

# The Wijkagenda project: A case study on the legitimacy of interactive decision-making



**Master thesis Governance of  
Migration & Diversity**

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## Chapter I Introduction

The term “participation society”, which refers to a society in which citizens should assume more responsibility for their own well-being and that of society in general, has been very relevant for the increasingly powerful role of citizens in the public domain since its introduction in the King’s speech in 2013 (Koster, 2014; Tonkens, 2008). The participation society is characterized by active citizenship that involves a more facilitating role for the government that stimulates citizens’ responsibility and self-sustainability (Edelenbos, 2005). Over the past decades, local authorities have increasingly stimulated active citizenship by facilitating the direct influence of citizens on the liveability in their neighbourhood (Wijdeven, 2012). In the 90’s, citizens began to receive more power to participate in interactive governance and thereby co-produce local policies. This form of citizen participation is also referred to as second generation participation, which has been followed by the third generation of participation in recent years with the emergence of citizen initiatives and citizen-led projects (Lenos et al., 2006).

The newly developed *wijkagenda*’s in The Hague, are an illustrative example of second generation participation and how it relates to third generation participation at the neighbourhood level. The *wijkagenda*’s are neighbourhood action plans developed in a collaborative governance network of civil servants, societal organizations, housing corporations and residents (Den Haag, 2021). The need of an integrative approach to enhance the social and physical liveability of the neighbourhoods in The Hague have resulted in the formulation of *wijkagenda*’s in The Hague (Kastelein, 2020). It serves as a tool to align the wishes and needs of stakeholders and citizens in the neighbourhood and to formulate priority missions and challenges for the following four years (Voortgangsrapportage, 2021; Kastelein, 2020). The interactive policymaking process of the *wijkagenda* could be a solid basis that provides understanding of neighbourhood issues. This relates to the literature of urban governance that emphasizes that the local level which deals with the complexity of diversity calls for an interactive and collaborative governance approach (Scholten, 2018).

The use of interactive governance in a collaborative governance network such as the *wijkagenda* is used to bridge the gap between the citizens, the government and other stakeholders (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016). The collaborative governance process is perceived as a form of deliberative democracy that can supplement the legitimacy of representative democracy by providing more opportunities for citizens involvement, representation, deliberation, and transparency (Edelenbos, 2005).

Although active citizenship and citizen participation in interactive governance has emerged with the development of the participation society at the local and neighbourhood level, evaluations on neighbourhood plans and approaches have revealed that it is difficult to provide citizens with the central role in the decision-making on neighbourhood policies (Wijdeven, 2012). The most important arguments for the limited involvement of citizens, are the available time and timing of new policies, the presence of other comparable projects, the fear to ask too much of citizens and the need to avoid the creation of false expectations (Wijdeven, 2012).

Even if the municipality would put in enough effort to involve citizens in the decision-making process of the collaborative governance network, the equal and fair representation in participation would still be an issue. Research on participation at the neighbourhood level shows that neighbourhood characteristics like deprivation and diversity, and individual characteristics such as age, educational level and ethnicity are important determinants for the level of participation and can explain differences between neighbourhoods (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). Other studies have shown that it is difficult to reach certain groups in neighbourhoods, which results in insufficient representation of minority groups and young people in participation processes (De Graaf, van Hulst, Michels, 2015). What does this mean for the democratic legitimacy of the *wijkagenda*'s in different neighbourhoods in The Hague?

