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'What Determines and Influences Public Participation in Urban Green Initiatives Implemented by the Municipality of Leiden and by its inhabitants?'

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**Universiteit
Leiden**

**'What Determines and Influences Public Participation
in Urban Green Initiatives Implemented by the
Municipality of Leiden and by its Inhabitants?'**

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**Masters Thesis for the degree of Cultural
Anthropology and Development Sociology, Policy in
Practice at The University of Leiden**

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1. Entering the Urban Landscape

There is no denying that our planet is becoming a predominantly urban world. Urban areas are currently home to 54% of the world's population and, by 2050, according to the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, this population is expected to increase by up to 68% (World Urbanization Prospects report: 2018). The underlying concern is that "a rapidly expanding global population along with urbanisation trends is putting increasing pressure on cities and the systems that support the people who live there" (Reeve et al: 2015: 2). Cities are facing the challenge of accommodating all of their citizens, as well as providing services and resources, whilst also attempting to reduce environmental problems including pollution and waste. Regrettably, urban environments generate most of the world's CO2 through mass consumption and transportation which causes global warming, exacerbates demands for natural resources and accelerates environmental damage (Manuel Castells: 2002: x). Furthermore, redeveloping urban areas to accommodate larger populations often implies an increase in public land-use competitiveness (Reeve et al: 2015). This results in major challenges in the areas of housing, the changing needs of residents and the greening the city for biodiversity and climate change purposes.

In response to these urban concerns, Alexander Garvin (2008) interestingly points out that we should stop "thinking only about how to prevent the degradation of the natural environment and start thinking about how humans and the natural environment can interact with one another to their mutual benefit" (Garvin: 2008: 63). Humankind has a strong effect on the natural world and nature has a fundamental influence on us as human beings. Therefore, these two domains should be placed in co-existence, in a collaborative process rather than kept separate. A relevant example of urbanism and nature co-existence is the integration of greenery in urban environments. C.Y. Jim explains, "including greenery in human settlements is a tradition deeply rooted in antiquity with diverse expressions" (Jim, C. Y.: 2004: 311). Greening should always be considered a "mainstream aspect of urban development" instead of an ad hoc implementation approach (idem). Moreover, sufficient high quality green spaces are perceived as a prerequisite for the quality of life in urban areas. A green city "can result in natural features delivering health and wellbeing benefits [to

the inhabitants] as well as a range of sustainability and resilience benefits to cities.” (Reeve et al: 2015: 11). Successful urban greening “epitomizes good planning and management and bestows pride on its citizenry and government” (Jim: 2004: 311).

A growing body of literature suggests that working towards the success of urban sustainability, including urban greening, requires dependence on human agency and the individual’s initiative. It is the people’s decisions and contributions that can condition the outcomes of sustainability in urban areas (Manuel Castells: 2002: x). The study of participation illustrates that individuals or groups of people, taking part in micro-level decision-making processes and pro-active practices at various degrees, may influence larger social structures that contribute to the participants’ needs and interests and determine the quality and direction of their lives. (John W. Vick : 2014 : 8-9); (Horelli: 2002: 611).

What determines and influences individuals to participate in urban green initiatives implemented by the municipality of Leiden as well as by the inhabitants will be the purpose of this thesis. When specializing in the Policy and Practice course, the University of Leiden offers various different research internships ranging from sustainability to diversity. This research internship, initially titled ‘Climate Proofing the Neighbourhood: Evaluating Citizen’s Participation in the City of Leiden’ was initiated by Masters coordinator, Erik de Maaker, in collaboration with the municipality of Leiden. This project entailed looking into the municipality’s efforts in making Leiden neighbourhoods ‘climate proof’, evaluating the degree of citizens’ participation within these sustainable-related projects and sharing my research findings with the Leiden local government. What appealed to me the most about this project is its connection to sustainability issues. I personally have an ongoing interest in environmental topics as I regularly conduct green activities, make sustainable-oriented choices and listen to powerful advocates of climate change and sustainability including Sir David Attenborough, Greta Thunberg and many others. Climate change is the biggest challenge of our current time and yet insufficient attention is given to it. Therefore, being able to choose a research internship that will allow me to perceive how sustainable initiatives are implemented, managed and maintained is a fantastic opportunity and a great way to gain knowledge on issues that are currently imperative. I also hope to use this experience in the future to pursue a career in sustainability or environmental issues.

Throughout the course of the research project, I scaled down from large sustainability projects contracted out to urban planners and chose to analyse green small-scale initiatives directly implemented by the municipality as well as by the inhabitants. I sought to gain an understanding as to why residents, from two specific Leiden neighbourhoods participated in these environmental initiatives. The neighbourhoods selected for my research were chosen due to communal green projects being situated in each, which in turn, would help me identify more green participants. Also, both were socially and financially contrasting neighbourhoods and I hoped this could reveal that socio-economic background alters the influencing degree towards participation decisions in sustainability.

In this research paper, the first chapter seeks to provide the reader with knowledge on the theoretical foundations, concepts and definitions that revolve around public participation in line with urban greening. Secondly, the reader will gain a brief understanding of the research locations and why these were specifically chosen. The third chapter of the thesis reveals the various anthropological methods used throughout the fieldwork and demonstrates the degree of each method's success. Lastly, the reader will understand in detail the influencing factors that lead to participative decisions towards green initiatives. The conclusion of the thesis will integrate both the findings and theoretical framework in the hope to answer the main research question, determine the validity of the research findings and express personal suggestions that might help policymakers increase participation in line with urban greening.

The research question for this thesis is: 'What determines and influences public participation in urban green initiatives implemented by the municipality of Leiden and by its inhabitants?' Consequently, throughout my fieldwork, I reflected on three sub-questions to help further develop the findings to my research project.

- *What types of green projects are being implemented in Leiden? And where are they located?*
- *Who are the residents participating and those who are not participating? And why?*
- *How does the municipality of Leiden enable and assist public participation towards urban greening?*

This paper is an anthropology masters thesis that makes use of gained data that I discovered and generated throughout my three-month fieldwork internship. The thesis is built on my ideas and proposals, which are backed up with academic literature and scholarly evidence. As this research project is a working collaboration with the municipality of Leiden, one of the main issues that the municipality and myself as researcher, are addressing is identifying individuals who are not participating in green initiatives and finding out the reasons behind their lack of participation. I hope this research project achieves in finding new ideas and strategies that can be used to increase motivation among inhabitants and getting them more involved in sustainability initiatives.

2. Greenery in line with Urbanism: its Complexities and Reasoning behind Public Participation

This section of my thesis involves the various concepts and theoretical foundations revolving around the topic of research. I will start off by briefly defining the conceptual term of urbanism, to better demonstrate its relevance to my research location. I will then theorize the current debates about urban sustainability as well as urban greening and explain how this gains relevance to my field of study. Secondly, I will analyse the concept of environmental justice, which will clarify the reasons behind potential occurrences of inaccessibility and socio-economic disadvantages due to the impact of municipality policies and social housing plans. This will then go on to highlight the concept of gentrification as it builds on the material of environmental justice. Thirdly, I analyse the concept of responsibility through neoliberal subjectivity, to question who is fundamentally responsible for implementing green initiatives, and responsibility through appropriation of space, to understand the processes of possessing and managing green projects. Lastly, I will present the theoretical foundation on public participation and demonstrate how the concept displays relevance to urban greening initiatives. Thereafter, I will investigate the concepts of inclusion and exclusion to gain further understanding on how research participants positioned themselves and incorporate the discussion of knowledge and beliefs as I consider these influencing factors towards public participation decisions.

2.1) Urbanism

Scholars argue what constitutes the concept of urbanism is its density of human structures, its population mass and its underlying function of the area -commonly driven by socio-economic mobility (Romero-Lankao et al.: 2016). The growing debate regarding urbanism is its relationship to sustainability. There is a growing concern on climate change and globalization and many believe that urban areas will increasingly become locations where humans can tackle contemporary environmental challenges. Nevertheless, it remains an unanswered question whether urban areas, such as cities, are truly up to this challenge, and whether urban sustainability is fundamentally achievable and scalable.

It is clear to highlight that the location of my research, Leiden, associates itself to the concept of urbanism as I identify the various social, economic and cultural forces among various research participants from densely located areas that shape urban forms and processes. How I conceptualize urbanism into my thesis is ultimately questioning if the city of Leiden can truly achieve successful urban sustainability.

2.2) Urban sustainability

2.2.1) Urban greening

Sustainability in urban areas implies living off its own resources and recycling strategies and resorting to activities that conserve, employ and recognize the natural environment such as renewable energy, park construction and ecosystem conservation initiatives (Birch et al.: 2008). In the context of my research, within the urban setting of Leiden, I chose sustainable initiatives that revolve around greenery, gardening and harvesting. This resonates towards the concept of urban greening as it entails “the creation of green spaces within a city’s built-up environment” (De Sousa: 2014 : 1050). Similarly to urban sustainability, urban greening preserves, protects and enhances natural areas within the urban setting. Green initiatives in Leiden are therefore examples of urban greening due to its connection between built infrastructure and ecological resources as well as its contribution towards sustainable solutions (Checker et al.: 2015). As mentioned in *Visie Stadstuinieren Leiden* (2020), urban gardening can contribute to biodiversity by providing a habitat for a wide range of species and can also contribute to climate adaptation such as cooling and water retention.

The current challenge regarding urban greening is its barrier on land-use for the creation of urban nature in cities. Reeve et al. (2015) convey that “as urban populations rise and land-use competition intensifies; it becomes increasingly difficult to allocate land for urban nature” (Reeve et al.: 2015: 2). Jim (2004) adds to this by arguing “the compact city incurs inherent physical and institutional obstacles, restricting the quantity and quality of amenity vegetation” (Jim, C.Y: 2004: 311). Moreover, certain cities from developing countries prioritize rapid urbanization and development aspirations while compromising environmental planning due to the exigency of meeting basic needs. Urban nature forms such as parks or recreational facilities require a substantial amount of ground space, which often can only be accessed “when manufacturing plants close or when changes to transportation systems allow land to be repurposed” (Reeve et al.: 2015: 2). The challenge of urban greening is that it has to minimize the competition for land-use while maximizing the value of the land it occupies.

Urban sustainability and urban greening are crucial applicable concepts to my research project as I identify what influences Leiden inhabitants to participate in sustainable green projects implemented throughout the urban environment. In studying urban greening, I consider if the implemented green initiatives face spatial challenges. I also question if the projects are well adopted, maintained and recognized. Other questions regarding urban greening I reflect on; who is responsible for the implementation of urban green initiatives? How is urban greening perceived among the inhabitants, participants, non-participants and the municipality? Do the green-implemented projects truly bring environmental change?

2.3) Environmental justice

Checker et al. (2015) point out that cities have the potential to change the world however they question whether human justice should be given the same level of importance and attention to urban sustainability. Shouldn’t complexities such as poverty, education, health and wellbeing be addressed the same way as “green energy, public transport or food supplies?” (Checker et al: 2015: 4). It is widely known that sustainable developments in multiple cities often fail to address social dimensions such as social equality, inclusion and poverty reduction. Sustainable urban developments must consider alternative solutions that take into account the importance of economic, ecological, political and cultural factors (McCabe: 2016: 135). This concern relates to the concept of environmental justice, a

subcategory of social justice, defined by McCabe as “a movement that challenges the unfair distribution of environmental benefits” (McCabe: 2016: 135). Environmental justice involves the uneven social, political and economic processes of a produced physical environment. For example, “drawing attention to the inordinate siting of harmful, toxic and dangerous industries in communities of colour- where environmental amenities such as parks and walkable infrastructures are lacking” (idem). Environmental justice thus fights towards improving the environmental surrounding and accessibility for all socio-economic sectors to physical amenities and the removal of dirty and polluting facilities that can cause harm.

In *Combining Sustainability and Social Justice in the Paris Metropolitan Region* (2015) François Mancebo demonstrates a clear example of environmental and social injustice within housing development plans in Paris. Mancebo (2015) reveals that sustainable housing and ecological neighborhoods are mostly occupied by wealthy people simply because they can afford the high construction costs. As housing accessibility for the low and middle class population is already an issue in France, choices on sustainable housing brought more pressure on pricing. Mancebo argues it is inappropriate to name neighborhoods ‘sustainable’ if it can only be accessed by upper class populations. This is an example of unjust environmental dynamics. Social injustice regarding sustainability resources or other regional ecosystem projects is due to authorities that fail to think of asking the local communities or the inhabitants of the area their attitudes and opinions towards the projects. Mancebo conveys that urban sustainability policies should stop creating ‘attractive and stylish’ green housing that prioritize financial gains and should focus on taking into account the social justice dimension through an inclusive approach, considering individual and collective attitudes and integrating public participation. The concept of environmental justice gains relevance to my research project as I discovered the impact of future implemented plans and policies from the municipality as well as from a housing corporation, in one of my research locations, were unjust. This would have caused social and economic divides within the neighbourhood community and inaccessibility towards sustainable resources. The neighbourhood responded to these unfair plans and demonstrated environmental justice practices by creating a neighbourhood vision, which included intentions to implement sustainable amenities to make their neighbourhood greener and accessible for all.

2.3.1) Gentrification

Moreover, the effect of these future housing corporation plans could have caused displacement of local working class inhabitants, which is considered gentrification. The original and still predominant concept of gentrification's "meaning consists of a displacement of a lower income population by a higher income one through some combination of three forms of upgrading: Economic upgrading, physical upgrading and social upgrading" (Marcuse, P.: 2015: 1264). Gentrification of economic upgrading implies the increased market value of a neighbourhood, which in turn will attract "economic investment as well as physical improvement" and entices other groups of higher social and financial backgrounds to move in (idem). This causes local working-class residents to no longer be able to afford or access housing locally while the neighbourhood continues to upscale. It is evident to suggest that gentrification captures "the class inequalities and injustices created by capitalist urban land markets and policies" (Slater, T. 2011 : 571). Slater argues that eviction, displacement and homelessness are a set of "institutional arrangements [consisting of private property rights and a free market], that favor the creation of urban environments to serve the needs of capital accumulation at the expense of the social needs of home, community, family" (idem).

Similarly, another form of gentrification that leads to local displacement is environmental gentrification. This implies the development of green and sustainable amenities in a specific neighbourhood, which increases local property value and attracts wealthier residents. Bonow and Normark (2018) highlight that community gardens can be perceived as a product of an environmental gentrification process where for example, "community gardens are used to make areas more attractive, which then increases neighbouring housing prices" (Bonow, M., and Normark, M: 2018: 504). Winifred Curran and Trina Hamilton (2012) believe that "environmental gentrification and displacement are the result of urban environmental policies that have become inextricably linked to economic development and growth" (Curran, W & Hamilton, T: 2012: 1031). Moreover, according to Checker (2012), "Environmental gentrification builds on the material of the urban environmental justice movement and appropriates them to serve high-end redevelopment that displaces low-income residents" (Checker: 2011: 212). This strongly reveals that gentrification and environmental gentrification both align to a neoliberal ideology as the two concepts

prioritize the market above everything else. Gentrification follows a neoliberal ideology by further marginalizing lower or working class inhabitants while continuing to favour and provide access for higher class, privileged residents.

I conceptualize gentrification in my thesis by highlighting if research participants have experienced gentrification tendencies themselves and if they have felt excluded or included within their neighbourhood. Furthermore, how environmental gentrification relates to my research is that while social housing company Portaal is currently redeveloping houses in one of the research locations, I question if the integration plans of greenery and gardens in the housing area will lead to environmental gentrification processes in the future.

2.4) Responsibility

Scholars often convey there are many environmental issues in our current world. There are frequent discussions regarding who causes these issues and whose task it is to solve the problems. Both of these questions are tied to the concept of responsibility. Individual consumption habits are one of the contributing factors towards negative environmental repercussions. Jessica Fahlquist (2009) agrees that individuals should be morally responsible for environmental problems. However instead of blaming individual actions, constituted of a backward looking responsibility, she believes ascribing responsibility in a forward-looking sense to individuals “focuses more on capacity and resources” (Fahlquist: 2009: 110). Moreover, Fahlquist argues that being held responsible strongly depends on the context of the individual such as their socio-economic, cultural and political background. This must strongly be taken into account when discussing individual responsibility for environmental problems. Relatedly, there lies truth in saying that it “cannot be that all individuals are responsible or no individuals are ever responsible” (2009: 115). Both indications depend on the contextual situation of the individual.

