and Tuin in de Stad. Last accessed March 29 2016.

171 See: ([thecirculars.org](http://thecirculars.org)). Last accessed February 24 2016.

172 See the file 'Inspraakrapportage Binnenstadsvisie “Bestemming Binnenstad”', which accompanies decision 5453827 made by the city council. To be found in the online archive of the Gemeente Groningen. The members of the G1000 initiative were thanked for their feedback and the *college* responded that they – in accordance with all affected (including

results? No, in the sense that the ideas put forward during the day did not result in any formal changes yet. However one idea which was not to be found in the top-10 but which can indirectly be related to the G1000 is currently being developed by the municipality: Paulusma's cooperative council.

### 5.3.2 Formal result

One day before the G1000 Paulusma received a phone call of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) which organized the so called 'Democratic Challenge'. This Democratic Challenge was part of the Agenda Local Democracy (ALD) initiated by minister Plasterk.<sup>173</sup> This agenda was meant to stimulate and promote initiatives concerned with local democracy and the Democratic Challenge, initiated in April 2015, was a period in which 99 different democratic experiments were gathered which could then get (financial) support from BZK. BZK asked Paulusma to send in her ideas on the so called cooperative council. Paulusma knew about cooperative councils developed in the United Kingdom, and also wanted to introduce these in the Netherlands. A cooperative council is a council consisting out of a mixture of council members and citizens who are randomly chosen. By means of lot, citizens are chosen for a designated period to become part of the council and deliberate and decide together with the regular members of the council.<sup>174</sup> Paulusma decided to send in a proposal for introducing a cooperative council on the level of districts in Groningen. She only did not discuss it with her own council. After the G1000, she with help of Van Voorn and Van de Wetering needed to convince the relevant political actors in the Groningen municipality of her already sent proposal. She explained to me that it took a while before everyone was convinced but in the end the recently established working group 'Werkwijze Raad' agreed on her proposal and gave the green light. Although this green light to experiment with the cooperative council is of course no direct result of the G1000, I think that the G1000 can be seen as an event which made it a bit easier for the initially skeptical council of Groningen to understand and accept it. Or in other words: the G1000 is part of a gradual move towards a municipality less afraid of democratic innovation, and more open to citizen participation.

I will elaborate on this gradual development more in the next chapter. For now it is good to answer the last question on this paragraph: how did the output of the G1000 fare? With regard to the informal results of the G1000 we can say that there are things happening with the ideas put forward by the participants of the G1000. But what exactly remains slightly unclear. Some participants joined the Mieslab to further develop the basic income project. Others organize walking tours to present their ideas about a green city. Participants also joined the sounding board of the municipality and gave their voice in the never-ending discussion about the city center of Groningen. At this moment no formal results are to be found. Yet, Paulusma, Van Voorn and Van de Wetering are working on the implementation of the first cooperative council in Groningen. If this succeeds, and I am correct in connecting the initiative indirectly to the G1000, some genuine progress has been made. But until that moment, I evaluate the last dimension as 'neutral'.

---

the G1000) – want to continue developing the different projects.

173 Letter dated March 13 2015 in which Plasterk explains to all municipalities his ALD. For a list of all experiments see Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, *99 Experimenten in de Lokale Democratie* (The Hague, n.d.).

174 An impression can be found here: (<http://democraticchallenge.nl/experiment/cooperatieve-vertegenwoordiging/>). Last accessed February 24 2016. Paulusma explains her ideas here: Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, *Raadslid in de Doe-Democratie* (The Hague, n.d.).

Dimension	Arguments	Evaluation
Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open agenda</li> <li>• Random selection citizen</li> <li>• Selective selection 'non-citizens' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Justified by political aspirations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Positive
Throughput	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured in such a way that strong unequal power relations were avoided</li> <li>• Clear explanation of the structure of the day to the participants</li> <li>• Nevertheless was not every aspect of the day clear for every participant</li> </ul>	Positive
Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal implementation of ideas (yet?)</li> <li>• Informal citizen initiatives</li> <li>• Informal spread of ideas regarding democratic innovation and citizen participation</li> </ul>	Neutral

Table 5: evaluation G1000 Groningen

#### 5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we encountered two different democratic initiatives. The G1000 Amersfoort was a mini-public steered towards democratic reform. In its motivation the goals of Van Reybrouck can be read who wanted to start a change of contemporary democracy as well. The structure of the G1000 Amersfoort was quite different from the Belgian one. From the recruitment method, the deliberative structure, to the aggregative processes in the final phase of the deliberation, Van Dijk choose a different structuring of the day than than Van Reybrouck did. Apart from some minor variations did the G1000 Groningen use Van Dijk's idea of how a G1000 should look like. However, the motivation and the goal of organizing it were different. Contrary to the G1000 Belgium and the G1000 Amersfoort, political or democratic reform was not high on the list of priorities. Neither did the group of *aanjagers* experience large divisions between citizens and the formal institutions in their city. They believed that the municipality was already slowly opening up its institutions for for citizen participation and initiatives. The implementation of the *Werkwijze Raad*, and the appointment of Van de Wetering and Brander as central nodes within the network of citizens and government are indicative for this gradual development. Next to the fact that the municipality became relatively open for democratic innovation, there is a huge variety of different citizen initiatives to be found in Groningen. From projects about basic income, to initiatives on ecology, to neighborhood cafes and meeting spots, every *Stadje* can in principle find some group of volunteers working on their interests. The type of citizenship that was being proclaimed by the organization of the G1000 reflects that. The G1000 Groningen wanted to promote in a positive manner the active, self-governing and self-sustaining citizen who can function independently from the local government and also wants to have a say in local policy. The organization did not only believe that civil servants are often still working in a paradigm in which they think they need to help and support 'their' citizens, they thought that citizens were stuck in a similar mode of thinking as well. The G1000 Groningen was meant to transcend this and make citizens – 'normal' citizens *and* the political and institutional ones – conscious of what they could do themselves for their city.

## 6. Evaluative chapter: putting the G1000 Groningen in its context

In the preceding chapters we followed the inception and migration of an idea, namely that of a deliberative mini-public called the G1000. Started in Brussels, transported to the city of Amersfoort, and eventually arrived in the North of the Netherlands, the conception of the concept G1000 as explained and put together by Van Reybrouck and his friends, changed from city to city. Initially, the G1000 related intimately to specific ideas about democracy and citizenship. For Van Reybrouck, democracy was in a crisis and deliberative democracy as a new method for political decision-making, could be the solution to the structural problems democracy faced. Van Dijk agreed with Van Reybrouck's interpretation of the democratic deficit. He, in contrast, disliked the specific solution Van Reybrouck proposed and transformed his conception of the G1000 accordingly. Van Dijk tried to maintain the aim of the Belgian G1000: that of democratic reform. He, however, tried to be as independent from political institutions as possible and strongly emphasized the potential citizen participation has in itself, regardless of dominant political structures. For our team of *aanjagers* in Groningen, the problems attributed to democracy were not the main motivation to organize a G1000. In this respect, the G1000 Groningen differed from that of the Belgian and Amersfoort ones. But similar to the Amersfoort case, the G1000 Groningen strongly stimulated citizen participation and saw the G1000 as a method able to make Groningen a more pleasant place to live in. This chapter ties together the different strands of thought found in the preceding chapters, and to relate these to the literature on democracy, participation, and citizen participation. It consists of a historical paragraph, a paragraph that deals with the ideal types of citizen participation and citizenship, and a final paragraph in which several critical remarks on our new participatory society are included.