### **1.1 Problem Definition**

The *wijkagenda* can be perceived as a collaborative governance network that makes use of citizen participation through interactive policymaking to bridge the gap between citizens, the municipality and other stakeholders. This can contribute to the legitimacy of decision-making by creating mutual understanding on neighbourhood issues, formulate priority goals and align wishes and interests. However, every neighbourhood deals with different issues and has a varying group of stakeholders and citizens which determine the level of participation. By comparing the neighbourhoods Bouwlust-Vrederust and Houtwijk, who have a different resident composition in terms of people with/without migration background, educational level and age, this exploratory research aims to describe the differences and similarities in public participation and analyse how this contributes (or does not contribute) to the legitimacy of the interactive decision-making in Bouwlust-Vrederust and Houtwijk. This thesis' research will answer the following research question:

*“How does citizen participation in the collaborative governance network of the wijkagenda contribute to the legitimacy of interactive decision-making in the neighbourhoods Bouwlust-Vrederust and Houtwijk?”*

## **1.2 Scientific relevance**

The rise of citizen governance through interactive and participatory decision-making initiatives is expected to have a positive effect on citizens' sense of community, trust in the government actor, but is also seen as a necessary platform to create government's responsiveness to citizens' concerns (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016; Denters & Klok, 2000). However, these advantages will only occur if there is a widespread participation that represents the interests of all citizens that will be affected by the governance decisions (Denters & Klok, 2000). Concerns on representation are relevant since Fung (2004) argues that broad participation, especially in deprived areas, is unlikely (Fung, 2004; Denters & Klok, 2000; Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). According to Fung's (2004) argumentation there are five reasons that make participation in deprived areas such as The Hague South West unlikely; (1) citizens lack the incentives to participate, (2) citizens lack the resources to participate, (3) the neighbourhood lacks sufficient social capital, (4) the presence of political culture that discourages participation of minority groups (women and ethnic minorities), and (5) the lack of necessary knowledge and skills for all citizens to participation. In addition to these challenges for participation, some research shows that policymakers often involve citizens based on specific motives, such as legitimization, creating a support base or to increase the quality of decision-making processes (Dekker & van Kempen, 2009; Gustafson & Hertting, 2017; van Marissing, 2008). These motives can be associated with reasons for which citizens are not (actively) included in participatory governance initiatives (Dekker & van Kempen, 2009; van Marissing, 2008).

This research will be an addition to the governance of migration and diversity literature in relation to citizen participation in urban and collaborative governance, because it will compare the citizen participation between the more ethnic homogeneous neighbourhood Houtwijk and the ethnic heterogeneous neighbourhood Bouwlust-Vrederust and evaluate the legitimacy of the policymaking process.

## **1.3 Societal relevance**

Looking at the challenge that diversity poses for representative policymaking and how this affects the legitimacy of decision-making and trust in the municipality, through an empirical

case study in The Hague, can make a relevant contribution to the understanding of this complex societal situation. Above all, the attention to the challenges of interactive and participatory policymaking could provide valuable and relevant lessons that can contribute to the the Hague policy agenda “Haags samenspel” that formulates the policy goals to invest in citizen participation and support collaboration between the municipality and citizens (Haags samenspel, 2020). Secondly, the purpose of this research will be to evaluate the legitimacy of the interactive decision-making within the collaborative governance network by analyzing the perceptions and experiences of citizens and other involved parties. The results of this research can provide valuable lessons and insights that could be useful for the involvement of citizens in future *wijkagenda*’s of other neighbourhoods.

## **Chapter II Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Participatory governance and collaborative governance networks**

Participatory governance and collaborative governance are two related concepts that are widely referred to in the literature on citizen participation and interactive decision-making (Agger, 2012, Ansell 2012; Boedeltje & Cornips, 2004; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015; Li, 2015). Ansell (2012) describes collaborative governance as a decision-making process that is formal, deliberative and consensus oriented. The collaborative governance network involves stakeholders constructively with interactive governance across boundaries of public agencies and levels of the public, private and civic sphere (Emerson et al. 2012). This resonates with the concept of participatory governance, the more widely used term in Europe, that emphasizes that the governance process engages actors who are usually not involved in decision-making (Newig et al., 2018). Participatory governance is based on the premise that citizens and other stakeholders take an active role in the policymaking process (Michels, 2012). Both participatory and collaborative governance emphasize that citizens have a central role in the policymaking process, which results in an interactive approach (Agger, 2012; Michels, 2012). The use of the concept “collaborative governance network” refers to the collective forum in which all stakeholders, including citizens, come together to engage in deliberation and decision-making (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Ansell and Gash define collaborative governance with use of six criteria. These criteria stress that the collaborative governance network (1) should be initiated by public institutions, (2) involve non-state actors, (3) participants engage directly in decision-making and are not only consulting, (4) the network is organized in a formal manner and meets collectively, (5) decisions need to be made by consensus and (6) the collaboration is focused on public policy making (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The criterium that participants, such as citizens are directly engaged in decision-making is not always fulfilled, often citizen participation in policymaking has only a consulting or advisory function..