Institutions and their roles should also be given the same amount of attention, as they neither are exempt from responsibility discourses. Fahlquist conveys that governments and corporations have a great share of responsibility due to their high levels of power and resources to solve environmental problems. “They have the capacity to make it easier and less costly for individuals to act in environmentally friendly ways” (2009: 111). This implies that governmental bodies and corporations have the power to create opportunities for

individuals to respond to environmental or social issues. The government thus holds a responsibility to assist the individual. As an example, Brown (2008) demonstrates in his research that “Municipal leaders invited public stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process...[allowing] full citizen involvement and public participation” (Brown: 2008: 156). By this process, the municipality gained responsibility by listening to what is important to the individuals participating and ensuring to engage them for the length of the implementation, maintenance and care for the small-scale projects. Brown’s example demonstrates that the institution has the power to include public participation and, in turn, can render it easier for the public to tackle sustainability challenges. Furthermore, if an institution as well as an individual “has the capacity, power and resources to contribute to solving a social or environmental problem, they have a responsibility to do so” (Fahlquist: 2009: 118). Through a forward-looking perspective of responsibility, Fahlquist argues that it is power and capacity that entails responsibility as she explains: “The more resources, power, and capacity an agent has, the better their ability to contribute to solving the problem” (idem). Nevertheless, in regards to the fair and efficient distribution of responsibility, scholars believe that institutions should be assigned more responsibility. Institutions would complete certain tasks more efficiently whereas individuals should not be burdened, as full time duty-bearers. However the public should ensure the institution successfully implements or completes the project in question. This insinuates a shared responsibility between both the institution and the individual in participating towards sustainability solutions.

Moreover, another responsibility factor to consider is whether neoliberal concepts of the Leiden inhabitants absolve the responsibilities of the municipality and transfer it to the individual. Schwiter (2013) points out that the impact of neoliberalism, in the context of his research, “transforms human beings themselves. It is incorporated into subjectivities and shapes how people understand themselves” (Schwiter, K: 2013: 153). By this, it suggests that neoliberal thought is not only embedded in policy but also can “operate as a governing logic that shifts responsibility for social risks or problems such as poverty, unemployment, [or even gentrification issues] etc. onto the shoulders of individuals”, implying that human beings feel and become responsible for the circumstances in which they are in (idem). In the case of my research, the neoliberal subjectivity potentially lies within the inhabitants as they

Commented [SM1]: This is also an underlying logic of many of the gentrification projects – it is not just about what individuals do themselves

might resort to their free choice and individualized responsibility towards participating in green initiatives.

Due to the popularity of personal sustainable-related projects observed throughout my research, this could imply that Leiden inhabitants, subjectively consider themselves unique or independent to others and resort to their entrepreneurial selves -strongly aligning to a neoliberal discourse and resort to individualized responsibility. Hence I question throughout my research if the public's individualized responsibility is a response to pursuing their freedom of choice, and this freedom perhaps constitutes having a greener city, thus revealing their reason behind participation.

2.5) Appropriation of space

Similarly to responsibility, the concept of appropriation of space, entailing a form of ownership, is also worth considering in line with participation. Benages-Albert, M et al. (2015) define appropriation of space as "a feeling of possessing and managing a space, irrespective of its legal ownership, for its everyday use or as a means of identification" (Benages-Albert, M et al 2015: 2). Appropriation of space is often conceptualized as a subcomponent of a broader theme of territoriality as it involves an "act of exercising control over a particular physical setting" (idem). Essentially the concept of appropriation of space is an interactive process in which individuals transform a physical environment into a meaningful place. This attachment to a place often results in creating a "sense of home, binding communities together and helping neighbors to define and defend their space" which in turn helps increase the individual's sense of responsibility for their surroundings (Rioux, L. et al.: 2017: 50).

The concepts responsibility and appropriation of space finds relevance to my research project as I believe both notions are influencing factors towards public participation decisions, which is a core-contributing factor to my research question. Moreover, a few questions in regards to responsibility and appropriation of space that I consider for the findings section: who is fundamentally responsible for urban green initiatives in Leiden? Is there a shared and co-productive responsibility between both the public and the local

government? Is the public's responsibility triggered due to the individual's (neoliberal) subjectivity? Are inhabitants being held responsible because they are being blamed for damaging the environment through their behaviours and are in need to participate to make up for their actions? Or are the Leiden residents taking on a sense of responsibility because they want to and hope to take on the task of tackling environmental challenges? Lastly, why is appropriation of space a fundamental influence for participants to get involved in green?

2.6) Public participation

As previously mentioned by Mancebo (2015), the success of environmental justice involves the integration of individual and collective attitudes and opinions and the incorporation of public participation. Participation implies individuals taking part in decision-making processes or undertaking micro-level activities as a way to influence larger social structures that contribute to the participants' needs and interests. (John W. Vick : 2014 : 8-9); (Horelli: 2002: 611). Active participation is "intended to encourage citizens to take greater responsibility for their own welfare and that of their communities" (Woodcraft: 2016: 157). The use of public participation such as individuals in local volunteering projects thus creates strong social networking at neighbourhood level and encourages community self-help.

According to Paul Brown in *The Role of Citizen Activists in Urban Infrastructure Development* (2008), he believes that community's practices of participation towards sustainability are a growing necessity. Brown argues that integrated programs would benefit from citizen activists and community interest who partner and collaborate in programs with the municipality, governmental bodies, private companies or NGO's. These partnerships can help improve communication and collaboration "between established utilities and community interest groups and activists" (Brown: 2008: 152). There is an increase and a growing reliance on small-scale projects that are based on the individual's efforts and responsibility for the operation, care and maintenance. This is because larger-scale infrastructure projects are creating a negative environmental effect due to its far travels for their resources and long distances to dispose of their wastes. "Many municipal utilities are working cooperatively with customers to reduce their demands on large-scale infrastructure systems, opening the door to many smaller-scale technologies" (Brown: 2008: 154). Brown conveys it is essential that the people who manage small-scale solutions do it with great care

and regular maintenance, in order to guarantee “less damage to the environment and less dependence on external resources and disposal sites” (2008: 155).

However Turnhout et al. (2010) mention several issues related to participation processes such as participation is inevitably selective, as not everyone can get involved, so its representation can never be complete. Participation excludes individuals who lack knowledge and specific skills that fail to contribute to meaningful participation, in turn rendering these citizens unable to get involved. Also, if a community participates, “participation treats these local communities as homogenous units with common perspectives and interests” and overlooks in defining or analysing the type of community comprising diversity and difference (Turnhout et al. 2010: 4). Lastly, participation initiatives tend to instill expectations on how the participant should behave and what they should do. Or being invited as a stakeholder and expected to represent their particular stake can limit their participants’ preferences and views they originally wanted to express through participation.

Public participation sparks debate as its result can be greatly beneficial yet may also have several concerns regarding its process. I find this very relevant to my research project, specifically in the case of community gardens and I will integrate these two contrasting topics. For the process of public participation, I look into the maintenance and care of green initiative among inhabitant participants. I also identify any exclusive, selective and restrictive tendencies throughout the participation process as well as find any expectations towards how the participants must act or contribute while participating. Whereas for the result of public participation, I analyse the positive outcomes experienced among green project participants.

2.6.1) Self-inclusion and self-exclusion

Relating back again to Mancebo’s article (2015), he believes that the public should be included and active in the implementation of sustainability policies. If sustainable implementation practices and policies fail to include the needs, desires and ideas of the local inhabitants, the policies might result in being too technocratic and exclusionary. Mancebo argues that ultimately the inclusion and/or the participation of the inhabitants and local communities “is the condition of collective appropriation of sustainable policies and thus of

their success” (Mancebo: 2015: 280). Nevertheless, Mancebo reveals it is also possible to see governing authorities implement sustainable projects that seek to include the local residents in the hopes to work collaboratively, however local residents reject this form of inclusion and choose to voluntarily exclude themselves. An example of this involves “the Paris City Council encouraging residents, associations, and local storekeepers to get involved as local actors in the governance of their quartier” by organizing communal activities and sustainable events such as organizing local food markets, shared meals and carnivals. Nevertheless the quartier inhabitants rejected this proposal. (2015: 277). Mancebo found that the residents took very little initiative regarding their quartier’s local economic processes and social policy. The author interestingly concludes that while the Paris city councils attempted to include and encourage the local community to participate in sustainability projects, its success depends on the response of the public. The most important challenge in implementing sustainability policies and projects is the acceptance among those that are affected by these policies and projects. Processes of inclusion or exclusion can emerge due to large-scale development policies and practices but also can be “shaped and created by people’s own actions and desires” to include or exclude themselves (Bakker and Nooteboom: 2017: 65). Moreover, this type of rejection of involvement can be interpreted as self-exclusion or self-inclusion. Mascareño and Carvajal (2015) reveal self-inclusion or self-exclusion as “a situation in which individuals autonomously chose to participate or not in a particular social output” (Mascareño, A., & Carvajal, F: 2015: 134). An example of self-inclusion and/or self-exclusion can be participation in religion as “those who consider themselves non-believers allow themselves self-exclusion from religious practice” (Mascareño, A. et al.: 2015: 134). Nevertheless, “for situations of self-inclusion/self-exclusion to be possible, people must have the individual capacities to identify and obtain the means to their ends” (2015: 134). This suggests that if individuals were to voluntarily exclude themselves, they would have to be capable of being financially or socially independent when not participating (idem).

Studying inclusiveness and exclusion ties in well with my research project as I identify self-inclusion and self-exclusion examples among research participants throughout my fieldwork. Among the included as well as excluded individuals, I attempt to argue that this is

predominantly an intentional choice, none are forced to be in this position and their choice is often determined by their beliefs, visions and everyday attitudes towards green initiatives.

2.6.2) Knowledge and beliefs

Enric Pol (2002) argues that in getting more people to be aware about sustainability and enhancing their sense of responsibility towards the topic is by providing information to people which in turn might change people's attitudes and behaviours and overall their knowledge on the matter. Knowledge is defined as an idea or a belief that an "individual or a community takes to be true and therefore is of sufficient merit to guide their reasoning and action" (Muñoz-Erickson et al: 2017: 7). The "production and use of knowledge is deeply embedded in all kinds of social, cultural and political dynamics", which is integrated in our everyday actions and the organization of our society and the world (2017: 2). Moreover, knowledge based on ideas and beliefs can respond to challenges and problems by "putting that knowledge into action through collaboration and integration" (2017: 2). Muñoz-Erickson et al. thus convey that knowledge can influence the visions and actions needed towards sustainability transformations. Urban areas such as "cities are spaces where a high diversity of organizations and their knowledge systems can come together in networks to catalyze or oppose new ideas and innovation" (2017: 8). This suggests that common knowledge, visions and beliefs towards sustainability among city inhabitants and communities can enable them to produce new and better outcomes of knowledge and facilitate successful implementation of sustainability projects.

I find the literature on knowledge relevant to my research project as I find that our ways of thinking, our opinions and beliefs to be an influencing factor for individuals to participate in green initiatives. I incorporate the concept of knowledge and belief systems into my research project by questioning: How do local inhabitants and municipality workers perceive urban sustainability? What is their knowledge on this topic? What are their beliefs in this? This will help me understand municipality workers' contribution and inhabitants participation decisions based on the beliefs and ideas they hold towards sustainability and greenery.

To briefly summarize, I analyse the concept of urbanism as this represents the location of my research and the concept of urban sustainability as well as urban greening as this relates to

the green initiatives being implemented by the municipality and by its inhabitants. I then look into the study of environmental justice and its product gentrification, to better understand emerging inequalities and inaccessibility towards sustainable amenities. I then go on to highlight debates on responsibility and appropriation of space to seek if accountability or ownership contributes to participation reasons. Lastly, I present the theoretical context on public participation to identify differences in participation processes and results from the Leiden green initiatives. Thereafter, I theorize self-inclusion and self-exclusion to understand the research participants' positionality and discuss knowledge and beliefs to reveal if these are influencing factors for Leiden inhabitants to participate in the urban green initiatives.

3. Traveling to Local Locations

The location of my research was initially planned to be areas that had undergone green project implementations by the municipality. Nevertheless this was too broad, as I had been told there were thousands of these micro-scale green initiatives scattered around Leiden. Also, not having a fixed location to work in would have flawed the results of identifying a common demographic for (non-) participants in green projects and for participation reasons. I thus decided to narrow the location down to two Leiden neighbourhoods. I chose the Professoren en Burgemeesterswijk (P&Bwijk), a spacious and polished upper-class neighbourhood and Zeeheldenbuurt, a small island inhabiting different types of residents. I additionally analysed the community gardens from within these two Leiden neighbourhoods as well as one other community garden location.

3.1) Professoren en Burgemeesterswijk

The Professoren en Burgemeesterswijk, translated in English as the Mayors and Professors' neighbourhood, is part of the Rodenburger district, situated south of the Leiden city center. Professoren & Burgemeesterswijk houses are a majority privately owned and are constituted mostly of single families. "The average income per inhabitant in the Burgemeesterswijk neighborhood is € 40,700", which, according to the average income figures in the Netherlands, is above the average of €24,000per inhabitant per annum (allcharts.info: January 2021). The largest age branch among P&Bwijk residents are between 45 to 65 years of age and the second largest is 65 and over. In regards to the inhabitants'

cultural background, 79.4% are native Dutch nationals. 15.1% are western migrants and only 5.5% are non-western migrants (allcharts.info: January 2021). These figures reveal that a majority of Burgemeesterswijk inhabitants are financially wealthy and most often Dutch national. The neighbourhood has predominantly an elder population however this will change over time. In *Sociografisch Buurtprofiel Professoren- en Burgemeesterswijk* (2016) Van der Zande and Manders explain that Burgemeesters and Professorwijk was built and designed “for the well-off middle class people consisting of doctors, lawyers, highly educated government officials, judges and professors” (Van der Zande and Manders: 2016: 1). The neighbourhood does well socially and economically as the residents are generally highly educated, the incomes are correspondingly high and the use of social schemes is among the lowest in Leiden. Most residents of the district are in control of their own careers and social lives and are largely self-reliant. Furthermore, this district is a spaciouly laid out residential area with proportioned single-family dwellings. In terms of my personal observations, I thought the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk was abundantly green and spacious. The houses were inviting with its warm architectural designs. Overall, the neighbourhood felt welcoming and family oriented. Several houses had their own front gardens and I assumed it had a back garden too. I observed several inhabitants riding bicycles of good quality and some with front carriers for the children, which are said to be very costly. Several individuals I saw walking by tended to be well dressed, in which the clothes were part of the current fashion trends. Often during the weekends, several middle-aged women were in athletic wear, accompanied with their children holding hockey sticks or tennis rackets, most probably heading towards or heading back from their sports club. These three factors helped me understand that Burgemeesterswijk is predominantly a middle and upper-middle class neighbourhood. I chose Burgemeesters en Professorenwijk as my research location because I believe it is a contrasting neighbourhood compared to other Leiden districts, more specifically to the Zeeheldenbuurt district, due to its socio-economic differences. I planned to find two socially and financially contrasting neighbourhoods and analyse if participation decisions were different between the two. Also, as the Burgemeesterswijk is already a spaciouly green environment, I hoped to uncover if its inhabitants are doing enough to retain the green character of their neighbourhood and if so, how?

3.2) Zeeheldenbuurt

The neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt, also previously known as de Waard, is a small island located in the southeastern side of Leiden. Zeeheldenbuurt housing is evenly divided between private and social owned houses, constituting the majority of single families. The average income per inhabitant in the De Waard neighborhood is €24,600, rendering Zeeheldenbuurt part of the Dutch average income group, which is the group below Burgemeesterswijk. The biggest age group in Zeeheldenbuurt is between 25 and 45 years of age and the second biggest age group is 45- 65. This indicates that Zeeheldenbuurt has a younger population than Professoren & Burgemeesterswijk. Similarly to Burgemeesterswijk, Zeeheldenbuurt is of a majority Dutch national background with 74.7%. 14.6% are western-migrants and 10% are non-western migrants, the latter being 5% more than Burgemeesterswijk (Allcharts.info: Jan 2021). When visiting Zeeheldenbuurt, I personally observed that there was very little green and much more tiles set in place. In the outskirts of the neighbourhood, the green parts consisted of residents' façade gardens, some shrubbery and lifted garden patches on the side of the streets. The greenery found in the inner parts of the neighbourhood was also residents' façade gardens, a few small-shared garden spaces and occasionally some plant pots on the corner of the streets. There were no front gardens in Zeeheldenbuurt as the house entrances were part of the sidewalk. In terms of the houses, they were all attached, standard size and mediocre architectural designs. I found the people walking by to be quite young, often family units, and cheerful. Yet going into the center of the neighborhood, the residents seemed to have a bit more of a rougher and bleak character and aesthetic based on their choice of clothing and certain mannerisms. Furthermore, in my point of view, the inner parts of Zeeheldenbuurt had more of a close-knit community than Burgemeesterswijk, as I perceived several inhabitants often meeting up and catching up among each other. For instance, I saw one teenage male resident having a chat with his friend who was also his neighbor. Another example of this was seeing two young residents sitting down on their porch for tea, expressing they were each other's neighbors.