### 6.1 Citizenship

It is important to notice that the G1000 Groningen was an initiative largely based on the idea to do something good for the city. It was not like the G1000 Belgium or the G1000 Amersfoort meant to radically change local government or influence its policies. It, in other words, did not have a negative motivation as many respondents explained to me. This explains why the *aanjagers* argue that their goals were not something quantifiable. The event was about having a good day with their fellow *Stadjers*, meet each other, and if possible, spread their *energy*, and *boost*, and by doing so create a sense of *common ground* between all participants. But although the G1000 did not have explicit political ambitions, it did present an ideal type of citizen, one which can function independently from the government, and is capable of organizing with his fellow citizens the things he himself likes to organize. One could infer from this ideal type of citizenship, the relation between citizen and government that especially people like Van Voorn and Paulusma wanted to change. In contrast to the situation in which the *Stadjer* is dependent upon the help of the municipality when organizing his life and also *expects* this support, and in which the civil servants and politicians think that it is their job to help *their* inhabitants<sup>175</sup>, the *aanjagers* wanted to readjust the balance between dependence and independence from local authorities. They, in other words, wanted to change the paradoxical relationship characterized by mutual expectations between citizens and government. The citizen expects that the government knows and can solve everything. The government assumes that citizens have these expectations and therefore also desires to know and solve everything. And in fear of doing

---

175 Note the difference between 'inhabitants' and 'citizens'. Inhabitants has a less political and active connotation than the word citizen which is immediately related to politics and rights. Even Brander and Van de Wetering were inclined to only use the words citizen when we explicitly talked about political subjects. This is indicative for the manner in which the municipality still considers the citizens of Groningen as its inhabitants, and less as politically relevant actors.

something wrong, the government also want to control everything which is for the citizen reason to say “Stop! I want to say something about what your are doing now!”. In other words: although the G1000 did not directly fit into the category of a movement solely motivated by the democratic deficit, the event is indicative for the difficult relationship between citizens and authority as experienced by the initiators in the city of Groningen. One example of this relationship is the following. After the deliberative rounds of the G1000, participants could join an idea of their own choice. This resulted in different smaller groups of citizens who developed their own ideas independently from the G1000. To help these initiatives a bit, the G1000 organization organized several introductory meetings in which they explained how organizing such events works in practice. In one of the final meetings, a group of *Stadjers* related to an initiative, immediately demanded help from the municipality. Why? They needed a place to convene and thought that their local government could help them find a location. Multiple *aanjagers* uttered their amazement. They spend months organizing an event on their own and succeeded in doing so. How could people who participated in the event still have that relation of dependence with the local authorities? How did they conceive the relation between citizen and government? Apparently, even after a long day of deliberative democracy, the citizens of Groningen were still not used to the idea that they can organize events and solve problems themselves.

The G1000 was meant to stimulate the idea that citizens could change their environment independently from their local government. One way of approaching this ideal type of citizenship is by distinguishing liberal from republican conceptions of citizenship. In 3.5 I explained how Habermas tried to formulate a different conception of democracy by distinguishing it from both liberal and republican conceptions. Habermas argued that his deliberative version can be seen as a compromise of both positions. Liberal and republican conceptions of citizenship are related to these conceptions of democracy. Liberal conceptions of citizenship focus on the rights and obligations stemming from formally being part of a democratic community. Republican conceptions, in contrast, emphasize the importance of being an active, virtuous, member of a political community. For republicans, being a citizen of a community is more than merely holding a set of rights, it is a mode of being. Citizenship in this conception is quite demanding, it demands a strong motivation and responsibility of citizens.<sup>176</sup> It is interesting to see how the kind of citizenship promoted in the G1000 Groningen neither fits perfectly in the liberal, nor in the republican model. The ideal G1000 citizen is an active member of the community, though not necessarily an active member of the *political* community.<sup>177</sup> You can be a virtuous citizen creating a common bond with your fellow neighbors without thereby necessarily being in contact with local politics. This is the result of the *apolitical* character of the G1000 Groningen. It is valuable if you know your way around the municipality as a citizen, but what is more important is being an independent, self-relying citizen. Or, put differently, independence and self-sustainability is more important than having political influence. If this is correct, Brandsma was not wrong after all in describing the Dutch G1000s as “large meetings to recruit volunteers”.

The ideal G1000 citizen is similar to one specific typology of citizen participation as introduced by Adriana Boele and Paul Dekker. Boele and Dekker distinguish between self-reliant types of citizen

---

176 David Miller, *Citizenship and National Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 85–86.

177 One could respond in a Arendtian way by arguing that acting in the public sphere is by definition a political action. I, however, want to highlight that for the initiators of the G1000, being a self-reliant citizen, does not necessarily entails any form of communication or relation with the political institutions of your society. For that reason I characterize the type of citizenship as put forward by the G1000 Groningen as *apolitical*; the G1000 citizen does not directly relate to its government.

participation, and forms of citizen participation meant to change governmental policy.<sup>178</sup> One example of the first form of participation is the cleaning of one's neighborhood. Actions like voting, *inspraak*, and having a voice in political decision-making, are examples of the second type of citizen participation. But how does the G1000's emphasis on self-reliant citizenship relate to the local government of Groningen?

## 6.2 Democracy

For the G1000 Groningen, solving a supposed democratic deficit was not the main reason for initiating the event. In contrast, the *aanjagers* were relatively positive about their local municipality. With respect to the openness and accessibility of their municipality for citizens, they argue that Groningen was already slowly making progress. This experienced process of democratization is reflected in the manner the municipality dealt with the theme of active citizenship in the last couple of years. This shift in attitude towards citizen participation from a governmental perspective is the second topic I want to highlight in this chapter. The relationship between the 'establishment' and the citizens who wanted to have a say in the decision-making process was sometimes quite complicated, to put it mildly. In the several case-studies we came across we, for instance, met councilors who actively tried to suppress these requests for participation. Illustrative are the arguments made by Gietema and the director of the Groninger museum when they explained why they disliked the actual participation of citizens in the process of policy-making: according to them, citizens are not able to give a meaningful contribution to such a process; matters were too complicated to hand these over to the common *Stadjer*. This attitude towards citizen participation differs from Wallage's plea for an open government in the 70s. Forty years after his first attempt of democratic renewal, Wallage again tried to convince the municipality of Groningen of the importance of citizen participation for local democratic institutions. In a speech given by him at the LPB-congress<sup>179</sup> organized in Groningen in the same weekend the G1000 Groningen presented itself to the public, Wallage – now president of the Council for Public Administration – argues for a different approach towards citizen participation.<sup>180</sup> He explained that politicians and civil servants should let go of the idea that it is their task to decide what is best for their citizens. Moreover, civil servants should move beyond a limited conception of democracy as party politics, and invite citizens to the negotiation table to discuss new, alternative forms of representative and direct democracy. Wallage returned to Groningen on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April to speak during a meeting of the council on 'gebiedsgericht werken'. This was one day after the formal launch of the 'Democratic Challenge' of BZK. These two events fit perfectly in a development since the arrival of D'66 in the *college* (since May 2014) in which measures like 'integraal gebiedsgericht werken' and 'wijkwethouderschap' were implemented as attempts to bridge the gap between institution and citizen. Another important meeting took place June 24, on which a proposal for the initiation of the commission Werkwijze Raad was accepted.<sup>181</sup> The commission Werkwijze Raad is important because in it, discussions are being held about the functioning of the council. The municipality itself places the formation of this commission within a discussion about the functioning of local democratic institutions and refers also to the meeting

---

178 Boele and Dekker, *Burgermacht Op Eigen Kracht?*, 11.

179 LPB refers to 'Landelijk Platform Buurt- en Wijkgericht Werken'. See page 43 in this essay.

180 The speech can be found here: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qH9LJxptkGU>). Last accessed April 7 2016.

181 The archive of the city council of Groningen is digitally accessible. Almost all documents of commissions and the council itself can be found by looking at the digital agenda found here (<http://groningen.notudoc.nl/cgi-bin/homepage.cgi>). Every last Wednesday of the month, a meeting of the council takes place. I checked all meetings that took place for relevant information on the topic of the G1000 until February 24 2016.

with Wallage in April. The commission – who does not meet publicly – discusses and investigates questions concerning neighborhood rights, neighborhood councils, different forms of citizen participation, and even initiatives like the G1000.

Simultaneous with the discussion and implementation of the commission *Werkwijze Raad*, Wieke Paulusma (after the Synthetron experiment, see page 42) introduced the cooperative council to the municipality of Groningen. The cooperative council is supposed to be a council based on lot in which 'normal' citizens convene together with 'normal' councilors. These implementations of alternative forms of local governance are indicative of a renewed attention given to ideas about citizen participation, democratic renewal, and supposed democratic deficits, especially since the new *college* included D'66. Some even argue that the collaboration with the G1000 of Paulusma was a means to the political end of institutionalizing the cooperative council. It is interesting to note the similarities between the measures implemented in 2015 (for instance the 'wijkwethouderschap'), and those which were proposed by Van den Berg in the 70s (see page 26-27 above). In both cases it concerns attempts to bridge the supposed gap between the political institutions and the citizenry of Groningen. For example, Van den Berg introduced neighborhood councils, social councilors and special civil servants appointed to help citizens organize themselves. The municipality of Groningen, under the guidance of our modern version of such a special civil servant (Van de Wetering), tries to implement the same kind of measures in 2015 which are all meant to enhance the participation of citizens and solve parts of an *experienced* democratic deficit. Thus, the debate on citizen participation in Groningen and its relation with local government now, is not so different from its preceding decades after all.

Our Groningen case fits nicely into a broader, national, debate on citizen participation and democratic renewal which began to take place after the 'depillarization' of Dutch societies in the 50s and early 60s.<sup>182</sup> The 60s and 70s are often characterized as the period of democratization and emancipation. The 'depillarization' in combination with a steady rise in the average level of education stimulated individuals to speak up, and try to influence the political process. Participation, however, in this period is often limited to forms of *inspraak*, and genuine processes of collective decision-making in political institutions are not yet noticeable. This gradually changed in the 80s where the ideal of the welfare state slowly was replaced by a market regulated state apparatus. From the perspective of the administration, the critical citizen changed into the consumer. In Groningen this was illustrated by a change in the interpretation of what an open government means. Where in the 70s this meant that processes of decision-making should be made accessible for citizens, 'openness' changed in the 80s in an attitude emphasizing the importance of governmental ties with companies. This period in which 'New Public Management' was dominant ended in the 00s and the Groningen municipality became open again for other forms of participation. This change in attitude towards citizen participation can be described as the replacement of *government* with *governance*. Or, put differently, the emphasis on participation meant to influence policy, is slowly being replaced by an emphasis on 'self-reliant' citizenship with a corresponding supportive role of governments.<sup>183</sup> In this new 'participatory society' or '*doe-democratie*', the roles of government and citizens are redefined. Without disturbance by the

---

182 Ank Michels, "Citizen Participation and Democracy in the Netherlands," *Democratization* 13, no. 2 (April 1, 2006): 328; Boele and Dekker, *Burgermacht Op Eigen Kracht?*, 23, 33; Monique Leyenaar and Kristof Jacobs, "Burgerparticipatie: Last of Lust?," in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 77; Evelien Tonkens, "Waarom Actief Burgerschap?," in *Tussen Onderschatten En Overvragen: Actief Burgerschap En Activerende Organisaties in de Wijk*, ed. Evelien Tonkens and Marieke van Giersbergen (Amsterdam: SUN Trancity, 2009), 9–16.

183 Boele and Dekker, *Burgermacht Op Eigen Kracht?*, 35.



government, citizens should start solving problems themselves. The government, in contrast, should withdraw from the public sphere and leave citizens be. This is at least the ideal picture of society presented by the government in recent documentation on democratic renewal. The G1000 Groningen, as an initiative meant to stimulate independent, self-reliant citizens without formal inclination to change or obstruct policy, fits perfectly within this ideal 'participatory *doe-democratie*'.

We have seen how the G1000 Groningen and the local Groninger government promoted respectively a form of self-reliant citizenship, and a form of democracy which can deal with these active citizens. Both ideals are intertwined in the sense that a citizens can only be genuinely self-reliant when their local government is accustomed to this type of citizenship. As a self-reliant citizen you do not want to be limited in your actions by a group of reluctant civil servants or a dense web of unnecessary regulations. What you need are civil servants who are willing to help you organize the thing you want to organize. The type of democracy envisaged here is what is being called a '*Doe-democratie*', 'associative democracy', or a bit more puzzling, as 'Weber 3.0'. The Scientific Council for Government Policy, for instance, introduces this ideal of 'Weber 3.0' with which they try to place current and future democratic developments in a similar history of citizen participation as explained above.<sup>184</sup> From strict hierarchical relationships between citizens and civil servants in the 50s (Weber 1.0), towards a period in which governments tried to include citizens into the democratic process but still failed to conceive of them as equal participants in this process (Weber 2.0). According to the Council, we should head into the direction of Weber 3.0, or a layered network of citizens and civil servants, who know each other, are constantly in contact with each other, and adaptive to ever-changing circumstances.<sup>185</sup> Tonkens et al. describe a similar democratic model but instead of Weber 3.0, they call it 'Montessori democracy'.<sup>186</sup> Tonkens et al. emphasize (among other things) an attitude of 'letting go'. Their democratic model is analogous to the Montessori educational model in which students study in their own tempo, and are responsible for their own progress. In the model, teachers and government are meant to support the student, respectively citizen, in their own self-chosen conceptions of the good life.