Around 1875, Zeeheldenbuurt was primarily a green area with agriculture, horticulture, some livestock farming and beautiful flower farms. Due to the rise of the industrial revolution, this formerly green area transformed into a large industrial sector. At the beginning of the 20th century, between the expanding factories, the growing working

population lived in poor and unhygienic conditions. Urban expansion was urgently needed to relieve the pressure on the overcrowded and impoverished city center (Smit: 2012: 12). The newly established housing corporations had to provide the poor working-class population with decent housing. Zeeheldenbuurt along with two other Leiden districts were the most striking exponents of a century of social housing in Leiden (Van der Zande and Manders: 2016: 4). The neighbourhood turned out to be a fine example of small-scale construction for people with modest means, constituting the working class and the small middle class. More recently, in 2011, the social housing company Portaal, had ideas to demolish several public as well as privately owned houses in order to revamp the social houses. The impact of these plans might have meant boosting up the housing prices and inviting more financially higher inhabitants to come in while displacing the local residents. Moreover, a few years later, the municipality had plans of their own to construct a high street that would cross through the middle of the neighbourhood. These projects caused a major uproar among the residents of Zeeheldenbuurt. The inhabitants protested and fought for their livelihoods, their home and community. As a result, a group of individuals created a neighbourhood vision document. This included the opinions, attitudes and thoughts of the Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitants expressing what they wanted and what they hoped to achieve in their neighbourhood. This neighbourhood vision document created a strong sense of community as it brought several inhabitants together to fight for a common cause as well as reunite in several green projects from 2015 to 2018. These green projects involved revamping the Zeeheldenbuurt Park, greening the 'Ons eiland' playground, implementing, in bulk, geveltuintjes around the neighbourhood and many more. This demonstrates environmental justice tendencies as the neighbourhood vision included future environmental projects the residents strived to implement. This will be analyzed in further detail later on. The reason why I chose Zeeheldenbuurt as my second field research location was, as previously mentioned, to examine a contrast between the Burgemeesterswijk neighbourhood in regards to the inhabitants' socio-economic background, age, political identities, education and upbringing. Moreover, I was also interested in Zeeheldenbuurt's cultural and historical heritage. I hoped to uncover if the neighborhood's history had affected its inhabitants socially or economically and thereafter understand if this is an influence to people's decision to participate in green initiatives.

3.3) Green localities

3.3.1) Samen aan de slag

I chose to analyse five types of green projects in which Leiden residents are participating in and investigate if there are differences in participation reasons between each. The first green initiative I looked into was 'Samen aan de slag' translated in English as 'working together', towards tackling environmental issues. Samen aan de slag consists of micro-scale green projects such as a 'Geveltuinje' which is a façade garden; a strip of greenery in front of your door against the façade of your house or a 'boomspiegel', which is flowering around the foot of a public tree. Samen aan de slag is a municipality owned initiative in which the municipality implements the greenery however thereafter the inhabitant must maintain it. How this process unravels is a certain Leiden inhabitant will call up or email the samen aan de slag team to request a geveltuinje, a boomspiegel or any other project they offer. One of the team members will come to the location, remove the paving stones, lay the border and apply a fertile layer of soil. What the inhabitant has to do next is choose and buy the plants and/or flowers for the geveltuinje or the boomspiegel and ensure the maintenance and tidiness of the green space. Fox-Kämper, R. et al. (2018) describe this as a 'top-down with community help' governance approach as the project begins with a top-down government-led approach during the implementation, planning and design but then transitions to a community-led approach for the management and maintenance phase.

Commented [SM2]: Geveltuinje

3.3.2) Personal projects

The second type of green initiative I came across was personal green projects. I did not initially plan on analysing personal projects, as they are neither government owned nor government implemented. However due to the popularity of personal green projects among the research participants throughout my fieldwork, I found it inevitable to not include and discuss. The implementation of a personal green project is a pure bottom-up governing approach. Fox-Kämper, R. et al. (2018) argue that pure bottom-up implementation is often based on individual motivations and efforts of gardening and does not include the contribution of any governmental bodies.

3.3.3) Community gardens

The third type of green initiative I looked into is the community gardens. According to the municipality's *Visie Stadstuinieren Leiden* document (September 2020), a community garden consists of a garden where local residents garden together. Together inhabitants grow flowers, vegetables, fruit and herbs. The city of Leiden prioritizes that community gardens are worked on in a nature-friendly way, using no poison or artificial fertilizer. There are various locations in Leiden where people enthusiastically garden together from Het Zoete Land garden to Zilverdistel school garden. The *Visie Stadstuinieren Leiden (2020)* article argues that city gardening contributes to a pleasant and healthy living environment, social cohesion and climate adaptation. It also strengthens biodiversity, sustainability and the local economy.

Within the neighbourhood of Professoren and Burgemeesterswijk, located at the corner of Cronesteinkade and Zoeterwoudsesingel, I explored the community garden named Het Zoete land, translated in English as 'The Sweet Land'. Het Zoete land started in 2013 and was set up by the Leiden Harvest Foundation. The garden is managed by the foundation itself as well as by a professional gardener, all its volunteers and harvest participants. This 3,600m² community garden constitutes a form of farming where citizens become members or participants of the garden for a fixed annual fee and are entitled to a share of the harvest. In this way, the garden is assured of an income and the citizens of fresh and healthy food. The Municipality of Leiden, as well as several foundations such as Oranje Fonds, the Groene Motor and NLDoeet also financially supports Het Zoete Land. My personal observations of Het Zoete land were that the entrance sign to the garden was very sweet and welcoming. I found the land large and the environment was quiet and serene. Het Zoete land had a big shed and a seating area that I imagine the participants use when they are on breaks. The gardening activity looked like fun yet seemed like it demanded a lot of attention and persistence due to its large gardening terrain.

The community garden that I analysed in Zeeheldenbuurt was the Bontekoe Park. This project is also set up by Harvest foundation. Bontekoe grows vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers yet, differently from Het Zoete land, its produce is for a Leiden Food bank and its customers. The park grows foods that are easy to cultivate such as potatoes, spinach, turnips

and tomatoes to ensure quick produce for the food bank. The Leiden Harvest Foundation manages the garden together with volunteers and a professional gardener. Bontekoe Park is more or less 1,000 m² and is an organically harvested land that does not use chemicals or fertilizers. From my perspective, Bontekoe Park was a small-patch of land yet a perfect example of utilizing public space to its fullest potential. I thought the park was well integrated within the outskirts of the Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhood, accessible for all inhabitants to look at and to walk around. I understood that the park is surrounded with fences to avoid animals or people walking on the harvest. The volunteers working away were a mixture of ages and gender but seemed to be a close team as they often chatted among each other and spent their coffee breaks together.

The last community garden I researched was Matilo Park, situated in the Rodenburger district, not far from Burgemeester and Professorenwijk. The community garden is located outside the Matilo Park but takes on the same name Matilo, I guess to avoid confusion. The Matilo Park is a type of city garden in between allotments and neighbourhood gardens - every gardener has their own patch of land yet there is also a communal part that involves the sharing of certain resources such as water, gardening tools, kitchen and seating area. Matilo Park, established in 2012, is the result of a citizens' initiative as the inhabitants from the residing area wanted to create gardens for the neighbourhood, with a limited surface area and a social function. Although all Leiden residents are welcome at Matilo Park, residents of Meerburg and Roomburg have priority as the gardens were intended for them. My personal observation of Matilo Park was that the garden was a spacious area that didn't occupy big sheds per allotment and had a strong communal character. This city garden is smaller than the traditional allotments however it felt very welcoming, compact and cozy. The members were keeping to themselves yet would often chat to one another for a catch-up or for some advice. In my point of view, there was a strong sense of social cohesion for a garden of independent micro-allotments. This might be due to the members going regularly to the park over the years and eventually creating new contacts with their allotment neighbors. Moreover, the gardeners at Matilo Park were very friendly and approachable. I believe all these three community gardens have been implemented through a 'bottom-up with political and/or administrator support' governing approach (Fox-Kämper, R. et al.: 2018). This implies that the green project is initiated by the public, alongside governmental

support. In these community gardens, for example, the individuals organize a green initiative while the Leiden municipality rents out public land and provides funding, and thereafter the inhabitants solely manage the green space.

4. Methods and Techniques of Research

This section of the thesis determines all the methods I had employed throughout my fieldwork, which involves document and online research, observations, interviewing and participation observation. For each method, I will explain what worked well as well as what did not work well and why. In questioning the method's degree of success, this will highlight the certain challenges I faced and demonstrate how I overcame these barriers.

4.1) Accessibility

Before conducting my research methods, a precondition that was necessary in meeting was accessibility and gaining permission. As my project entailed green initiatives being implemented by the municipality of Leiden, gaining permission and accessibility from the municipality was very much needed. This turned out to be successful as I was regularly in contact with municipality worker, Jolanda de Schiffart. Jolanda is also the main stakeholder and coordinator for my research project. She was an effective key informant in offering me several referrals, useful information and advice. Furthermore, how I had hoped to identify green participants who were involved in the municipality owned-initiative 'samen aan de slag', was to ask the director of samen aan de slag team, Ronald van der Steen, for referrals, as he keeps track of all previous Samen aan de slag participants. However this was a privacy and confidentiality concern, as these participants did not initially comply with being contacted by a student when participating in the samen aan de slag project. Therefore I failed to gain access towards these referrals and I was unable to contact any samen aan de slag participants through Ronald. How I went around this inability to gain referrals was by asking myself inhabitants of Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt if they were involved in green initiatives implemented by the municipality, including samen aan de slag. Another method I used to identify participants was by looking for the 'samen aan de slag' metallic plates left on the side of a boomspiegel or a geveltuinje, which indicated the green project was implemented by the samen aan de slag initiative. I then proceeded to knock on the doors close to where these metal plates were and questioned if it was theirs. An additional

method I used was knocking on doors that had a geveltuinje. However a majority of Zeeheldenbuurt residents expressed that their geveltuinje were personal projects or not samen aan de slag related.



(Taken on 29th January in Burgemeesterswijk)

Moving on, how I hoped to gain access to inhabitants not participating in green initiatives is by distributing flyers to people walking around outside and through resident's letterboxes at my research locations. This flyer highlighted the purpose of my project, how the person reading the flyer can contribute to my project and my contact details. However this technique proved to be challenging as no one contacted me after I had given them a flyer. Also I found it counterintuitive to approach inhabitants with a flyer, then walking away and never hearing from them, when I could have easily interviewed them straight away when approaching them. The latter is what I decided to do to gain quick access towards participants and non-participants in green activities. Nevertheless the flyers proved to be useful for several inhabitants I had interviewed and gained an interest in my research. I gave them a flyer for them to contact me if ever they wanted to read the final thesis.

I found that the most challenging part about accessibility was identifying non-participants towards green projects in Leiden. This was what I hoped to access the most as this meant getting to understand what influences and determines inhabitants not to participate in green projects. The reason I had difficulty accessing non-participants is that, among all the research participants I had spoken with, the majority tended to give examples of when they did participate in green projects overall in their life, which may not have meant currently. Moreover, as I had interviewed research participants in person, it seemed they were inclined

to say they were participants of a past green initiative, as a way to redeem themselves for not currently being involved in green. When I had asked the interviewees their thoughts about urban greening, the majority expressed they were aware about the importance of green and what it means to the environment. Thus many mentioned they participated in a green project several years ago perhaps to make sure their opinions towards sustainability aligned with their contribution. Therefore, I identified several research participants as green participants more than non-participants as they manifestly had expressed participating in a green initiative at least once in their life. I personally think that identifying non-participants would have been better to find through the method of questionnaires or surveys as people would have responded honestly as they could remain anonymous. Nevertheless, I overcame this challenge, quite late during my field research, by making my questions more precise, asking informants 'if they were involved in any green projects currently', and not taking into account past green experiences.

4.1) Document research

At the start of my fieldwork, I directed myself to conduct online research, as Hine (2015) argues in *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday*, that the virtual world is a powerful source of insight. I started off with various Leiden municipality website pages to gain an understanding of their sustainability implemented practices and policies. I then found the Gagoed.nl website. Gagoed.nl is a Leiden municipality owned website that offers information and advice related to sustainability. It also demonstrates the municipality's current projects or contributions on sustainability, energy and greenery. The website provided a newsletter, which I signed up to, as a way to be up to date on any novel news from the municipality. Gagoed.nl was a great source for contacts as it included all the neighbourhood ambassadors of Leiden. The neighbourhood ambassadors are the mediators between the municipality and the inhabitants for each Leiden neighbourhood. Their goal is to provide easy and accessible information for inhabitants seeking to be more sustainable and often, they implement their own sustainable ideas in their neighbourhood. I proceeded to email all neighbourhood ambassadors and invite them each for a structured online interview. This led me to investigate each of the neighborhood's own websites. The two that stood out the most were zeeheldenbuurtleiden.nl and profburgwijk.nl as both were informative and detailed in their past and ongoing projects towards sustainability. This was a

contributing factor in helping me decide to narrow down my research location to the two neighbourhoods: Zeeheldenbuurt and Professoren en Burgemeesterswijk. For each of these two neighbourhoods, I researched more online sources such as allcharts.info, uitgeverijginkgo.nl/home/ons-eiland and expatica.com/nl to gain statistical information on the type of residents living there and historical background material to know what each neighbourhood was like. Moreover, I researched the following websites: groendichterbijleiden.nl, stadstuinenleiden.nl and hetzoeteland.nl, which contributed to my findings on green projects in Leiden. In hoping to gain better insight on public participation in line with Leiden green initiatives, I looked at, again, municipality platforms. One in particular was an online interactive platform called 'Doe en Denk mee', translated as Participate and Think. Residents can participate, contribute and share their ideas towards various projects that are currently or will be implemented in their city. One project in particular that helped me gain data on my topic of research was on 'Stadstuinieren', translated in English as 'city gardening', in Leiden. This website page explained Leiden's past plans on city gardening in 2020 and its implementation procedure. It also included two surveys involving the inhabitants' opinions towards city gardening, which were very insightful.

4.2) Online research

While conducting online research, I employed different social media platforms throughout my fieldwork. I used Instagram, Twitter and Facebook in the hopes to seek out relevant informants and investigate the research locations. I started off with Twitter as a way to find a group or a community that were involved in green initiatives in Leiden. However I could not find what I was looking for, as I found out that twitter was quite an individualistic platform with more personal profiles rather than groups. I then moved on to Facebook, which was easier to find Leiden community groups yet none were 'green initiative'-related. Facebook was useful for further information on the neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt as it had their own Facebook page. On the Zeeheldenbuurt page, I was able to discover various posts and photos on past projects, including green projects the neighbourhood had organized and managed. One post example from 2015: "The neighbourhood is a little greener again! Façade gardens have been planted again and many people have picked up a packet of bulbs and planted them in their tree-edge / façade garden / flower box. What a

colorful and fragrant pleasure that will be for bees and residents in the spring!”
(Zeeheldenbuurt Leiden: Facebook: 25th November 2015).



(2016 geveltuinactie Trompstraat [accessible at:]

<https://www.facebook.com/ZeeheldenbuurtLeiden/posts/1448726145214009>)

Lastly, I employed Instagram to ‘follow’ the community garden, Het Zoete land, that had an Instagram page and to explore their previous posts to understand what the garden looked like.

4.3) Observations

When first visiting Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt, I conducted observations in order to see what each neighbourhood looked like, in terms of if it is well kept or badly maintained, what the inhabitants were like and to understand what green initiatives were being implemented and/or managed. In the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk, observing the residents, more specifically, seeing what bicycle they rode, what clothes they wore and what sports they played, helped me to identify their socio-economic backgrounds - that being upper class. Meanwhile in Zeeheldenbuurt, my observations revealed that this neighbourhood was heavily paved and had little public greenery. The houses were all attached, standard size and mediocre architectural designs. The inhabitants were a mixture as those living on the outskirts looked physically and seemed socially different than those living in the inner parts of the neighbourhood. Moreover, the inner residents seemed to have more social cohesion than the outskirts residents, as they often chatted with each other. Overall, through observations, I understood that the two neighbourhoods have strong

financial contrasts between inhabitants, housing design and urban planning. Burgemeesterwijk was much greener, spacious and had richer and bigger houses compared to Zeeheldenbuurt. However Zeeheldenbuurt was not as run down and secluded as I had initially thought and had a stronger sense of community. Moreover, the method of observation in all community gardens helped me distinguish the infrastructure and urban planning for each. Also by observing the members for each garden, this helped me identify if there was a common demographic.

4.5) Interviews

During my fieldwork, the most prominent method I conducted was interviewing. This method was a successful source to gaining specific knowledge and data on research participants' personal opinions and perceptions. Interviews were divided between in-person, semi-structured and online, structured. The gained data between the two types of interview were different, which will be discussed further below. Both interviews questioned the participant's overall perspective about sustainability and their general thoughts about the Leiden Local government or the Dutch government. This was to determine if their actions in greenery aligned with their thoughts towards sustainability and if their opinions about the government influenced their participation decisions. The questions were thus: 'What is your personal opinion on the municipality?' Or 'what is your relationship with the municipality?' 'What are your thoughts about sustainability?' and 'Could you please tell me about your political party preference?'

Throughout all stages of the interview, I had ethically committed to respecting the safety, dignity, privacy and well being of the informants. How I ensured this was through confidentiality, informed consent and anonymity of the research participants. Before extracting any research data, I obtained the consent of my research subjects, ensuring that the informants agreed to give away information that will be utilized for my research. Furthermore, as my research subjects were always allowed to change their mind, I informed them of the possibility to renegotiate or withdraw their consent. I committed to asking if the research subjects wanted to remain anonymous. When this was the case, I made my informants aware that I keep their identifying details such as name and email address confidential and thus will not be found in the final research findings if they did not consent

to this. Furthermore, any questions or concerns informants might have had, I gave them a flyer with my name, how to contact me, the purpose of my research, explanations of how their contribution will help and the ethical codes of conduct I am employing. Furthermore, another way I ensured the safety of the informants was by securing and managing their extracted data correctly. I made sure the information gained was not leaked, nor in the wrong hands as this could negatively impact the subjects. I was the only owner of the research data and I strictly avoided the transference of ownership to any other party. As I wrote down the data digitally, I stored it securely, protected with a password to which only I have access. Also, my hard copies were on me at all times or securely put away in my apartment.

4.5.1) Semi-structured and in-person

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in-person with inhabitants from the research locations and members from the community gardens. These interviews were conversational and informal to ensure a more relaxed and inviting setting. By making it more of a conversation, it often triggered various different ideas and topics among the interviewees and often drifted into a chat rather than an interview. The interview with inhabitants was to evaluate their level of participation in sustainable-related projects while also identifying their socio-economic, cultural and political background. The questions thus involved: 'what do you do for a living?' 'Who do you tend to vote for?' 'What do you like most about your neighbourhood?' 'What green projects are you involved in, and are any of these municipality projects?' and 'why do you participate/ or not participate in green?' 'What influences your decision?' Moreover, the method of walking interviews as well as dog-walking interviews with residents from Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt was also very successful. This generated rich data because the interviewees felt more incentivized and inspired to answer questions about their surroundings while being in the area.

4.5.2) Structured and online

Formal and structured type of interviews also proved to be effective throughout my research, which I had conducted with, samen aan de slag directors, municipality workers and neighborhood ambassadors. As I needed to gain specific in-depth data from governing authorities, structured interviews proved to be the most suitable. How I structured the interview was sending a set of questions to the interviewee beforehand for them to review

and during the interview, I asked them these specific questions for them to answer. The structured interview with neighbourhood ambassadors was to reveal their sustainable intentions and contributions within their neighbourhood. The questions for example involved: 'What is your primary goal you hope to achieve as a neighborhood ambassador?' and 'what are all the sustainability projects happening in your neighbourhood?' While with other civil servants, the aim of the interview was to recognize their role within the municipality, access a better understanding of the municipality's inner working and dynamics and also gain their perception towards the public. All structured interviews were conducted online, not particularly due to covid-19 restriction, but because the interactions started online, via email, and it was easier to keep the communication online. Moreover, with online interviews, I was able to record the call (to which I had asked permission beforehand) and have the possibility to play back, which eases the transcription writing. I was also able to arrange multiple follow-up meetings when necessary. Overall, online interviews helped me gain knowledge from the informants in a one-on-one setting.

Regarding my positionality through the interviewing processes, I believe my position as a 'foreigner' allowed me to gain insight into things that every Dutch inhabitant should already know or do, which made it acceptable for an outsider, like me, to ask. In having a neutral position towards various subjects such as Dutch politics or sustainability in Holland, this incentivized informants to express their beliefs and opinions honestly towards the topic as a means to explain the subject. As an example, one question I often asked my research participants: "who do you normally vote for?" to determine if political opinion was an influencing factor towards participation decisions in green. As they might have thought that I didn't have a say in the matter, the response was almost always positive as they expressed their political party or sphere preference and voiced why. In terms of the communication between the informants and myself, I found that the language barrier did not prove to be restrictive. I relied on nearly all research participants to speak English, which they did very well. I also relied on my Dutch friend being my translator for a couple of interviews as well as relying on my basic level of Dutch when this was needed.

4.6) Demographic

After all the interviews, I evaluated that I spoke with 36 participants from Professoren & Burgemeesterswijk. 4 of them were online interviews and 32 were in-person interviews in the public area of Burgemeesterswijk or at the participant's household door. In total, 31 were Dutch nationals and 5 were western migrants. 19 of the interviewees were male -16 of them were Dutch-national and 3 were western migrants. 10 of the male informants had expressed participating in a green initiative. Among these 10 participants, 2 were young males (under 30 years of age), 6 were middle-aged (between 30 to 60) and 2 were elder males (60 and over). 7 of these male green participants were involved in personal green projects such as their own garden, a 'geveltuinje' (façade greening), a 'boomspiegel' (flowering around a tree) or an allotment. The other 3 male participants were part of a communal project such as a community garden or the samen aan de slag initiative. The 9 other male informants were non-participants in green projects. Among the 9 non-participants, 2 were young males (1 western migrant and 1 Dutch), 4 were middle-aged Dutch and 3 were elder aged Dutch. The other 17 interviewees were female -15 were Dutch nationals and 2 were western migrants. In total, 12 females were participants of a green project -1 was a young female (under 30), 10 were middle-aged (30-60) and 1 was an elder female (Over 60). 8 of these female participants were involved in their personal green project and the other 4 were part of a communal project. The other 5 female interviewees were not participating in any green initiatives. Among the non-participants, 3 were young females (2 Dutch and 1 western migrant) and 2 were Dutch elder females. I noted that the individuals that were not participating in green projects did not imply they weren't sustainable at all. Very often the non-participants, specifically in Burgemeesterswijk, were involved in other sustainable projects such as solar panels, recycling, veganism, house insulation, less car use, etc.

Another way I determined the research participants' financial and educational background, other than observation, was by asking what they did for a living. The responses I received were ex pilot, lawyer, doctor, corporate employee, two in the energy industry, two had managing director roles, 3 were in the science sector, a municipality worker, an art dealer, a hairdresser, a life coach, 3 were students, 6 were retired and the remaining I am unaware. Several of these jobs involve a high salary, making a majority of the research participants of

a wealthy economic background. Also, many of these careers require a university-level education, which implies that several of the informants are well-educated.

Participant and non-participant demographics for Burgemeesterswijk:

14 Burgemeesterswijk non-participants			22 Burgermeesterswijk participants			
Nationality:	12 Dutch	2 western migrants	19 Dutch	3 western migrants		
Gender:	9 Males	5 Females	10 Male	22 Female		
Age:	5 (10-30)	4 (30-60)	5 (60+)	3 (10-30)	16 (30-60)	3 (60+)
Socio-econ background:	Majority of Burgermeesterswijk participants were middle-class as well as a number of upper middle class participants.		Majority of Burgermeesterswijk participants were middle-class as well as a number of upper middle class participants.			

In Zeeheldenbuurt, I spoke with 27 inhabitants, all of which were in-person interviews. In total, 23 were Dutch nationals, 2 were western migrants and the last 2 were non-western migrants. Among the informants, 9 were male and all were Dutch nationals. 7 of these male participants were involved in a green project and the other 2 males were non-participants; both young aged residents. 3 of the 7 male green participants were involved in personal projects. Similarly to Burgemeesterswijk, personal projects involved maintaining their own gardens, geveltuinje or boomspiegels. The other 4 males were involved in a communal project. These projects however are different from the ones in Burgemeesterswijk as it consists of green activities that happened as a result of the development of the neighbourhood vision. These projects involved a ‘geveltuinje in bulk’ initiative, the greening of the ‘Ons eiland’ playground and the planning of Bontekoe and Zeeheldenbuurt Park. Among the male participants in green; 4 were young males (under 30) and 3 were middle-aged males (30-60). 18 of the interviewees were female, 14 were Dutch nationals, 2 were western-migrants and 2 were non-western migrants. Among the female interviewees, 14 were participants in a green initiative and the other 4 were non-participants. Non-participants involved 1 young non-western migrant, 1 young western migrant and 2 Dutch middle aged females. 8 females were involved in a personal project and 6 were participants of a communal project. Among the participants in green, 1 was a young female, 7 were middle-aged females and 6 were elder females.

Equally to Burgemeesterswijk, I asked what the research participants did for a living to determine their financial background. Among the informants there was a ministry of finance employee, a lawyer, a municipality worker, a stay at home mum, 2 consultants, a student, 4 were retired, an elder health care worker, 2 crèche workers, 2 sales employees at a retail shop, 2 researchers, a graphic designer, an illustrator, an animator, a cleaner, a mortgage advisor and an architect. I believe this is a mixture of careers involving both blue and white-collar jobs. The general demographic of Zeeheldenbuurt is said to be two general types of people residing in the neighbourhood. The first group is young adults that moved to the neighbourhood around 10 years ago and are mostly Leiden student alumni who are highly educated. This group lives on the outskirts of the neighbourhood. The other group constitutes individuals, often-elder people that hold traditional values in which they have lived at their current address for a very long time, and transfer the ownership of their household to their following generation. These people live in the center of the neighbourhood and often live in social housing properties. Therefore, with these two types of people living in Zeeheldenbuurt, I find the financial background to be similar, in having working class and middle class people.

Participant and non-participant demographics for Zeeheldenbuurt:

6 Zeeheldenbuurt non-participants			21 Zeeheldenbuurt participants			
Nationality:	12 Dutch	1 western migrants	1 non-western migrants	19 Dutch	1 western migrants	1 non-western migrants
Gender:	2 Males	4 Females		7 Male	14 Female	
Age:	4 (10-30)	2 (60+)		5 (10-30)	10 (30-60)	6 (60+)
Socio-econ background:	Zeeheldenbuurt non-participants were majority middle-class and also a few working class individuals			Majority of Zeeheldenbuurt participants were middle-class and had varying levels of income.		

Overall, between Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt, the common demographic for participants in green projects were middle-aged Dutch female. Meanwhile, the demographic for non-participants, my findings revealed that Dutch males under the age of 30 were the least engagement in green activities. In terms of the participants and non-participants' socio-economic background, this varied between each neighbourhood. The most common demographic between the two were middle-class individuals, yet with different levels of income.

Participation demographics for both Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt:

20 Non-participants				43 Participants		
Nationality:	16 Dutch	3 western migrants	1 non-western migrants	38 Dutch	4 western migrants	1 non-western migrants
Gender:	11 Males		9 Females	17 Male		26 Female
Age:	9 (10-30)	4 (30-60)	7 (60+)	8 (10-30)	26 (30-60)	9 (60+)
Socio-econ background:	Majority of both neighbourhood non-participants were middle-class and had varying levels of income. ¹			Majority of both neighbourhood participants were middle-class. Yet Burgemeesterswijk also had a number of upper middle class participants.		

¹Research in Zeeheldenbuurt was predominantly conducted on the outskirts of the neighbourhood in which younger and richer inhabitants reside, rendering the sample of the Zeeheldenbuurt population slightly uneven by not representing the working class.

In terms of the community gardens, at Het Zoete land, I spoke with 3 gardeners. All were Dutch nationals and all female. 1 was middle-aged (30-60) and 2 were young females (Under 30). At Bontekoe Park, I interviewed 6 individuals. 5 of them were Dutch nationals and 1 was a western migrant. 4 of the interviewees were males, 1 young male, 2 middle-aged male and 1 elder. The other 2 participants were female, 1 young and 1 middle-aged. At Matilo Park, I interviewed 3 members and the manager. Only the manager was a Dutch national and the 3 members were non-western migrants. In total, 3 of the participants were middle-aged female and 1 was a middle-aged male.

As I worked collaboratively with the municipality in the hopes to gain their perspectives towards participation in urban greening, I interviewed several governing authorities. My first contact was the primary coordinator for my research project, Jolanda de Schiffart. I then communicated with various neighbourhood ambassadors including Maarten Schoffers from Rodenburger district, Anja Mølten and her colleague Katja from Leiden Nord, Ckees from Stevenshof district, Jeroen Schram from Zeeheldenbuurt and Annemarie Koopman, member of the Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhood association and coordinator for the neighbourhood vision. Two other municipality workers I spoke with were Lucille who manages all neighbourhood ambassadors and Ansar who is part of the energy saving branch. Lastly, I had an interview with Arja Nobel who conducted and created the *Leiden stadstuinieren* document (2020).

4.7) Participant observation

The last method I employed is participant observation. I hoped to conduct participant observation by participating in the green initiatives myself, by either maintaining a boomspiegel, a geveltuinje or assisting in a community garden. This could have been an activity where I contributed to or been a part of as a way to include my positionality and explain my personal experience of the participation in the final thesis. However I was unable to participate myself, as I didn't want to rob research participants of their personal activity or duty of gardening. All the informants I had been with while they were working on their garden space were very focused and determined to get the work done. It didn't feel right for me to come in, with my very little gardening expertise, and take that away from them. Nevertheless I believe I still conducted participant observation by physically being in the field, by being in the research locations of Zeeheldenbuurt, Burgemeesterswijk and the community gardens. I immersed myself through physical presence, into the lives of the residents and community garden members, into their green modes of living and their regular gardening activities. Moreover, as I spent time with the informants from the research neighbourhoods, for example, walking with them, I understood how they acted in their local area. As a result, I could decipher their attitudes and thoughts they had towards their neighborhood environment as well as the green projects. Similarly, by spending time and chatting away with the members of community gardens, often while they were managing their green project, this helped me gain intimate experience and knowledge on the research participants.

4.8) Covid-19 circumstances

As I was conducting fieldwork through the coronavirus pandemic, I had initially thought not many residents were going to be outdoors due to a fear of the virus. This would have meant fewer inhabitants to gain data from, which, in turn, would have negatively affected my research findings. However I found that this was not the case. Due to the lockdown restrictions back in March 2020, several residents in Leiden were very interested to engage in outdoor activities including gardening as a way to free themselves from being indoors. Therefore there were surprisingly many more inhabitants walking around in the research neighbourhoods and on the community gardens than I had initially expected. Moreover, while being in the field, I abided by the covid-19 regulations which involved respecting the

1.5m distance when approaching research participants, regularly washing my hands and coughing into my elbow when necessary.

5. Why do Leiden inhabitants (not) participate in green-oriented projects?

This chapter displays the major research findings as a result of conducting methodology in the field. In the hopes to answer the main research question, the findings will start off by stating the various influencing factors towards participation in urban green initiatives implemented by the municipality and by its inhabitants, then the influencing reasons towards non-participation. The findings will then go on to involve the municipality implementation plans, practices and policies towards urban greening. This will determine if the government is contributing and empowering enough for the people to participate. Moreover, the findings will also include the municipality and the inhabitants' opinions of each other in the hopes to convey if the inter-relation between people and government may affect public participation decisions.