Weber 3.0 and the Montessori democracy are different typologies which help us to understand how our democratic institutions change, and how we can deal with these experienced developments. Two main conclusions can be drawn for our short dive in the academic literature. In the first place: the idea of government as an institution meant to help citizens develop themselves (in contrast to the government as caretaker of the 70s, and the minimal government of the 90s). In the second place: the idea that citizens should be held more responsible for how they want to lead their lives. The government still offers a set of services but expects citizens to take the initiative when they think that is necessary.<sup>187</sup> For both citizens and government these ideal roles are quite demanding. It requires the ability to imagine what it is like to stand in the position of the other. But this requirement of sympathetic concern is not the only, nor the biggest problem to be found in the ideal of the participatory society. The third paragraph discusses several other criticisms of the development noticeable in both government and the G1000 towards self-reliant citizenship and democracy.

### 6.3 Ideals and Criticism

When evaluating the value of a mini-public like the G1000 Groningen for its local democratic institutions, it is easy to argue that it was politically insignificant because it did not have real political

---

184 Scientific Council for Government Policy, *Vertrouwen in Burgers*, chap. 7.

185 Ibid., 199.

186 Tonkens et al., *Montessori Democratie: Spanningen Tussen Burgerparticipatie En de Lokale Politiek*, chap. 7.

187 Tonkens, "Waarom Actief Burgerschap?," 15–16.

influence. I explained that such conclusion would be drawn too quickly. When comparing the informal and formal results of the G1000 Groningen, it is possible to ascribe important output to the event. But there are other criticisms of the G1000 (and mini-publics in general) to be found in the literature. It is in the first place possible to criticize mini-publics for the fact that they attract only a relatively small percentage of the electorate, namely, relatively high educated citizens who are fond of deliberation.<sup>188</sup> Secondly, it is possible to criticize the quite demanding conception of citizenship inherent in these mini-publics. Normal citizens do not have the capacities to perform these sort of actions<sup>189</sup>, which makes it possible to ascribe another representational problem to the ideal of local deliberative democracy. If we assume for the sake of our argument that a form of deliberative democracy is the direction we ought to take, we are still not in the position to argue that we presented a satisfactory solution to the question put forward by Warren in 3.5 (how to reach a legitimate decision in a state of disagreement?). But I do not see this as a problem. I think it is both conceptually and empirically impossible to give a definite answer to Warren's question. Moreover, I doubt it is morally desirable to even reach such a decision, and I think a mini-public such as the G1000 is indicative for the lively manner in which civil servants and citizens deal with this impossibility to answer Warren's question.

In the first place, there is the so called democratic boundary problem. The legitimacy of a democratically made decision depends upon the individuals who were included in the process of decision-making. In the case of Groningen this was evident in the case-studies we investigated. The decision-procedure of the building of the new museum was for instance characterized by an absence of genuine participation of those who were affected by the decisions: the citizens of Groningen. From a strict democratic point of view the decision must be seen as illegitimate. The problem for democratic theorists, however, is the fact that you cannot decide collectively who should be included in the process of decision-making or not, without falling into a regress. Each time you make a decision about who is part of the decision-making procedure, democratic theory requires a justification for making that decision, which begs the question of who should be included in the decision-making process. This means in practice that every democratically made decision depends upon the validity of other decisions, and is therefore, always open for discussion by individuals who think their interests were not taken satisfactorily into account.<sup>190</sup> In the second place do the above stated criticisms indicate that it is very hard, if not impossible, to structure a decision-making procedure in such a way that all relevant affected actors are included in the process. In contrast to classical Greece, modern democracies are incapable of organizing forms of direct democracy where every possible citizen is included. There is no practical way of avoiding a form of representation in modern democracy. And even if this was possible, it is hard to imagine a situation in which all possible discussants reach a rational consensus as envisaged by Habermas. In other words: from the perspective of ideal theory, it is hard to imagine reaching the ideal of rational consensus in a process satisfying the requirements of a Habermasian discourse (see 3.5).

But I do not regard the conceptual and empirical difficulties of reaching a valid decision (whether by means of a G1000, or an other deliberative format) as problematic, because I believe a

---

188 Boele and Dekker, *Burgermacht Op Eigen Kracht?*, 25; Evelien Tonkens, “De Participatiesamenleving Inhumane?” (Utrecht, November 2, 2014); Frank Hendriks, “Gedeelde Verantwoordelijkheid in Een Verdeelde Samenleving,” 2015.

189 Anchrit Wille, “Democratische Drempels: De Moeizame Relatie Tussen Participatie En Democratie,” in *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, ed. Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 114–115.

190 Marco Verschoor, “The Quest for the Legitimacy of the People: A Contractarian Approach,” *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 14, no. 4 (2015): 391–428.

healthy democracy is being characterized by an open, and never-ending political debate. Or put differently: the unsolvable democratic boundary problem is a productive force and demands a constant process of legitimization by means of intersubjective deliberation.<sup>191</sup> We should start worrying when people do *not* complain about their political leaders and institutions. Luckily, we have seen that both *Stadjers* and civil servants of Groningen, are in a constant debate about their democratic roles and the functioning of their government. This struggle for independence and autonomy was also visible in the G1000 Groningen. In the next and final chapter we analyze the value of this new format of citizen participation in Groningen and see if the G1000 is a valuable method of democratic renewal.

---

191 This emphasis on discussion or 'contestation' is often contrasted with Habermas' emphasis on consensus. If you interpret Habermas' emphasis on consensus as a 'regulative ideal', or standard at which one can aim, contestation and deliberation are perfectly compatible. See for an explanation of the meaning of a regulative ideal Mansbridge, Jane et al., "A Systematic Approach to Deliberative Democracy."