Throughout the findings section, I will abide by the anonymity of all research participants including Leiden inhabitants and municipality representatives. I will use names other than their personal identifying ones to uphold their safety and well-being.

5.1) Reasons behind participation

5.1.1) Personal background

As I gained knowledge from all types of Leiden inhabitants, this implied a variety of opinions, attitudes and backgrounds. I believe one of the determining factors towards participation in urban greening is the condition of how the individual is brought up, educated and what values, norms and traditions they hold.

- **Upbringing and Intergenerational education**

Throughout my field research, several green participants explained their knowledge and practices of greening originated from their parents. How I came to understand this was by

asking the informants: 'how did you learn about the importance of green and/or when did you first learn how to garden?' Examples of the participants' responses involved:

- [I learnt about green because] "I think my parents always were the type to love being outside, they also like to work in the garden" (young mother from Burgemeesterswijk resident: February 10th 2021).
- "[I learnt about gardening] a long time ago, 50 years ago [with my parents], they taught me to listen to the birds, [care for] the flowers" (Elder P&Bwijk male resident: March 19th 2021).
- "I always was interested [in gardening], so were my parents, so I grew up with it" (Middle-aged Dutch female resident from Zeeheldenbuurt: February 17th 2021).
- "My parents always had a house with a small garden and my father cultivated his own vegetables for the whole year, he also cultivate flowers – so early childhood on there was always something to do in the garden" (Elder lady, Zeeheldenbuurt resident: February 22nd 2021).
- "From the young age, my parents did a lot of green and I like green. [Also] I come from the east part of Holland, so a lot of forest there" (middle-aged, P&Bwijk male Dutch resident: March 19th 2021).
- "Where I grew up, I'm actually from Germany. I lived near a forest and I was always very much outside. And my aunt had a farm and worked with the farm animals too but I cannot point to an age or a date on when I learnt green" (middle-aged white female – Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitant: February 17th 2021).

Moreover, Neighbourhood Ambassador, Christina, expressed that her perception of urban greening and her knowledge about its importance started when she was a child, back when she was living in a small town, in the south of Germany. In this area, it was very environmentally oriented. "In the 1970s, they promoted strict recycling measures and if you

don't recycle or throw the garbage properly, it was almost like being stoned" (Christina, Neighbourhood ambassador: January 22nd 2021). As several of these informants expressed learning gardening through their parents, it is clear to identify this as intergenerational learning. Ramirez-Andreotta, M. D et al. in *Understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations associated with community gardening to improve environmental public health prevention and intervention* (2019) argue that intergenerational learning "is an important part of lifelong learning, where the generations work together to gain skills, values, and knowledge." (2019: 10). The authors explain that by frequently communicating and providing valuable feedback to an individual, this individual will increase their self-efficacy, which in turn can enhance their participation motivation towards the activity they are learning from. Ramirez-Andreotta, M. D et al (2019) also mention that intergenerational education in gardening can teach the individual to gain more confidence "and satisfy their basic psychological need for achieving competence" (idem). Therefore, this form of upbringing, by offering experience and knowledge to following generations about a certain activity, can be understood as an influencing factor for research participants to be involved in urban greenery -as they enthusiastically follow their parents' footsteps.

Furthermore, a few informants expressed they grew up in a sustainable and nature-oriented environment. I believe that in terms of what surroundings you were regularly exposed to growing up, can influence you to have a location preference, which in this case are spaces with greenery. Zheng, B., Zhang, Y., & Chen, J. (2011) add to this as they argue "Individuals' tastes on environmental appreciation are often shown to be linked to a person's training, their previous experiences and personal characteristics such as age, personal emotional experience, social status and education" (Zheng, B et al.: 2011: 1). More relevantly, Dearden (1984) who investigated factors influencing landscape preference "found that familiarity with general landscape types appeared to have a positive correlation with landscape preferences" (idem); (Dearden, P: 1984). This can insinuate that location preference is strongly based on childhood upbringing locations. If one's childhood location was abundantly green, this contributes to your current location preference being green, which to a certain degree, can make you a green participant as you render your surroundings greener yourself.

- **Education**

Gaining awareness and knowledge on urban greening, other than through intergenerational ties, can also be through schooling systems. As I asked research participants when they learnt about greenery and sustainability, several responses included through elementary school due to a communal garden being in the playground, through high school as they offered classes on the environment and sustainability and through university by choosing to study agricultural and/ or biological studies or conducting sustainability-related research. Moreover, a few inhabitants mentioned learning about green on their own, by reading about it, through the newspaper, social media, radio or TV programs. I found that, among these research participants who had gained a certain amount of education and awareness on sustainability in their lifetime, lead them to being quite engaged in green projects, as they are fundamentally more aware about its importance and urgency. This strongly relates to the discussion of knowledge and beliefs, in which Eric Pol (2012) suggests that getting more people aware about sustainability is by providing information to people, which in turn, can change people's attitudes and behaviours and overall their knowledge on the matter. That knowledge becomes a belief that the "individual or a community takes to be true and therefore is of sufficient merit to guide their reasoning and action", which in this case is the action to participate in green projects. (Muñoz-Erickson et al: 2017: 7).

- **Political party preference**

Another form of having awareness and knowledge towards sustainability and urban greening is the individual's political views and opinions. I found that the type of political party an informant would vote for shapes their beliefs and ideas they have towards sustainability in general, and in turn, might influence their participation actions towards urban greening. To gain data on informants' political opinions, I proceeded to ask the research participants: 'whom do you normally vote for? Or do you mind telling me your political party preference'? Moreover, as Dutch elections were in March, during my fieldwork, I integrated a question in relation to this by asking: 'what are you hoping for in the upcoming elections?' As a point of reference, the major political parties in the Netherlands are VVD (People's party for Freedom and Democracy) which is a center-right, conservative-liberal party, D66 (Democrats 66) which is a centrist social liberal party, PVV (Party for Freedom) constituting a right-wing populist and national-liberal party, Forum voor

Democratie (Forum for Democracy) representing a right-wing, populist, national conservative party and Groenlinks (Greenleft) which combines green politics with left-wing ideals. The current governing party in the Dutch House of Representatives is VVD. (*A guide to Dutch Political parties*, Expatica: February 3rd, 2021). In the neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt the responses I gained from the inhabitants included:

- “We are very leftish people that like the environment, it’s good for the world” (Young white male, Leiden university alumni: February 4th 2021).
- “Normally I vote for Groenlinks. Hoping more green for the next elections”. (Young mother, Biologist Researcher resident: February 17th 2021)
- “I’m going to vote for the Partij voor de dieren, so that’s more green. I think it’s good you have one party that’s thinking about the future and the environment” (Young Dutch male inhabitant: 23rd February 2021)
- “I vote leftish and green” (young female resident: 23rd February 2021)
- “I used to vote for socialist party – I was raised by communist and feminist, I’m a socialist but I found out a couple years ago that they support animal testing- that’s a big no for me. I’m not sure [who to vote for], Partij voor de dieren have weird ideas about women’s rights and I will stay far away from far-right [parties]”. (Middle-aged white Dutch female resident: February 17th 2021)

Relating back to my methods section on the two types of people living in Zeeheldenbuurt, Eva, member of the Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhood association, explains that there are similar political party preferences among each group. Eva argues that the elder working class population tends to vote for Forum voor Democratie or PVV while the younger educated individuals vote for Groenlinks or D66. These findings confirm Eva’s statement as the green and leftish voters were mainly young educated informants. Overall, the majority of the research participants voted for a green-oriented party and among them had expressed participating in a green project. Therefore, to a certain extent, the informants’ political party

preference in Groenlinks influenced their awareness about greening and actions towards urban gardening. However these findings are not an accurate representation of the general political opinion in the neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt, firstly because I conducted much more research in the outskirts of the neighbourhood, which is where the young population resides. Secondly, I am unaware if all responses were honest and truthful, as it might be plausible PVV or Forum voor Democratie party voters preferred to keep their political opinions to themselves and shared other inaccurate answers.

From the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk, some responses were:

- “I voted Groenlinks. I’m very much against how we treat animals, pigs, and chickens. I hope they (the government) improve animal welfare, no industrial farming” (elder male inhabitant: March 19th 2021).
- [I vote for] “mainly left leaning party and most of the time Groenlinks” (Young father resident: February 17th 2021)
- “I like [the elections] because D66 won [seats] big time and I think they are thinking a lot of the future of green” (Young male inhabitant: March 19th 2021).
- “I’m sort of happy [with the election results], I voted for the D66 and they won [seats] and I’m happy with it, also happy with the current prime minister, he’s doing a good job” (Middle-aged white male inhabitant: March 19th 2021).
- “I like [elections results] because D66 won big time and I think they are thinking a lot of the future of green” (Young white male inhabitant: March 19th 2021).
- “I am VVD, I think this guy (the prime minister) is doing well” (Elder Dutch resident: March 19th 2021).
- “I voted for the VVD [...] I voted for the prime minister because he did well during the crisis (Middle-aged white male resident: March 19th 2021).

The responses from Burgemeesterswijk on general politics were overall positive, including their satisfaction towards the prime minister. In terms of party preference, there was a variety including D66, VVD and Groenlinks party. Moreover, all these informants expressed participation in either communal or personal green projects. I thus believe these political parties might have raised awareness to these informants about sustainability in general, however not all as VVD is not regarded as a sustainable advocate. Although these respondents explained to participate in green, this might have been due to other reasons, which will be discussed below. Therefore, political party preference was not a major influence towards participating in urban green projects, nevertheless it was more a determining factor toward sustainability awareness.

- **Socio-economic background influence**

While still remaining in the context of the individuals' personal background, I found that the individual's socio-economic background implies differing degrees of housing and property accessibility, which could help towards participating in green projects. In the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk, a majority of the participants owned a private front and/or a back garden. One inhabitant in particular expressed that when she was living in Amsterdam, she lived on the 6th floor and if she wanted to do some gardening, she would have to take all the gardening stuff out, take it down and walk a long distance to get to the communal garden, which was all a big hassle. When she was thinking of moving to Leiden, her biggest influential factor in choosing a property was for it to have a private garden. Currently, she spontaneously gardens whenever she feels like it, while leisurely having a cup of coffee due to her close and easy accessibility to the front and back gardens that came with the house.

Moreover, another form of accessibility influence based on one's socio-economic context was represented through the boomspiegel implementation in Burgemeesterswijk. In this well-off neighbourhood, there is an abundance of public green spaces and several public trees. This enabled plenty of room for inhabitants to set up a boomspiegel, which was not the case in the neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt due to the lack of greenery. Socio-economic background enables green accessibility through property or living location, thus becoming an influencing factor towards participating in a personal green project.

5.1.2) Personal preference

In seeking to identify the influencing reasons why inhabitants of Leiden participate in green initiatives, a prominent result I found throughout my research is that it's people's 'personal preference' that motivates them to get involved. This implied participants saying, 'I like gardening or I enjoy gardening', expressing a deep interest towards the activity yet sometimes could not explain further why they had this preference or where this preference came from. Nevertheless, for a majority of research participants, there were often different reasons behind their personal preference such as it improves their mental and physical health, creates social cohesion and increases awareness. For the participants who had shared their reasoning for participation, I will divide the responses between benefits gained as an individual and benefits gained as a group when conducting green activities.

5.1.3) Individual benefits

- **Mental health**

Several research participants, specifically from community gardens, gained mental health and wellbeing benefits while conducting green activities. During my interview with Lily, coordinator of the Bontekoe Park, she explained that her previous job in a corporate environment caused her high levels of stress and anxiety and resulted in a major burnout. When she decided to pursue a gardening life-style first through volunteering then professionally, she felt it made so much more sense. It was good for her mental health, body and spirit, and to be overall connected with nature. Lily expressed she wasn't proud, happy nor satisfied with her previous line of work. She had a lot of social pressure to deal with a society that tends to praise those who work in corporate jobs and earn a high salary. It was difficult for her to break out of the norm. Nevertheless, once she did, it was the best personal and mental change she had ever made. Jan, another Bontekoe worker, explained what he enjoys the most about gardening, and to which is one of the main reasons he participates, is the brain numbness of conducting the activity. While doing the physical labour in gardening, Jan explains that his mental state is completely relaxed and laid back and he thinks in nothing else but in the task at hand. Moreover, a community garden member from Matilo Park argued that her influence to participate in greenery is because of her mentality. It is a calming feeling yet also a spiritual feeling that "keeps me grounded" (Matilo park member: March 20th 2021).

It has been proven among several academics that gardening is a source of improving mental health and wellbeing. Sarah Smidl, Douglas Mitchell and & Cynthia Creighton (2017) mention in *Outcomes of a Therapeutic Gardening Program in a Mental Health Recovery Center* that “gardening is a productive and leisure occupation which has been used as an occupational therapy intervention for nearly 100 years” (Smidl, S et al. 2017 : 374). Today, a variety of individuals with mental illnesses and disabilities utilize therapeutic gardening as a way to improve their mental state (idem). While Smidl et al. (2017) investigated if a therapeutic gardening project within a psychosocial recovery curriculum from a community mental health center is truly beneficial, they found that the recovery garden project “served as an enormous sense of pride, purpose and achievement” for those who had participated in it (Smidl et al.: 2017: 375). They concluded that horticulture as a therapeutic medium offered a “range of productive and social activities which engaged individuals with differing interests, goals and needs” (2017: 384). Booth, J. M et al. (2018), who examined the association between individuals’ levels of participation in community gardens, similarly conveyed that gardening and community gardens contribute to participants’ psychological well being. Through their study, they found that the “social interactions facilitated during community gardening activities increased residents’ social connectedness, mutual trust, and social support, which are factors consistently related to better mental health outcomes” (Booth, J. M et al.: 2018: 7). Also, certain participants of this study described engaging in gardening activities as a major stress-relieving tool. The research participants I had spoken with, as well as the participants from these academic studies, convey that when they garden, this results in them gaining positive feelings, therapeutic qualities and alleviating stress. Mental health and mental well-being is thus a major influencing factor towards participation in urban green initiatives.

- **Happiness and enjoyment**

Another factor closely related to mental wellbeing is the emotional state, characterized, in this case, by feelings of happiness, joy, contentment or fulfillment when doing green projects. Throughout my research, several inhabitants and community garden members shared happy experiences and expressed happiness when conducting a green activity. Eva Cheng and Shane Pegg’s study (2016) agree that “leisure gardening does contribute to the

overall level of happiness and subjective well-being of participants” (Cheng & Pegg: 2016: 287). However I understood that happiness was not fundamentally an influence in participation decisions yet was more the current emotional state of the individual when conducting green activities or a resulting feeling after gardening. Moreover happiness is a complex concept to grasp and is based on each individual’s subjectivity, meaning the concept is understood differently for everyone. Nevertheless scholars do perceive strong connections of happiness and well-being in gardening activities.

- **Physical health**

The third individual benefit while participating in green projects I witnessed throughout my research is physical health. Examples of this include a Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitant who works as an elder health care worker, expressed participating in green activities mainly for her health, specifically for working on her breathing. Another young inhabitant from Burgemeesterswijk voiced his involvement towards greenery is to be healthier and in good shape, by taking in the fresh air. There are a variety of scholars that recognize and highlight the physical health benefits of gardening activities. For example, Hawkins, J. L et al. (2013) who explored the benefits of allotment gardens, found that all participants of their study mentioned experiencing physical activity through gardening and perceived this as a positive benefit in terms of “health, fitness, well-being, and stress reduction” (2013: 116). Other physical activity benefits mentioned included “weight loss, increased fitness, staying supple and trim, feeling good, and reducing sedentary time” (2013: 117). Based on my findings and academic evidence, it is clear to suggest that physical health is an influencing factor towards green participation.

- **Financial gain**

Moving on, financial gain and saving money is an individual benefit when participating in green projects. Nevertheless this proved to be a less popular incentive in my research as very few informants expressed participating for finance related-reasons. Nevertheless, among those who did, including the daughter of a Zambian migrant community garden member, from matilo park, explained: “last year we cultivated a large amount of onions and for about 2- 3 months we didn’t buy onions, it’s beneficial. Cutting down the costs” (Daughter of a community garden member: March 20th 2021). The mother also mentioned that: “[gardening teaches you] about self-reliance. Instead of buying, you have your own”

(Community garden member, Zambia migrant: March 20th 2021). Among the several academic studies, including Ramirez-Andreotta, M. D. et al's (2019), it is highlighted that economics and saving money are clear motivations to garden among participants. "Gardening has been shown to reduce the amount that an individual or family spends on groceries by providing them with produce that they would otherwise have to purchase" (2019: 10). Gardening is an obvious financial benefit yet this was an influence for only a few of my participants.