## 7. Conclusion

The main question guiding this thesis was the following: *to what extent can a 'mini-public' like the G1000 Groningen improve local democracy by proposing a change in the relationship between citizens and local government?* I tried to give an answer to this question by firstly giving an introduction to the more common interpretations of the problems as experienced in Western democracies (chapter 2). There are multiple understandings of the so called democratic deficit. All of these interpretations emphasize different aspects of what they think is really going wrong in terms of for example representation or democratic decision-making. I argued that we should not exaggerate the problems often ascribed to Dutch democracy. After all, we are still a 'high-trust' country. In contrast to those who think Dutch democracy is completely hopeless, I am inclined to follow Frank Hendriks who argued that the problems we experience, are better to be interpreted as luxury problems of a well-functioning political system.<sup>192</sup> In chapter 3 we moved to Belgium and investigated David van Reybrouck's solution to what *he* thought was the problem haunting our electoral representative democracy. Van Reybrouck blames the emphasis on elections and presents a solution to this 'democratic fatigue syndrome' by combining ideas about deliberative democracy and the concept of lot. This combination resulted in a deliberative citizen meeting in Brussels called the G1000. But even though the event was meant to bring about policy change, no actual, formal changes have been implemented and the event was soon forgotten.

In chapter 4 we moved to Groningen to see how the municipality dealt with citizen participation in the past. The chapter functions as a historical introduction to the G1000 Groningen. By analyzing several infrastructural projects of the municipality of Groningen, we managed to get a sense of the relationship between government and citizen in the city. We saw that this relationship was in a constant change over the years. This change in the attitude towards citizen participation resembles broad national trends, meaning that also in Groningen the 70s were the decade of democratization characterized by pleas for open democratic institutions, and the 80s and 90s the decades of New Public Management (NPM), characterized by a conception of citizens as consumers. A second important point worth repeating here is that already in the 70s, versions of the democratic deficit were common. Complaining about the status of our democratic institutions, and the functioning of our representatives is therefore nothing new and probably typical for every democracy.

Chapter 5 consists of an analysis of the G1000 Amersfoort and the G1000 Groningen. To be able to understand the G1000 Groningen, a good understanding of the first Dutch G1000 organized in Amersfoort is also necessary. I therefore started the chapter with an analysis and evaluation of the G1000 Amersfoort. Though both initiatives did for the large part have similar structures, the G1000 Groningen was different because it was lacking a clear, formal political motivation. It did not refer explicitly to the democratic deficit, or failing governmental decision-making procedures. The G1000 organization tried to foster the bond between the *Stadjers* of Groningen by organizing the event without too much focus on its (political) results. This difference makes it possible to characterize the citizen participation found in the G1000 Groningen as one in which self-reliance is very important, in contrast to a form of citizenship found in the G1000 Amersfoort and Belgium in which political change was pivotal.

This difference between different types of citizen participation is crucial in answering the main question. If it is the case that the G1000 Groningen solely stimulated an active, virtuous, and self-reliant form of citizenship, one might ask how this type of citizen participation relates to the local democracy of Groningen. But the type of citizenship as stimulated in the G1000 Groningen fits within

<sup>192</sup> Frank Hendriks, "Het Einde van de Consensusdemocratie?" (Prodemos, Den Haag, November 9, 2015).

an ideal type of democracy the Dutch national government (BZK) has been promoting now for several years. In this plea for a 'participatory society', 'Montessori democracy' or 'doe-democratie', the emphasis is put on (1) the government as supporter of citizen initiatives, and (2) the responsibility of citizens for the way they want to lead their lives. If this is the direction local democracy should take according to the Dutch national (and local) governments, deliberative mini-publics stimulating this type of active, self-reliant citizenship are more than welcome. Problematic, however, is that it is yet unclear whether the G1000 really caused a difference in the attitude of its participants. The results of surveys done after the event do not show a significant improvement in the manner the respondents related to their neighborhood. The G1000 motivated participants to join several initiatives, but because the organization does not actively keep track of these initiatives, it is hard to tell how they exactly fare. The least one can say about it is that some initiatives joined other, already existing initiatives. Others did organize activities, and a last group became part of a commission of the municipality and functions as a sounding board. I therefore evaluated these *informal* results not as failed, but neither as very successful. Regarding *formal* results related to the G1000, it is possible to mention that Wieke Paulusma succeeded in implementing a citizens council based on lot. Though this result was not directly related to the procedure of the G1000, I interpreted the acceptance of Paulusma's proposal as being the indirect result of organizing the deliberative experiment of the G1000 in the city of Groningen. At the moment of writing it is too soon to say anything more about the functioning of the council. I therefore argue that the G1000 Groningen does not have any formal political results (yet), but that it might have stimulated a type of self-reliance citizen participation in Groningen. But what kind of general conclusions regarding the relationship between local government and deliberative mini-publics can be drawn from our Groninger case-study?

It is in the first place good to have a sense of what it means to organize a deliberative mini-public in practice. Only by means of conducting interviews with the G1000 Groningen team, it was possible to get a slight grasp of the hours this group of volunteers spent on the preparations of the G1000. Preparing for the event did not only cost time, it demanded a certain 'momentum' which was used by the initiative to spread their ideas. Mark Sekuur explained to me how this worked with help of a Tedx-presentation called 'How to Start a Movement' by Serek Sivers.<sup>193</sup> In the presentation, Sivers shows a short film of a man dancing all alone on a grassy slope in a park full of people. After a while, two other persons join him in his weird dance, and after that moment, the complete park joins the small group and a real movement was born. The film is meant to illustrate, according to Sekuur, one of the important factors for organizing an event like the G1000: besides the charismatic leader with a strange, new idea, you need a handful of other people who publicly show that the idea of the first person is interesting, and that it is worth to join the movement. The development of the organization of the G1000 followed a similar pattern. After being convinced of the idea by Van Dijk, Marian van Voorn spread 'the virus' of the G1000 to people in her direct environment and after the first group of *aanjagers* was formed, the organization got its momentum and more and more people joined the movement. For Van Voorn it helped immensely that she was part of a network of active citizens herself, and hence could relatively easily spread her enthusiasm. The question which I cannot answer here is whether such an environment is a *necessary* precondition for organizing such an event successfully or not. Though the G1000 stimulated a certain type of citizenship, it might as well be an expression of this network of active citizens in Groningen. Thus, an analysis of a mini-public such as the G1000 Groningen does not only *motivate* citizens to adopt a certain attitude, it is also an *expression* of an already existing attitude towards citizenship and participation. An analysis of a G1000 can therefore be

193 See: ([https://www.ted.com/talks/derek\\_sivers\\_how\\_to\\_start\\_a\\_movement](https://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_how_to_start_a_movement)). Last accessed April 9 2016.

a rich source of information about the public culture of a city.