- **Food quality and distance**

The last individual benefit is the quality and freshness of food gained through gardening. Several participants, mostly from community gardens, voiced their preference towards fresh food due to its better taste and its non-use of pesticide and chemicals. Furthermore, "Gardening in the city is key to reducing the distance food travels from the field to the table" (Bonow, M., & Normark, M: 2018: 510). One community garden member from Het Zoete Land strongly aligned to this statement. She disliked seeing labeled food from supermarkets travelling from Kenya and chooses to grow her fruit and vegetables locally. Another community garden member also believes in food travel reduction and in response to this, is currently working on a city food policy to ensure more food can be regionally produced.

5.1.4) Group benefits

- **Social cohesion**

The most popular group benefit in gardening is the high chances of meeting new people, expanding one's social network and overall allowing social cohesion. Various scholars agree that gardening is an opportunity to build new relationships and strengthen social ties. Gardening with others results increased "communication, socialization, a sense of commitment, and responsibility to the group" (Heliker, D., Chadwick, A., & O'Connell, T.: 2001: 41). Moreover, the development of a sense of community was also found in several gardening studies due to enhancing social interaction, social ties and civic engagement. Gardening often implies frequently aligning with others that have similar interests and sharing a common purpose (Kingsley, J., Foenander, E., & Bailey, A: 2019). A community garden can be understood as an example of a "micro-community" thanks to the regular surroundings of like-minded people and the sharing of common experiences. Kingsley et al.

(2019) believe that community gardens “act as ‘third place’ settings beyond home and work which are non-commercial, community-building, aesthetically pleasing and enhance social life across genders, cultures and ages” (2019: 3). The latter was very much the case in my research as the community gardens included a variety of members interacting across different ages, cultural and social backgrounds, education, different nationalities, migration backgrounds, etc.

Among several participants mentioning participating for the social aspect of it, Anaïs’ gardening experience is a positive representation of social cohesion motivation. Anaïs, who is a Burgemeesterswijk resident, organized a boomspiegel project from Samen aan de slag for her whole residential street. Anaïs got involved due to, firstly her admiration towards the samen aan de slag initiative, secondly her street was in need of cleaning up and, lastly, having an opportunity to get to know her neighbors. She explained once the boomspiegels were implemented, all street neighbors were present and working hard. The participants were chatting away and getting to know each other, which created a real sense of community in the street. She expressed it was “the start of a new life in this previous anonymous street” (Anaïs: February 2nd 2021). Furthermore, when I had asked how it made her feel to participate in this initiative, she responded she was happy because she had made two new friends, one of which became her tennis buddy and the other teaches her about plant maintenance. Overall, interaction and connection opportunities and social cohesion are a predominant influence towards participating in community gardens or other gardening projects.

- **Environmental Concern**

Having concerns towards the environment was a common participation influence among research participants from both Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhoods. A majority of participants were aware about the environment’s degradation and negative repercussions due to climate change and, in turn, created their sense of concern for the environment. Others expressed environmental concern due to current social issues including globalization, the economy, and animal welfare. One other example of environmental concern involved informants complaining about their neighbourhood (Zeeheldenbuurt) having too many tiles set on the ground or too much concrete. This causes rain to puddle up when it rains, increases high temperature during summer and it makes the neighbourhood

less green in general. This concern and dislike was enough of a motivation for these inhabitants to participate in a green project, which involved removing the tiles and creating a *geveltuinje* or greening their previously tiled garden. This in turn would result in a group benefit as it includes all other residents living in the neighbourhood. Best, H., & Mayerl, J. (2013), along with other scholars perceive “environmental concern as a complex structure of general and issue-specific attitudes, environmental values, and beliefs” (2013: 710). Relating back again to the theoretical framework of knowledge and beliefs, it is essentially our common knowledge, visions and beliefs towards sustainability, and in this case concern towards the environment, that can enable us to facilitate successful implementation of sustainability-related projects.

- **Spreading awareness**

The last influence I found was participating in green initiatives for the sake of the following generations. This type of motivation was most prominent among inhabitants with children or grandchildren. They were often concerned about the future of the planet and how their children were going to live on it. As I asked these participants what influenced them to participate in green, the responses I gained were: “My main priority is to keep the world a livable place for my children in the future” (P&Bwijk resident- middle aged father: February 17th 2021). “For the future. I have two grandchildren. When I’m with my grandchildren, we’re in the garden growing potatoes and everything. They have to know how it is, a lot of people don’t know how it grows” (Elder female, very green Zeeheldenbuurt resident, February 17th 2021). And “I garden for my son and teach him how plants grow, to understand the meaning and circle of life” (Middle-aged Burgemeesterswijk inhabitant: March 19th 2021). Spreading awareness and offering education encompasses group benefit as it involves advancing family units and helping future generations. This strongly relates back to intergenerational learning yet this section involves participants that are parents passing down the knowledge instead of the participants who had gained the knowledge as children. This participation motivation thus entails residents participating in greenery or spreading awareness about sustainability for the sake and well being of others (-others being the following generation).

5.1.5) Responsibility

Moving on to another reason behind participation is responsibility and responsibility through appropriation of space. I understood that responsibility among the relevant informants was conducted through a forward looking sense, which Fahlquist (2009) argues is based on the individual's capacity, resources and overall personal initiative to take on responsibility, instead of the individual being blamed for their actions, constituting a backward looking responsibility. The relevant research participants thus displayed forward responsibility by taking control and taking charge of making a difference.

5.1.6) Appropriation of space

Among the participants that manifested space appropriation as their influencing factor towards engagement in green projects, this was due to their "feeling of possessing and managing a space, (...) for its everyday use or as a means of identification" (Benages-Albert, M et al 2015: 2). Through space appropriation, these participants transformed a physical environment into a meaningful place, in which they managed, maintained and cared for and in turn helped increase their sense of responsibility for their surroundings (Rioux, L. et al.: 2017: 50).

One Burgemeesterswijk inhabitant explained that she takes responsibility for her personal garden because she lives in it, walks on it and sees it everyday. A Zeeheldenbuurt resident mentioned that she manages, with her neighbor, a patch of green space next to her house. She felt a sense of responsibility to maintain it due it being in such close proximity to her residency. Moreover, neighbourhood ambassador Christina agrees that responsibility implies ownership and physical appropriation of a space. She believes that if residents don't have that feeling that it's their space, they don't have that sense of ownership, and thus responsibility. Christina feels it's her responsibility to educate the inhabitants about their appropriation to space so that they own and maintain a green space themselves. Fahlquist (2009) conveys this as a positive example of forward-looking responsibility through a governing authority. Leiden municipality representative Christina, uses her resources and power to educate and create opportunities for inhabitants to take on environmental projects.

Another example of space appropriation responsibility is when the space is being threatened or is at risk of transforming. Zeeheldenbuurt was facing future infrastructure changes due to the social housing company plans as well as municipality plans and its inhabitants felt a sense of responsibility to react and fight for their appropriated residential land. Certain research participants expressed getting involved in the Zeeheldenbuurt's Neighbourhood vision and, in turn, bringing about environmental justice by implementing various sustainable plans and green projects. One resident explained that because he lives here, he felt responsible to do something. And because of the social housing demolition plans, he wanted to have a say in the matter. My findings suggest that this resident may have experienced potential displacement due to the impact of these infrastructural plans, highlighting a gentrification process. The inhabitant did not approve of this and responded by being a participant in the neighbourhood vision and thus contributed to environmental justice practices in his neighbourhood.

5.1.7) Covid-19 circumstances

The last influencing factor towards green participation, which was mainly circumstantial, is the coronavirus pandemic. Once the first lockdown restrictions started to ease and outdoor activities were allowed to resume, this added great value to gardens and green activities in Leiden. Inhabitants were making the most of the outdoors as a result of being locked in for so long and had higher interests to engage in local green activities. When interviewing the chairman of the Matilo community gardens, they said there has been an increase of allotment requests and considerable increase of people walking on the allotment parks since corona, "Because everybody wants to be out!"(Matilo park community garden chairman: March 5th 2021) She believes that the corona crisis has been a blessing in disguise for gardening and green programs. One Community garden member for example highlighted that he was influenced to participate specifically because he was bored during Covid times- implying he was bored of being indoors and proceeded to sign up to the Bontekoe park project.

5.2) Reasons behind non-participation

This section discusses the research findings on reasons why inhabitants choose not to participate in green projects. This involves two areas: factors related to the municipality-owned green initiatives and factors related to the individual that are based on their personal

circumstances or intentions. The various reasons for non-engagement were highlighted by the inhabitants themselves, explained by governing authorities or brought to light by my own interpretations, which will be discussed below.

5.2.1) Factors related to the initiatives

- **Management issues**

This first reason was revealed through the Samen aan de slag initiative in which the project displayed minor unresponsiveness and delays, causing certain inhabitants to be discouraged to participate. For instance, one resident from Burgemeesterswijk had contacted Samen aan de slag in the hopes of participating yet several months had passed and they still had not heard back. Moreover, Neighbourhood Ambassador Christina had explained to me that several inhabitants from her neighbourhood had requested a boomspiegel from Samen aan de slag however had to wait 8 months to 1 year for the boomspiegel or the geveltuinje to be implemented. Christina's colleague, Anna, voiced, "it takes almost a year for Samen aan de slag to be set up, which results in people losing interest" (Anna: Neighbourhood Ambassador coordinator: January 22nd 2021). Having revealed the minor negative outcomes of the Samen aan de slag initiative, this has, to a certain extent, influenced certain inhabitants not to get involved in this project, therefore making them non-participants in green.

- **Selective participation processes**

The second reason I found was selective tendencies in the participation process of the community garden Bontekoe Park. Bontekoe Park constitutes harvested food for the food bank, which implies that the members, most often, need to be experienced and fast paced for a quick return of produce. One member of this community garden explained that they prioritize individuals that live in close proximity to the project -that being Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitants. Nevertheless if they are elder citizens with little gardening experience, this might slow down food production and thus their chances to join might be reduced due to their lack of experience or slow working pace. This closely aligns to Turnhout et al's (2010) opinions when they point out that participation processes can be selective and not everyone can get involved. They add that participation can exclude individuals who lack knowledge and specific skills that fail to contribute to the outcomes. This is exemplified in Bontekoe park's participation process and as a result, these inhabitants are unable to get involved or

participate. Moreover, the gardening efforts made on the Bontekoe Park do not result in benefiting the members as the produce is given away to the Food bank. Only those who eat at the Food bank will take advantage of the fresh products. Meanwhile in Het Zoete land, the members benefit directly from their participation as the produce is for their personal consumption. This suggests restrictions of member benefits within the Bontekoe community garden's participation process. However the Bontekoe workers do not see this as an inconvenience as they benefit indirectly when knowing their efforts are to help alleviate hunger among the poor in Leiden. Furthermore, I did not gain data from participants who had experienced restrictive or selective practices from gardening activities. These findings are based on my observations and interpretations.

6.1.3) Waiting list

Moving on to the third reason behind non-participation, which was predominantly displayed in Het Zoete land Community Park, is the excessive length of the waiting list to join the initiative. It can be perceived that the use of waiting lists for garden projects demonstrates that more people in Leiden want to participate and be involved in urban gardening. However this also reveals restrictive tendencies in the participation processes. The treasurer of Het Zoete land highlighted in our interview that there is currently a waiting list of 170 individuals wanting to become a harvest participant. He added that the wait would be around 10 years for these residents to become members of the green project. Similarly to Samen aan de slag's implementation delays, the several years waiting to participate can affect the individual to lose interest and thus not participate. Throughout my research, I did not gain data from any inhabitants who had given up on the wait to become a member at Het Zoete land. Nevertheless, from my point of view, the waiting list does display restrictions within the participation processes and thus can restrict individuals to participate straight away.

○ Information issues

The last weakness from the initiative's end that results in non-participation among inhabitants is in regards to the information the projects provide. Inhabitants from both Burgemeesterwijk and Zeeheldenbuurt expressed not being familiar with any of Leiden's green projects, as the information was not made easily accessible to them. Moreover, one Zeeheldenbuurt resident explained she does not participate in green initiatives due to the project's information being in a language she cannot understand. Therefore, inaccessible

information and language barriers can both be influencing factors towards public non-involvement in green projects.

5.2.2) Individual factors

○ Involvement in other projects

The first reason behind non-participation, which proved to be the most popular among the non-participants I managed to interview, is their involvement in other sustainability or environment-related projects. A few examples of this included an elderly Dutch couple from Burgemeesterswijk that participated in a 'reducing waste project' over 20 years ago. This was a private organization's project but it was in collaboration with the municipality. This couple along with a younger couple and a middle aged Burgemeesterswijk resident also contributes and participates in their own way, through personal actions, by eating less meat, traveling less, recycling and trying to drive less. Moving on, two young male Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitants and one other middle aged Burgemeesterswijk inhabitant were involved in renewable energy plans as they owned solar panels, insulated their homes or used reduced heating gadgets. Moreover, an elder lady resident was the guide for the 'gezond nature wandelen' initiative, consisting of taking a group of people and guiding them on a walk through the forest or nature parks once a week. Lastly, two inhabitants were involved in a sustainability-oriented initiative by taking part in the Rodenburger hockey pitch referendum. This entailed a debate between building a new hockey field and keeping the park as it is. These two participants both voted for the park to remain. All of these examples demonstrated non-participation towards urban green initiatives due to the participation towards other sustainable-related projects. I find this to be a positive reason behind non-participation as it demonstrates Leiden inhabitants' concern, commitment and contribution towards general sustainability in their city, in their neighbourhoods and in their livelihoods.

○ Lack of resources

The second influencing factor that I found to be based on infrastructural circumstances is the lack of resources to access green initiatives. One Burgemeesterswijk inhabitant expressed that they did not participate in any green projects, mainly because they lived in an apartment building and did not have a garden. The individual subsequently mentioned they would most definitely participate in greenery if they had a personal garden. Therefore the

lack of resources indicates a shortage of possibilities to participate in green initiatives, which, as previously mentioned, often depends on the socio-economic background of the individual. This is well demonstrated in the neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt where responses in regards to what type of initiatives the inhabitants were involved in included less personal green projects (such as maintaining a private garden) in comparison to Burgemeesterswijk. Based on my observations, the urban infrastructure of Zeeheldenbuurt is much more paved than Burgemeesterswijk, leaving little space for front/private gardens. The neighborhood's lack of green spaces thus entails lack of resources for inhabitants to participate in a personal green project.

- **Lack of education and awareness**

Another reason behind the individual's non-participation, which was most commonly revealed by neighbourhood ambassadors and other governing figures, is lack of awareness and education towards sustainability and the environment. By rejecting the existence of climate change or refusing the importance of sustainable-related topics for example, this creates a belief in which there is no necessity or urgency to contribute and participate in greenery.

Neighbourhood Ambassador coordinator Anna, had experienced trouble accessing less educated inhabitants from their neighbourhood and to get them involved in green projects. She argues that these residents' reluctance to participate seemed to be due to their fear of the unknown. As Anna and her colleague were planning the implementation of the bee hotels, inhabitants with less of an educational background would automatically voice out the negative outcomes such as it's too dangerous and the bees will sting us, while having little knowledge on the matter. As a response to this, Anna and her colleague Christina have to regularly reassure and explain to these people in particular the positive aspects of the green project. Nevertheless this is time and energy consuming and can become frustrating to have to explain so much so often. Moreover, Eva, coordinator of the Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhood vision, explained, while they had successfully implemented geveltuintjes around several parts of the neighbourhood and various inhabitants getting involved, the maintenance was the issue. The geveltuintjes were badly maintained and managed, as inhabitants did not seem to be aware about having to care for the plants in order for it to

look good. Eva expressed that it was difficult to make people understand that they needed to maintain the plants. As Muñoz-Erickson et al (2017) mention, knowledge is based on an idea or a belief one takes to be true, in which that knowledge is then used in everyday social, cultural and political practices. Once that knowledge is embedded, there is little possibility to alter it, as clearly exemplified through Anna and Eva's difficulties in having to regularly explain sustainability benefits among inhabitants who are unaware or lack this type of education. This then suggests that having little to no education or knowledge on green related projects results in non-participation or poor management participation towards these green initiatives. Lack of education and awareness as an influencing factor was not revealed among any of the research participants. However, this was highlighted by municipality representatives, to be the biggest influential factor behind non-participation.

- **Lack of motivation**

Moving on to the third reason behind non-participation that I found among few participants was lack of engagement and motivation. I believe engagement can often be due to the individual's personal situation, which can render the individual unmotivated to participate. One Zeeheldenbuurt resident explained for example that several workers from her neighbourhood have blue-collar jobs and "if you're working in construction 12hours a day, most of them don't feel like taking care of a garden [after work]" (Middle aged female Dutch resident: February 17th 2021). This interestingly connects to the concept of responsibility and Fahlquist's (2009) ideas, as he believes that responsibility depends on the context of the individual such as their socio-economic, cultural and political background. Lack of motivation due to personal background circumstances should thus be taken into account when questioning why inhabitants do not participate in green initiatives. However, this factor was not mentioned among any of my research participants and is based on my reasoning behind non-participation.

Other inhabitants did express lack of motivation towards participation yet due to it being a trait of their personality. I asked one Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitant why he did not participate in green and he blatantly pointed out: "mostly because I'm just lazy, if someone fixes it for me, it's better" (Young male, mortgage advisor: February 22nd 2021). Several researchers, including Clark and Schroth (2010) suggest that personality factors are related to motivation.

While Clark and Schroth (2010) explore the relationship between students' personality characteristics and the motivation behind pursuing their university degrees, they found "intrinsically motivated students tended to be extroverted, agreeable and open to new experiences. Those who were extrinsically motivated tended to be extroverted, agreeable, conscientious and neurotic and those who lacked motivation tended to be disagreeable, careless" and overall indifferent to their studies (Clark and Schroth: 2019: 19). Similarly, Dorothea Ariani (2017) who examined the "relationship between self-efficacy personality (...) and academic engagement", uncovered that students who lack motivation are "individuals that have low self-efficacy personality" (Ariani, D.: 2017: 69, 80). These studies confirm that motivation as well as amotivation can be categorized as a personality trait. Furthermore, this research participant's rejection of involvement can be interpreted as intentional self-exclusion which aligns with Mascareño and Carvajal's (2015) self-exclusion definition: "a situation in which individuals autonomously chose to (...) not [participate] in a particular social output" (Mascareño, A., & Carvajal, F: 2015: 134). This participant thus demonstrates that his lack of motivation towards green projects is based on his personality traits.

Moreover, Eva, who expressed that the implemented *geveltuintjes* were badly maintained due to the participant's lack of education, also believes that this failed management was because of the inhabitants' lack of engagement and motivation. Smidl, et al. (2017), who investigated the benefits of therapeutic gardening in a mental health center, similarly found that "the level of participation fell during the garden maintenance phase, and the corresponding target was not met. Only 29% of the participants volunteered for the weeding and watering tasks" (2017: 381). Green projects demand regular upkeep and management and its failure to maintain it is either based on people's personality trait of being unmotivated or based on the individual's personal circumstances that unable them to participate. The success of an implemented project tailored for the people depends on the response and initiative of the public. The most important challenge in implementing sustainability policies and projects is the acceptance among those that are affected by these policies and projects (Mancebo: 2019). Lack of motivation is therefore a negative response from the public, which in this case, is due to the research participant's intentional self-exclusion position, which is based on their personality trait.

- **Time constraints**

The last individual factor behind non-participation is time constraints, which is also based on the individual's circumstances. Only one research participant expressed she does not participate in green projects, as she does not have enough time to do. What I had observed was that she was a mother of three young children and explained she is a full-time worker at a crèche. Her occupation as well as her motherly responsibilities are personal circumstances that restrict her to find the time to participate in a green initiative.

In terms of the factors related to the initiative, including the management and information issues, were highlighted among inhabitants from both Burgemeesterwijk and Zeeheldenbuurt and can be considered as public complaints towards the municipality initiatives. Meanwhile the neighbourhood ambassadors and coordinators voiced that lack of education and awareness were influencing reasons behind the public's non-participation. Other factors related to the individual such as lack of resources and time constraints were based on personal circumstances, while being involved in other sustainability projects was based on personal intentions to not participate in green activities. Therefore, there seems to be a minor pattern in which the residents themselves point out the flaws in the municipality projects while the municipality representatives point out the flaws of the residents, which in both cases result in non-participation towards green activities. Moreover, one neighbourhood ambassador criticized that lack of motivation determined the residents' non-engagement in green activities and a Leiden inhabitant agreed on this. This factor in particular indicates an alignment between the resident's and the neighbourhood ambassador's reason behind non-participation.

5.3) The municipality

As a majority of the green projects I analysed throughout my research consisted of municipality owned and implemented initiatives, it is worth understanding the municipality's true intentions. This section will reveal the municipality's policies and practices in urban greening and consider if these are truly scalable and achievable. This part will also highlight the variety of criticism the municipality faces in regards to urban greening plans

5.3.1) The municipality's challenges and objectives

Leiden is a compact city as it is considered one of the most densely populated areas in the

Randstad. The pressure on public space is increasing as the number of residents grows. The number of inhabitants is expected to increase from 125,000 to 137,000 in 2029, which contributes to Leiden's large building requirement, resulting in further densification of the city (Visie Stadstuinieren Leiden: September 2020: 5). According to *Leiden biodivers en klimaatbestendig: Samen maken we Leiden groener* (uitvoeringsprogramma 2020-2032), Leiden's challenge is finding the right balance between the use of the area and the quality of the living environment for the people and nature. As Leiden continues to grow its densely built-up city, this also increases pressure on green spaces. This often causes larger gardening initiatives trouble in finding spaces that allow definitive or long-term contracts. The municipality of Leiden is well aware that space in the city is limited and recognizes the changing needs of city dwellers including their need for being outdoors, contact with nature and working in nature such as growing food themselves. Leiden has no room for large new locations for urban gardening. However, there is room for micro-scale green initiatives and for neighbourhood gardens. Sarah, coordinator of stadstuinieren (urban gardens) in Leiden, explains that urban gardens don't take away land that would have been used for building new houses. These garden initiatives use land that is currently a public green area such as grass fields. She adds that these small-scale spaces are more than enough as the purpose of 'standstuinieren' consists of sharing and creating a sense of togetherness and not to become self-sufficient from the garden. The municipality thus acknowledges large networks of volunteers, enterprises and foundations that fully contribute to greening the city on a small-scale. What the municipality hopes to achieve is to support all green initiatives and make them a top priority.

Furthermore, relating back to the municipality's 2020-2023 executive program, '*Samen maken we Leiden groener*', it underlines the city council's future plans and goals related to developing urban greening and increasing biodiversity and climate resilience in the city. Among a few of these prospects, the first includes improving the quality of existing green spaces. By adapting the layout or management of the existing green spaces in the city, the municipality hopes to optimize the various functions of the green space and make it suitable for the wishes of the residents while also contributing to biodiversity and climate resilience. The second is creating extra green spaces such as public trees or public gardens in the city by implementing them in small-scale and location specific areas. The third is encouraging

residents, companies and corporations to do green. As private parties own 50% of Leiden's surface area, it is proof that greening the city is a joint task. Lastly is nature and sustainability education. The city council hopes to share and increase knowledge about sustainability for Leiden inhabitants and grow their awareness and thus influence on greening the environment. (This would consist of, for example supporting through subsidies and utilizing neighbourhood ambassadors for them to translate the municipality goals to the people). In terms of finance for these goals, the municipality will make efforts to obtain subsidies from the national government or from European Union in order to achieve these ideas. Similarly in the Leiden Stadstuinieren document (2020), it reveals the municipality's plans it hopes to achieve as a way to support and promote Leiden green initiatives. This involves, as previously mentioned, making more public space available for urban gardening and finding other new possible locations for neighbourhood gardens. Also, talking to organizations currently involved in urban gardening, such as the Leiden School gardens Association, The harvest foundation and Groendichterbij71, etc. and discuss finding new approaches to urban gardening.

Overall the municipality of Leiden recognizes the positive effects of urban gardening for Leiden and for its residents. The city council mentions that they are currently facilitating and promoting green projects as much as possible, which could result in higher levels of public participation. Nevertheless municipality representatives involving neighbourhood ambassadors as well as some other municipality workers think otherwise, and have revealed certain weaknesses and flaws from the city council when organizing urban gardening.

5.3.2) The municipality's weaknesses in urban gardening management

Neighbourhood ambassador (NA) Anna explains that there are currently several residents enthusiastic to start or participate in a green project however they argue that the communication and arrangement to do it with the municipality is complicated. Municipality worker Henry agrees that the communication is a little **shattered**. It's difficult for residents to find specific information for a specific topic as it's all scattered around. This also applies for city garden initiators who expressed having trouble finding their way for information and complain there is no single point of contact. Anna highlights that the city council should find ways to make the application process easier for inhabitants or for project initiators to get involved in municipality owned green projects. Moreover, Anna and her colleague were

Commented [SM3]: scattered

planning on implementing a green initiative in their neighbourhood, which the municipality had successfully approved. However later on, the municipality had to change or take away several aspects of the project. Anna believes this is due to the amount of people involved in the municipality. The communication between the different departments can, in her opinion, cause delays or complicate the green implementation processes. This was confirmed during my call with Jolanda as she explained around 40 people work in the municipality's 'sustainability branch' as it included project managers, communication consultants, advisors, policy makers, engineers, architects, designers, finance analysts, management, maintenance, and so on. This sources my concern on the imbalance between the planning and execution for municipality-owned and implemented green initiatives. The planning team constituting 40 different workers seems to outweigh the execution team of, as I understand it, only 1 maintenance gardener from the Samen aan de slag initiative. Relatedly, neighbourhood coordinator Eva expressed frustrations on the amount of workers at the municipality. The city council offered support to the planning of the neighbourhood vision by providing project managers. Yet after a certain amount of time, the project manager would leave and a new one had to come in, which caused delays in the project and much discontinuity in the development process. Eva had to deal with 17 different municipality project managers for the neighbourhood vision. She would repeatedly have to explain everything again for each new project manager, which caused her irritation towards the municipality's sustainability-project organization.

Moreover, the municipality might be financially lacking in helping more towards educating and offering courses to the people about green. Stadstuinieren coordinator Sarah, explains that, aside from the samen aan de slag initiative, there are few other activities the municipality is offering to encourage people to do green activities, which is often due to a lack of budgeting. The municipality tends to prioritize projects that work well or that have been functioning for a while, such as road construction, parking, infrastructure development and healthcare. Therefore this leaves little budget for implementing small-scale green projects or creating education courses on greenery. These disadvantages from the local government, interestingly pointed out from municipality representatives themselves, thus demonstrate potential influence towards non-participation in green projects among Leiden inhabitants due to the city council's lack of information, disorganization and little funding

opportunities. Municipality workers highlighted these flaws, rather than it being the inhabitants, because I believe these civil servants have an insider experience of what it's like working with or working in the municipality and thus are more exposed to the variety of challenges the local government faces.

5.3.3) Response to these issues and concerns

The municipality is hearing the NAs concerns and have found solutions to a few of these issues. For the problem of scattered information, the municipality is updating the ga.goed.nl website to make it more clear as structured. Also, the city council is organizing events that will be online and offline (later on) to increase networking and easier communication between neighbourhood ambassadors and inhabitants. Furthermore, the municipality is targeting/ tracking down the 'moments of changes' in residents' lives. This implies when inhabitants are renovating their house, moving out or moving in, the municipality hopes to provide an information starter pack about housing sustainability so the residents can integrate sustainable features while they renovate or move in. Moreover, the municipality is strategically communicating with the neighbourhood community associations. These groups consist of individuals for each neighbourhood that oversee the various neighbourhood-related topics such as diversity, accessibility as well as sustainability. They are an important contact for the municipality as it enables the local government to gain information about each neighborhood's issues and act accordingly to these problems. Nevertheless, the municipality and its workers inevitably face barriers when implementing new green initiatives, as they have to consider all the potential challenges, consequences and impacts of these green projects. This often involves them having to respect specific rules and regulations, which can delay or even prevent the green project from going ahead.

5.4) Inter-relations between the inhabitants and the municipality

This section considers the opinions inhabitants have towards the municipality to determine if their beliefs towards the local government influence their participation decisions. It also includes the municipality representatives' thoughts towards the public to determine how the people are responding to the municipality's contributions and empowerment processes.

5.4.1) Inhabitant thoughts about the municipality

Among all research participants, I gained a variety of mixed opinions ranging from satisfaction to disappointment. Several were indifferent about the municipality yet for others it depended on the specific topic of their contribution. In the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk, opinions were evenly divided between positive and negative thoughts. Those who had expressed contentment towards the city council was due to the *Samen aan de slag* and the *Singelpark* initiatives, the municipality's clear communication and management and its subsidy opportunities. One inhabitant thought the *Samen aan de slag* was an enjoyable initiative and because it offered free support, it helped to get more of her neighbors on board with the *boomspiegel* project. She added that once she got involved in the *boomspiegel* project, she was more aware of the other municipality's initiatives and thus increased her enthusiasm to get involved. A middle-aged male along with an elder male resident raised their appreciation towards the *Singelpark* project and explained the municipality made Leiden more beautiful as they reduced the bricks and implemented pretty flowers. Another middle-aged man thought that the municipality was very active in terms of subsidies for energy saving gadgets and solar panel installments. A young female Burgemeesterswijk inhabitant expressed pride towards the local government's management and added "they are very connected to us, there are a lot of council meetings and the people have a say in them." (Female student from P&Bwijk: February 2nd 2021). Lastly, one other male Burgemeesterswijk resident thought "it's good that [the municipality] have all sorts of initiatives (from what he reads in the local newspaper) so it's good that they stimulate it and try to get people involved in them" (P&Bwijk resident, hospital director: February 17th 2021).

In the neighbourhood of *Zeeheldenbuurt*, opinions were also evenly divided nevertheless positive attitudes were more pronounced among the young and educated population. Similarly to the Burgemeesterswijk opinions, certain *Zeeheldenbuurt* residents expressed satisfaction with the municipality's renewable energy plans, the *Singelpark* initiative and its overall contribution to green. One young male's contentment involved how the municipality is making the houses more sustainable by incentivizing to implement LED lights and offering 70euro energy-saving vouchers. Another young male enthusiastically mentioned that Leiden municipality offers solar panel projects, funded the *Zeeheldenbuurt* park (through the

neighbourhood vision) and improved the Singelpark, compared to other cities such as Utrecht, whom he expressed didn't have much green going on. Two other young residents explained their appreciation for the Singelpark initiative as it brings a lot of tourism and makes the city greener.

In terms of the negative opinions of the municipality from the Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhood, this resonated with issues of execution, communication, organization and destruction. The demographic that expressed negative emotions was mixed yet constituted more elder and traditional individuals. One middle-aged man thought that the local government had a good agenda, ideas and plans to achieve but they are not necessarily getting it done. A middle-aged female resident showed disappointment in the municipality and said "they don't do enough and all they do is destroy" as she refers to a waterfront construction for boats, resulting in a decrease of wildlife and biodiversity (Middle-aged female resident: February 17th 2021). Another elder lady resident adds that while one department of the city council offers funding and organizes an initiative, "another department will come in and destroy it" which demonstrates scattered communication and bad organization (Elder lady resident: February 22nd 2021). Lastly, one young female as well as another elder female resident complained about the municipality as they both experienced having certain requests towards the city council, related to maintaining public green spaces, ignored.