It is in the second place good to notice the unavoidable but valuable tension between actively participating citizens, and their civil servants. This tension is not only felt by those citizens who are motivated to change policy, as illustrated by the attempts of participation in all the large architectural and infrastructural projects initiated by the Groninger municipality. 'Self-reliant' citizens like our initiators of the G1000 have to deal with governmental regulations as well. The task for both citizens and civil servants is to find a method, acceptable by both of them, in which they can discuss their interests without falling back into the New Public Management-paradigm of the 80s and 90s. The G1000 Groningen tried to change this relationship by inviting civil servants to their event. Though I doubt that it thereby changed the work ethic of all the civil servants of Groningen, the current implementation of Paulusma's cooperative council shows that organizing a deliberative event in your city, might also be of value for the members of the political institutions themselves. More long-term research is needed to evaluate the extent to which the G1000 influenced the work ethic of civil servants in the municipality of Groningen.

A final point to draw from our preceding analysis concerns the relationship between the G1000 and representation. A common response to the supposed democratic deficit by citizens and some scholars is to argue for more direct influence on their political institutions. These responses criticize the fact that they do not feel represented anymore and propose methods like a referendum as the solution of solving that problem. On the basis of our historical overview of referendums in Groningen I argue that such pleas for more direct forms of democracy are mistaken. They are mistaken because these methods do not solve the lacking influence on policy. Our Groningen examples show that when politicians and civil servants have experience with these direct forms of citizen participation, they will use all political means of convincing the electorate of what *they* think *you* should choose. I agree with Frank Ankersmit that in such situations all what is valuable for you as a citizen of a democracy will be lost.<sup>194</sup> Being an 'active' citizen in a direct democracy requires nothing more than simply following your (supposed) self-interest which makes you a stranger to your fellow citizens. In contrast, representative democracy, which is still to be found in, and compatible with a deliberative mini-public,

“requires of us the capacity and the willingness to see what the world might look like from the perspective of others, and it makes us search for a shared background against which we can negotiate our own needs and interests against those others. It brings us, in one word, from a state of nature to a civilized world inhabited by human beings capable of and willing to see the world through the eyes of others”.<sup>195</sup>

If the G1000 succeeded in helping *Stadjers* leave their political state of nature, and for one day experience what it is like to genuinely be part of a representative democracy, I would consider it a more than worthwhile initiative. Moreover, the G1000 shows that there is more to democracy than having direct political influence as the 'furious citizens' we encountered in our introduction argue for. People not merely want to have *inspraak*. Genuine participation in the process in which the decisions are made is just as important. Only in a less direct, more representative, deliberative model of decision-making, it is possible to relate yourself to your fellow citizens and be really part of a democratic community.

---

194 Frank Ankersmit, “Representative Democracy: Rosanvallon on the French Experience,” in *The Politics of Democratization in Europe: Concepts and Histories*, ed. Kari Palonen, Tuija Pulkkinen, and José Maria Rosales (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2008), 34–35.

195 *Ibid.*, 34.

## 8. Sources

### 8.1 References

- Ackerman, Bruce, and James Fishkin. "Deliberation Day." *Journal Of Political Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2002): 129–52.
- Alonso, Sonia, John Keane, and Wolfgang Merkel. "Editors' Introduction: Rethinking the Future of Representative Democracy." In *The Future of Representative Democracy*, 1–22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Andel, Marjolijn van. "Een Tekstanalytische Case Study Naar de Schriftelijke Communicatiemiddelen van Projectgroep Regiotram Voor Omwonenden Tijdens Een Interactief Beleidsproces." *Master Thesis Rijksuniversiteit Groningen*, 2010.
- Andeweg, Rudy, and Jacques Thomassen. *Van Afspiegelen Naar Afrekenen? De Toekomst van de Nederlandse Democratie*. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Ankersmit, Frank. "Representative Democracy: Rosanvallon on the French Experience." In *The Politics of Democratization in Europe: Concepts and Histories*, edited by Kari Palonen, Tuija Pulkkinen, and José Maria Rosales, 17–36. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2008.
- Bell, Christophe, Benoît Derenne, Miriana Frattarola, Jelle Henneman, Ken Lambeets, Min Reuchamps, Lieve Van den Broeck, and David Van Reybrouck. "G1000 Eindrapport: Democratische Innovatie in de Praktijk." Benoît Derenne, 2012.
- Beus, Jozef Willem de. *Na de Beeldenstorm : een Beschouwing over de Werking van de Toeschouwersdemocratie in Nederland : Voordracht in het Kader van de Etty Hillesumlezing 2002*. Heerde: Langhout & De Vries, 2002.
- Beus, Jozef Willem de, Kees Brants, Philip Van Praag, Rudy Andeweg, and Jacques Thomassen. "Media En Hun Rol in de Nederlandse Democratie." In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, 387–405. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Binnema, Harmen, and Geerten Boogaard. "De G1000 Uden: Innovatie in de Verhouding Tussen Burger En Overheid?" *Working Paper*, 2015, 1–30.
- Boele, Adriana Hendrika, and Paul Dekker. *Burgermacht Op Eigen Kracht?: Een Brede Verkenning van Ontwikkelingen in Burgerparticipatie*. SCP-Publicatie 7. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2014.
- Boogaard, Geerten, and Harmen Binnema. "De G1000 Amersfoort: Reconstructie En Analyse Vanuit Politiek-Institutioneel Perspectief." *Working Paper*, 2015.
- Boogers, Marcel, and Pieter Tops. *De Toor'n van de Stad: een Essay over het Groninger Referendum van 21 februari 2001 en de Kwaliteit van de Lokale Democratie*. Dongen: Pijnenburg, 2001.
- . *Hoe het Referendum werd "gewonnen": een Evaluatie van het Groninger Referendum van 29 juni 2005*. Dongen: Pijnenburg, 2005.
- Bovens, Mark. *Diplomademocratie : over de Spanning tussen Meritocratie en Democratie*. Amsterdam: Bakker, 2011.
- Bovens, Mark, and Anchrit Wille. "Politiek Vertrouwen in Nederland: Tijdelijke Dip of Definitieve Daling?" In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, 21–43. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Bulder, Elles. "Het Sociale En Culturele Leven in de Verzorgingsstaat." In *Stad van Het Noorden: Groningen in de Twintigste Eeuw*, edited by Maarten Duijvendak and Bart de Vries, 119–50.

- Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2001.
- Caluwaerts, Didier. "Van Representatie Naar Deliberatie." *Res Publica* 54, no. 3 (2012): 372–75.
- Caluwaerts, Didier, and Min Reuchamps. "Deliberative Stress in Linguistically Divided Belgium." In *Democratic Deliberation in Deeply Divided Societies: From Conflict to Common Ground*, edited by Juan Esteban Ugarriza and Didier Caluwaerts, 35–52. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- . "Does Inter-Group Deliberation Foster Inter-Group Appreciation? Evidence from Two Experiments in Belgium." *Politics* 34, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 101–15.
- . "Strengthening Democracy through Bottom-Up Deliberation: An Assessment of the Internal Legitimacy of the G1000 Project." *Acta Politica* 50, no. 2 (2015): 151–70.
- Denters, Bas, Merel De Groot, and Pieter-Jan klok. "'Staan Voor' En 'Gaan Voor' ...: Vertegenwoordiging in de Lokale Democratie." In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, 369–83. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- De Vries, Bart. "Politiek En Bestuur in Een Stroomversnelling." In *Stad van Het Noorden: Groningen in de Twintigste Eeuw*, edited by Maarten Duijvendak and Bart De Vries, 399–448. Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003.
- Dramademocratie. De Reality Check*. Tegenlicht, 2010. <http://tegenlicht.vpro.nl/afleveringen/2009-2010/meeste-stemmen-gelden/dramademocratie.html>.
- Dryzek, John S. *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance*. Oxford etc: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Duijvendak, Maarten, and Bart de Vries. *Stad van het Noorden : Groningen in de twintigste eeuw*. Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003.
- Fishkin, James Steven. "Deliberative Polling: Reflections on an Ideal Made Practical." In *Evaluating Democratic Innovations : Curing the Democratic Malaise?*, edited by Ken Newton and Brigitte Geissel, 71–89. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Fung, Archon. "Survey Article: Recipes for Public Spheres: Eight Institutional Design Choices and Their Consequences." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 11, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 338–67.
- Gemeente Groningen. "Bestemmingsplan: Regiotram - Tracédelen I En II," 2012.
- Gould, Carol C. "Diversity and Democracy: Representing Differences." In *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, edited by Benhabib Seyla, 171–86. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Groote, Peter. "Van Groot Naar Klein En Weer Terug?" In *Stad van Het Noorden: Groningen in de Twintigste Eeuw*, edited by Maarten Duijvendak and Bart De Vries, 353–98. Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2003.
- Grunberg, Arnon. "Voetnoot: Democratie." *De Volkskrant*, October 24, 2015.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *Between Facts and Norms : Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge etc: Polity Press, 1996.
- . "Concluding Comments on Empirical Approaches to Deliberative Politics." *Acta Politica* 40, no. 3 (2005): 384–92.
- . *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Edited by Christian Lenhardt and Shierry M. Weber Nicholsen. Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.
- . "Three Normative Models of Democracy." In *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, edited by Ciaran P. Cronin and Pablo De Greiff, 239–52. Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998.



- Hajema, Luuk. *De Glazenwassers van het Bestuur : Lokale Overheid, Massamedia, Burgers en Communicatie : Groningen in Landelijk Perspectief 1945-2001*. Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2001.
- Ham, Marcel, and Jelle van der Meer. *De Ondernemende Burger: De Woelige Wereld van Lokale Initiatieven*. Utrecht: Movisie, 2015.
- Hendriks, Frank. "Gedeelde Verantwoordelijkheid in Een Verdeelde Samenleving." 2015.  
———. "Het Einde van de Consensusdemocratie?" presented at the Prodemos, Den Haag, November 9, 2015.
- Hofman, Beno. *De Vaart erin!: van Trekschuit tot Tram*. Assen: In Boekvorm, 2010.  
———. *Grote Markt Oostzijde: van oud Stadshart tot nieuw Bouwplan*. Assen: In Boekvorm, 2005.
- Holtland, Jenne Jan. "De Democratie Als Tombola." *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 2015.  
<http://www.groene.nl/artikel/de-democratie-als-tombola>.
- Imhof, Joost. "Op Het Goede Spoor: Een Actor-Netwerk Perspectief Op de Succes- En Faalfactoren Bij de Ontwikkeling van Tram En Light Rail." *Master Thesis Utrecht University*, 2011.
- Jacobs, Kristof. "Deliberatieve Democratie: Geen Panacee." *Res Publica* 54 (2012): 377–79.
- Kleinnijenhuis, Jan, and Janet Takens. "Het Politieke Nieuwsaanbod van Dagbladen En Televisie: Objectief En Pluriform?" In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, 407–24. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Leijte, Tom. "Parlement Moet Naar Wilde Beesten Ruiken." *De Volkskrant*, July 14, 2015.
- Leyenaar, Monique, and Kristof Jacobs. "Burgerparticipatie: Last of Lust?" In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, 83–102. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Lunsing, Jan R. *De Besluitenguilotine: hoe het Lokaal Bestuur een Referendum kan winnen*. Den Haag: Lemma, 2008.
- Maddison, Sarah. "When Deliberation Remains out of Reach: The Role of Agonistic Engagement in Divided Societies." In *Democratic Deliberation in Deeply Divided Societies: From Conflict to Common Ground*, edited by Juan Esteban Ugarriza and Didier Caluwaerts, 189–205. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Mansbridge, Jane, Simone Chambers, Thomas Christiano, Archon Fung, John Parkinson, Dennis F. Thompson, and Mark E. Warren. "A Systematic Approach to Deliberative Democracy." In *Deliberative Systems: Deliberative Democracy at the Large Scale*, edited by John Parkinson and Mansbridge, Jane, 1–26. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Michels, Ank. "Citizen Participation and Democracy in the Netherlands." *Democratization* 13, no. 2 (April 1, 2006): 323–39.
- Michels, Ank, and Harmen Binnema. "De G1000 in Groningen En de Burgertop in Amsterdam Vergeleken Met Andere G1000en: De Realisatie van Democratische Waarden." *Working Paper*, 2015, 1–20.  
———. "G1000 in Amersfoort, Uden En Kruiskamp: De Realisatie van Democratische Waarden." *Working Paper*, 2015, 1–30.
- Miller, David. *Citizenship and National Identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties. *99 Experimenten in de Lokale Democratie*. The Hague, n.d.  
———. *Raadslid in de Doe-Democratie*. The Hague, n.d.
- Morrissey, Charles T. "On Oral History Interviewing." In *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert

- Perks and Alistair Thomson, 107–13. Routledge, 1998.
- Mouffe, Chantal. “Democratic Politics and the Dynamics of Passions.” In *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Politics of Democratization in Europe: Concepts and Histories*, edited by Tuija Pulkkinen and José Maria Rosales, 89–100. Farnham: Ashgate, 2008.
- Na de Democratie*. Tegenlicht, 2010. <http://tegenlicht.vpro.nl/afleveringen/2009-2010/meestestemmen-gelden/na-de-democratie.html>.
- Nieuwenhuis, Stefan, and Beno Hofman. *Vertrek & Aankomst: Regiotram in Stad*. Groningen: Kleine Uil, 2012.
- Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkely: University of California Press, 1967.
- Pratchett, Lawrence. “New Fashions in Public Participation: Towards Greater Democracy?” *Parliamentary Affairs* 52, no. 4 (October 1, 1999): 616–33.
- Reuchamps, Min, and Didier Caluwaerts. “The G1000. Facts, Figures and Some Lessons from an Experience of Deliberative Democracy in Belgium.” In *The Malaise of Electoral Democracy and What to Do About It*, 10–33. Brussel: Re-Bel E-Book, 2012.
- Scientific Council for Government Policy. *Vertrouwen in Burgers*. Amsterdam University Press, 2012.
- Shapiro, Ian. “Enough of Deliberation: Politics Is about Interests and Power.” In *Deliberative Politics: Essays on Democracy and Disagreement*, edited by Stephan Macedo, 28–38. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Smets, Peer, and Marloes Vlind. “Diversiteit Als Uitdaging Voor de Nieuwe Democratie. Een Kijk Op de Burgertop Amsterdam Met Uitstapjes Naar Andere Burgertoppen.” *Working Paper*, 2015.
- . “Een G1000 Gun Je Iedereen. Participatiebevordering in Kruiskamp, Amersfoort.” *Working Paper*, 2015.
- Smith, Graham. “Deliberative Democracy and Mini-Publics.” In *Evaluating Democratic Innovations: Curing the Democratic Malaise?*, edited by Brigitte Geissel and Ken Newton, 90–111. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Thompson, Dennis F. “Deliberative Democratic Theory and Empirical Political Science.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 497–520.
- Tonkens, Evelien. “De Participatiesamenleving Inhuumaan?” Utrecht, November 2, 2014.
- . “Waarom Actief Burgerschap?” In *Tussen Onderschatten En Overvragen: Actief Burgerschap En Activerende Organisaties in de Wijk*, edited by Evelien Tonkens and Marieke van Giersbergen, 7–23. Amsterdam: SUN Trancity, 2009.
- Tonkens, Evelien, Margo Trappenburg, Menno Hurenkamp, and Jante Schmidt. *Montesorri Democratie: Spanningen Tussen Burgerparticipatie En de Lokale Politiek*. Amsterdam University Press, 2015.
- Van der Kouwe, Erik, Paul Pennings, and Hans Keman. “Tussen Mandaat En Resultaat: Problemen in de Vertegenwoordigende Democratie.” In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, 351–68. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Van Reybrouck, David. *Tegen Verkiezingen*. 8th ed. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2015.
- Van Stokkom, Bas. *Rituelen van Beraadslaging: Reflecties over Burgerberaad en Burgerbestuur*. Amsterdam University Press, 2006.
- Verschoor, Marco. “The Quest for the Legitimacy of the People: A Contractarian Approach.” *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 14, no. 4 (2015): 391–428.
- Vis, Jan, and Wijbrandt Van Schuur. “Politieke Kennis van Kiezers.” In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques

- Thomassen, 65–81. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Wille, Anchrit. “Democratische Drempels: De Moeizame Relatie Tussen Participatie En Democratie.” In *Democratie Doorgelicht: Het Functioneren van de Nederlandse Democratie*, edited by Rudy Andeweg and Jacques Thomassen, 103–18. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- Young, Iris Marion. “Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy.” In *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, edited by Seyla Benhabib, 120–35. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

## 8.2 Interviewees

- Harm van Dijk (October 27 2015)  
 Frank Brander and Liesbeth van de Wetering (November 26 2015)  
 Maarten van der Laan (November 26 2015)  
 Marjan de Vreugt (November 26 2015)  
 Joost Engelhart and Marleen Vreeswijk (November 26 2015)  
 Nepthis Brandsma (December 18 2015)  
 Mark Sekuur (December 18 2015)  
 Marieke Zomer (December 18 2015)  
 Marian van Voorn (December 19 2015)  
 Annette Barelds (December 19 2015)  
 I store the recordings and transcripts safely at my home.

## 8.3 Interview question list

1. Wat is uw functie precies?
2. Hoe hebt u de Groningse politiek van de afgelopen jaren ervaren?
  1. Hoe functioneren de colleges van de afgelopen jaren?
  2. Hoe liggen de verhoudingen tussen de verschillende partijen in Groningen?
    1. Hoe kijken u en uw collega's naar de Stadjsers?
      1. Is die houding de afgelopen decennia veranderd?
  3. Hoe ligt de verhouding tussen het lokale bestuur en de Stadjsers?
  4. Zijn er ook problemen binnen de Groningse politiek?
    1. Zo ja. zijn dit typisch Groningse problemen?
3. Hoe kwam u te weten over de G1000 Groningen?
  1. Liefste een zo precies mogelijk antwoord.
  2. Wat is het voor evenement naar uw idee?
    1. Wat denkt u dat de aanleiding van het organiseren van de G1000 was?
      1. Waarom nu?
      2. Waarom in Groningen?
    2. Wat is het volgens u het doel van de G1000?
      1. Welke idealen/ideeën?
    3. Hoe proberen ze dat te verwezenlijken?
    4. Wat vindt u hiervan?
    5. Is zo'n G1000 iets bijzonders in Groningen?
4. Bent u bij de G1000 betrokken geraakt? Zo ja, wanneer en hoe precies?
  1. Met wie contact gehad? Wanneer?
  2. Hoe is dat befallen?

3. Kunt u de totstandkoming van de G1000 in Groningen beschrijven?
  1. Welke partijen zijn hierbij betrokken geweest en waarom?
  2. Hoe ging de financiering ervan in zijn werk?
  3. In hoeverre werd het project ondersteund door lokale of nationale overheden?
4. Was u ook aanwezig op de G1000 van 6 juni zelf? Zo ja, als wat precies?
  1. Hoe verliep die dag naar uw ervaring?
    1. Liefste een zo precies mogelijk antwoord.
  2. Wat zijn de resultaten van die dag?
  3. Weet u ook wat er verder gaat gebeuren met deze resultaten?
  4. Heeft de G1000 haar doel bereikt?
5. Hoe past de G1000 binnen de Groningse politiek?
  1. In hoeverre voegde het iets toe?
  2. Wat wordt er gedaan met de resultaten?
  3. Volgend jaar weer? Andere meer normatieve vragen:
    1. In hoeverre moeten Stadjes de mogelijkheid hebben invloed uit te oefenen op het lokale bestuur?
    2. Wat is de beste manier burgers bij het bestuur te betrekken?
    3. Wat vindt u van de mogelijkheid om als burger een referendum aan te vragen?
    4. Wat is de toevoeging van de G1000 als je ook een referendum kan aanvragen?
  4. Kent u nog andere mensen die beschikbaar zijn voor een interview?
6. Voor G1000-medewerkers:
  1. Welk archiefmateriaal is er beschikbaar?
    1. Te denken valt aan brieven aan burgers, begrotingen, flyers, etc.
    1. Zijn er sponsors bereid te worden geïnterviewd?

9. Acknowledgments

I thank the attendees of the thesis seminar for their comments and critique on the early versions of this essay. I thank the following people for reading (parts of) the thesis and correcting my argument and 'Dunlish': Ginger Haasbroek, Tadhg Ó Laoghaire, Cees van der Linden, Erik Mul, Casper Sundholm and my supervisor Henk te Velde. I finally thank the reference manager Zotero for making annotating fun.