Negative opinions towards the municipality were less pronounced in the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk. Several inhabitants displayed approval of the city council as they recognize they are trying however they believe this is not enough and the execution is still too minimal, which converts their opinions into negative ones. One female resident expresses that "the motivation is there, the execution is less" (Middle-aged mother, P&Bwijk inhabitant: February 10th 2021). Another female resident adds that the municipality is trying but it is still too slow, Leiden is still too stony with lots of infrastructure. A middle-aged male inhabitant also agrees that the city council are doing their best yet he believes it's very complicated due to politics in general. He thinks, "there is always a coalition- always give and take, it's 1 step forward but 2 steps back, that's how politics works", implying that the municipality's organization and inner-dynamics is never quick nor easily. (Sales manager,

P&Bwijk resident: February 11th 2021) Other inhabitants, who similarly did not express unhappiness towards the municipality, did complain that the city council should make bigger and more impactful decision towards sustainability. One burgemeesterwijk inhabitant in particular argued, “the municipality should be bolder! They should take bigger decisions and take over big infrastructure projects that leads to bigger impact instead of implementing a few gardens here and there” (Middle-aged female resident: February 11th 2021). Another reason behind an inhabitant’s negative perception towards the city council is her general distrust in the government. This elder resident conveys that she doesn’t trust the municipality because they prioritize power to the parties and think only about the short-term impact -they are overall untrustworthy. Schuck et al. (2008) add to this as they investigated the role of EU skepticism to understand voting behavior in EU referendums. They found that general skepticism, in this case, caused by having little faith in the politicians that support the referendum proposal, having strong national pride or fear of globalization, “is the factor through which other political attitudes and predispositions exert an influence on voting intentions in EU referendums” (Schuck R. A. et al.: 2008: 201).

Moreover, between both Zeeheldenbuurt and Burgemeesterswijk inhabitants, some were indifferent to the municipality or could not say anything because they didn’t not know enough about the municipality’s contribution to make out an opinion. Therefore, throughout these negative perspectives towards the municipality due to problems of communication, organization, execution, destruction, unresponsiveness and distrust, this can result in these inhabitants having little incentive to participate in municipality led-initiatives. Nevertheless among the residents who expressed positive opinions about the city council, they seemed to be more aware about the municipality’s contributions as they mention Samen aan de slag, Singelpark and the energy saving vouchers. Relating back to the lack of education, this could imply that differing degrees of information and awareness can change one’s perception towards the subject and in turn can influence their decision to participate. One inhabitant from Burgemeesterswijk clearly demonstrates this as she explained once she participated in a municipality-owned project, she gained further insight of other municipality projects and thus increased her enthusiasm to get involved.

5.4.2) Municipality thoughts about the inhabitants

Among the few municipality workers I spoke with, emotions and thoughts towards Leiden inhabitants were quite similar in thinking that the public should be doing more to green the city. Sarah believes that there is much enthusiasm and promotion within the municipality for green and sustainable-oriented projects nevertheless she believes the municipality “can’t organize everything for the inhabitants – they cannot decide how and when each small project should be managed” (Arja Nobel: Stadstuinieren document coordinator). The initiative has to come from the people who live in Leiden and want a greener city. Henry, communication consultant from the municipality, adds to this in saying “we all are responsible” for greening the city (Henry: municipal communication consultant: February 3rd 2021). He argues that the municipality can provide a platform, can empower, motivate and facilitate, however the people need to take this on themselves to implement change. It is the public that should take that empowerment and action it. “At a certain point, the people also need to do something” (idem).

Furthermore, Henry points out the reason why it is important for the municipality that the people get involved is “because the decisions we make have a direct impact and effect on the inhabitants, [it is] best to ask them (the public) or get them to have a say in it and try to make the decisions together” (Henry: February 3rd 2021). Quite often the inhabitants complain once the regulations are set up and say that the policies don’t reflect the opinions of the population. However, from the local government’s point of view, the policies have to apply to the whole city and not just one specific neighbourhood. “We have to make choices on behalf of everyone and everything” (idem). This strongly relates to Shore’s arguments, as she conveys in *Anthropology and Public Policy* (2012) that many policies share similarities with universalistic morality. “Policy typically represents itself as a rational and collectivist endeavor: i.e. pragmatic, efficient and geared towards serving the needs of the community, rather than the interests of particular individuals” (Shore: 2012: 13). This reveals that the universalistic approach of policy cannot be tailored for each individual, thus cannot please all and can have negative effects for certain individuals. In this case, policies that are implemented for whole cities imply there will always be disagreements and complaints yet also satisfaction and praise.

6. Conclusion

A large number of people from the neighbourhood of Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt as well as members of community gardens displayed great interest in gardening projects, expressing enjoyment and happy experiences when conducting green activities and revealed a dynamic participation status in urban greening. Reasons behind participation depended on each individual and can be broadly segmented by: personal background, personal preference, gain in individual or group benefit and responsibility through appropriation of space.

Conversely, as discovered, there was a significant minority of non-participants. The influencing factors towards non-participation also depended on each individual, based on their intentions or circumstances. With respect to the latter, time constraints, lack of resources and inadequate access to infrastructure were the principal factors. Intentional reasons meanwhile, were often related to already being involved in other sustainable-oriented projects or being unmotivated to do green activities. Other influencing factors towards non-participation were the non-participants' perceived weaknesses in the municipality's green initiatives such as poor management and inaccessible information. From the municipality's perspective however, its representatives conveyed that the prime reasons behind non-participation was due to a lack of knowledge and awareness. Opposing opinions were found between the municipality and the inhabitants as each party expected more of their counterparty, arguing that they hoped to see higher initiative or contribution from the other side. Such negative perception was mutual and tended to accentuate the divide between government and the public as neither seemed to consider changes within themselves and preferred to rely on behavioural changes in the other party.

In terms of the participation contrasts between the Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhoods, a majority of the influencing reasons were equally distributed between the two, nonetheless there proved to be a few exceptions. Firstly, Burgemeesterswijk was more involved in municipality-owned projects as its residents were more aware about the municipality's initiatives than the Zeeheldenbuurt inhabitants. Zeeheldenbuurt had already organized, through the neighbourhood vision, a variety of green communal projects before

the creation of the municipality's most popular initiative 'samen aan de slag'. Zeeheldenbuurt had thus less reason to be involved in this municipality initiative. Secondly, the socio-economic difference between the two neighbourhoods created differing degrees of accessibility towards gardening participation based on resource or property possession. Burgemeesterswijk is more spacious and green or the residencies have a private garden, thus allowing its inhabitants more resources to garden and more accessibility to participate in gardening. Meanwhile in the less rich neighbourhood of Zeeheldenbuurt, resources were minimal, which decreased access for its residents to participate.

As regards the population contrast between the two neighbourhoods, I found little difference, as a majority of my research participants from both Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt were educated and financially stable. However I find this an imperfect sample of the Zeeheldenbuurt population demographic as I mostly researched outskirts neighbourhood residents much more than inner residents. I believe it is my personal social class background that affected the demographic accuracy of the research locations. While being in Burgemeesterswijk, I felt more comfortable and found myself at ease communicating with its inhabitants as the surroundings and the type of people was what I've socially been accustomed to. It was easier for me to conduct research in this area and as a result, I portrayed a better representation of the Burgemeesterswijk demographic. In contrast, I found Zeeheldenbuurt center to be an unsettling environment and a little challenging to approach its residents. I spent more time on the outskirts, in which resides a young and educated type of population and thus contributing, towards an uneven representation of Zeeheldenbuurt as I 'under'- sampled the working class population residing in the inner-neighbourhood. Time constraints, as well as having more than one research location, also contributed to this inaccurate sampling as I had limited opportunity to research all types of residents from both neighbourhoods. I would recommend prioritizing only one research location to extract a better sampling of the area or starting the research internship within the 'underprivileged' areas of the research location in order to get accustomed to the environment and to its residents.

Moving on to questioning the contextual validity of my developed findings, I found the biggest variable of my research is its climate and weather conditions. Analyzing participation

projects related to gardening and harvesting is best conducted during spring and summer months as this would have exponentially increased witnessing inhabitants working on green projects, compared to the winter months when there is typically less activity. If I had conducted research throughout the blossoming seasons, I believe I would have identified more green participants, found more reasons towards participation and most importantly seen the results of the public's efforts in greening the city. I also find that fieldwork in the spring would have created a stronger bias towards green participants, as I would have been more inclined to approach them and less opportunity to interact with the non-participants. I find that research in a winter climate context enabled me to interview passersby at random, which resulted in identifying a significant sample of non-green participants. Moreover, had I managed to participate in a green initiative myself, which perhaps could have been possible in the spring or summer time for a gardening project as the labour is more in demand, I would have been able to reveal my personal reasons behind participation, and through ongoing interactions with other active participants would have revealed, more transparently, their motivations and confirm more strongly my findings. After all, it is what any fieldwork anthropologist would have done, to be within and among the research participants to gain the furthest of detailed insights and experiences.

Overall, I believe that the city of Leiden is on course to becoming truly sustainable as it takes on various urban green projects implemented by its municipalities either directly or through participatory initiatives from city dwellers. Nevertheless, as this thesis developed and investigated the debate of public participation in line with urban greening, I found several issues that can be improved to enable better participation towards green projects:

- **Communication is key**

This first is ensuring a better relationship between the local government and the public through clearer communication. Manuel Castells (2002) argues the success of urban greening requires dependence on human agency and the individual's initiative. However Fahlquist (2009) conveys that institutions should be assigned more responsibility as they hold more power and resources to implement plans and projects successfully. I consider both these scholars correct yet results are unlikely to be optimal if responsibility is ascribed to one another in a backward looking sense. The public and the municipality should establish

clear communication in order to be more aware of what responsibility each party should bear. For example, as the neighbourhood ambassadors proved to be a successful method for public participation, the municipality should correctly rely and ascribe better responsibility to them in order to continue this positive momentum. By this, I suggest making the neighbourhood ambassador position a full time job in order to engage them in bridging a better relationship between government and inhabitants while also getting more residents involved in sustainable-oriented initiatives.

- **Openness and empowerment**

If the municipality could explain in detail, their thought processes and reasoning for choosing certain policies or conducting types of practices, this would ensure a better symbiotic relationship with the inhabitants. Asking directly for the inhabitant's support in pursuing a greener and more sustainable city is a means for the residents to feel empowerment in the green projects. As the local government entrusts to the public, the task of achieving urban sustainability, it increases opportunity for the inhabitants to feel it is they who are taking responsibility for the future outcome of their city and their neighbourhoods. Through this greater empowerment, this can create better public participation results in urban greening.

To conclude, striving to achieve success in sustainability is the greatest challenge of our current time. As documented by numerous scientists and scholars, our world's environment is not getting any healthier, and if we don't act promptly, the damage to our environment may be irrecoverable. Remedial action is thus urgently needed. Fortunately, the Leiden municipality's efforts and contributions in greening in the city is heading in the right direction and plays its role in saving the planet. The public is also on a sustainability course as a majority of Leiden inhabitants engage in the municipality's green initiatives and initiate their personalized green projects. It is to be hoped we maintain this positive momentum in reaching successful urban sustainability through optimism and confidence and remain aware about the importance of participating in micro green projects, as our small-scale efforts can make a large impact.

7. Policy brief

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LEIDEN'S GREEN INITIATIVES: INFLUENCING FACTORS

Anthropology Masters Thesis
Monica Le Jeune

Key Issues:

- Identifying those who are and those who are not participating in green initiatives within Leiden
- Highlighting the influential factors behind non-participation
- Understanding whether non-participation is due to the individual's intentions or their circumstances

Background:

During my three month research internship, I analysed several micro-scale initiatives implemented by the Leiden municipality and by its inhabitants, which revolved around gardening, greening and harvesting. I carried out this research in order to better understand the influencing factors behind the public's participation in such projects and why levels of engagement varied between individuals and different neighbourhoods. The research was conducted in three community gardens and in two Leiden neighbourhoods, with contrasting socioeconomic status: Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt.

This policy brief focuses on the factors that are influential in the individuals' non-participation, rather than those which encourage participation, aiming to provide various solutions and strategies for municipality policymakers to increase public engagement in green initiatives.

1. Participant demographics for both Burgemeesterswijk and Zeeheldenbuurt:

20 Non-participants				43 Participants		
Nationality:	16 Dutch	3 western migrants	1 non-western migrants	38 Dutch	4 western migrants	1 non-western migrants
Gender:	11 Males	9 Females		17 Male	26 Female	
Age:	9 (10-30)	4 (30-60)	7 (60+)	8 (10-30)	26 (30-60)	9 (60+)
Socio-econ background:	Majority of both neighbourhood non-participants were middle-class and had varying levels of income. ¹			Majority of both neighbourhood participants were middle-class. Yet Burgemeesterswijk also had a number of upper middle class participants.		

¹. Research in Zeeheldenbuurt was predominantly conducted on the outskirts of the neighbourhood in which younger and richer inhabitants reside, rendering the sample of the Zeeheldenbuurt population slightly uneven by not representing the working class.

2. Reasons behind non-participation:

- Inhabitants **being involved in other sustainable-oriented projects**, such as fitting solar panels, insulating residencies, recycling waste: This reason was the most common and reveals a positive reason behind non-participation, as it demonstrates Leiden inhabitants' overall concern, commitment and contribution towards sustainability in their city and in their neighbourhoods.
- **Communication issues** and **difficulties accessing information on municipality-owned green projects**: While municipality workers argued that the inhabitant's lack of awareness and education towards sustainability contributed to their non-participation, inhabitants expressed concerns that information was not made easily accessible to them. For example, one greek resident explained that the information was in a language they could not understand.
- **Infrastructural limitations**: Certain residents did not own a personal garden and were not able to participate in green initiatives. In addition, Zeeheldenbuurt is a heavily paved neighbourhood, leaving little available space for garden terrain and thus minimal resources for its residents to garden in public spaces.
- **Inhabitants' time constraints**: Other work and personal responsibilities was a circumstantial reasons that restricted the individual's time and ability to participate in a green initiatives.

Furthermore, I personally observed when analysing the community gardens excessively long waiting lists of up to 10 years and selective practices in avoiding inhabitants who have little gardening experiences and will not be able to quickly contribute to an outcome. This discourages inhabitants from engaging in these projects, if they feel that they do not have enough prior experience or understanding of gardening.

3. Strengths and weaknesses concerning the role of the municipality:

- **Strength**: Neighbourhood Ambassadors proved to be successful in increasing public participation. Having a central point of contact can help inhabitants locate information related to sustainability or green energy, encouraging residents to get involved in greening, whilst bridging a better relationship between governmental departments and inhabitants.
- **Weakness**: Lack of communication from the municipality in general can result in confusion and distrust from the public, as they are not fully aware about the municipality's strategies or future projects. Furthermore, the communication between the different municipality departments can cause delays or complicate sustainability project implementation processes. This also relates to management issues within the municipality due to the high number of staff, responsibilities can be difficult to distribute and allocate. In addition, when regularly outsourcing to short-term professional project managers, this can cause a discontinuity within green development projects.

Conclusion: My research findings demonstrated that the participant population were, in the majority, Dutch middle-aged females. Meanwhile, the non-participant demographic were mainly Dutch males under the age of 30. My findings illustrate that an individual's socio-economic background and their income did not determine the degree of participation among participants or non-participation. Rather, I found that reasons behind participation as well as non-participation depended on each individual's intentions or their personal circumstances.

Influencing factors towards participation in green activities can be broadly segmented by: Personal background, i.e. how the individual was brought up and educated; personal preference; gain in individual benefits, such as mental health and food quality or gain in group benefits including social cohesion and spreading awareness; and responsibility through ownership and appropriation of space.

Influencing factors towards non-participation can be categorised by: non-participants' perceived weaknesses in the municipality's green initiative and their personal circumstances.



Recommendations:

- Integrate the google translate feature in all of the green project's web pages or write a short section in English to avoid language barriers. For better information accessibility, try out different communication platforms including leaflets, adverts, press releases and social media. Look into which one proves to be most successful and resort to that method.
- A solution for more garden resources, create available spaces in certain areas of the Zeeheldenbuurt neighbourhood and highlight that these spaces are for communal greening purposes.
- Offer short educational courses or tutorial videos so that all inhabitants have basic gardening knowledge before starting to participate. To reduce the waiting list, adjust the community garden size to accommodate more gardeners, set up a 'buddy system' of a garden volunteer and a waiting list member to take turns for gardening between the two and create 'temporary gardens' within spaces that has an alternative purpose such as cemeteries or public parks to give more opportunity for people to cultivate and garden.
- Change the neighbourhood ambassador position to a full time job in order to continue this positive participation method and to avoid overworking the NA's who often have other work commitments.
- For clearer communication, ensure more openness from the municipality to the public. Reveal the local government's reasoning for choosing certain policies or conducting types of practices and ask directly the inhabitants for their help in pursuing a greener and more sustainable city.
- If the reader of this policy brief is aware about the importance of green participation, share this knowledge to your friends and family and urgently highlight that the successful outcome of our future environment depends on your contribution. Spread awareness that small scale efforts can make a large impact!

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