In the Netherlands, participatory governance is used in many forms at the local level of governance, which are mostly initiated and led by the local government, such as the municipality (Michels, 2012). Participatory governance in a collaborative governance network is “expected to increase democratic legitimacy, narrow the gap between citizens and government, enlarge the problem solving capacity, increase the support for policy, and improve the quality of policy (Michels, 2012, p.286). It is understood that policy decisions are more legitimate and effective if they are informed by the people affected by the decisions (Agger, 2012; Michels, 2012). Policymaking therefore needs to involve citizens in the design,



implementation and even enforcement of public policies, by sharing influence and responsibility within the collaborative network through co-creation and co-decision (see section 2.3, ladder of citizen participation) (Agger, 2012).

## 2.2 Citizen Participation

Citizen participation can be defined as *“the degree to which communities can influence decision-making in policymaking processes”* which *“depends on the degree of openness of government and the way in which decisions are made”* (Dekker & van Kempen, 2009, p.114). Participation in decision-making on neighbourhood related issues requires the capacity to influence the final decision.

To assess whether the participatory governance structure facilitates meaningful participation, two dimensions can be considered (Edelenbos, 2005). These dimensions are “width of participation” and “depth of participation” which together determine the strength of the participation (Berry et al., 1993; Edelenbos, 2005).

The depth of participation in decision-making can be analysed by determining the degree and type of participation which is related to the citizens’ power to determine the end-product of the policymaking process. Arnstein introduced the ladder of citizen participation which shows that significant gradations of citizens participation can be distinguished (1969). Arnstein distinguished eight gradations of citizen participation that can be divided in “non-participation”, “tokenism” and “citizen power”. Coherent with Arnstein’s gradations of citizen participation, Edelenbos has developed a participation ladder that is focused on the Dutch governance situation of interactive policymaking and represents specific roles of both the citizen as the public government (2000). An oversight of this participation ladder and corresponding roles is summarized in the table below.

Level of participation	Description role of the government	Role participant
<b>Informing</b>	Government actor decides on policy agenda and informs the citizens.	Listener
<b>Consulting</b>	Government actor decides on policy agenda but consults citizens in developing the policies.	Consulting interlocutor

<b>Advising</b>	Government actor decides on the policy agenda but provides the opportunity for citizens to propose issues and potential solutions.	Advisor
<b>Co-creation</b>	Government actor and citizens collaboratively decide on the policy agenda and work on solutions for policy issues.	Co-creator
<b>Co-decision making</b>	The government actor leaves the development and decision making on policies to the citizens and fulfills an advisory role.	Co-decisionmaker

Table 1. Participation ladder (Edelenbos, 2000).

The width of participation can be analysed by considering how governments have shaped the invitation for participation, the opportunities made available and the accessibility of the participation initiative (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006). The width of participation is thus determined by *“the degree to which each member is offered the chance to participate in each phase of the interactive process”* (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006, p. 428). It is therefore important to understand the conditions that can either support or counteract citizen participation. Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker (2006) have provided an investigative tool that helps policymakers and practitioners understand these conditions. They argue that *“citizens engage depending upon the resources they have access to, the extent to which they feel engaged in a wider community, whether they are helped to participate by supportive organisations, if they are mobilised and if they experience a response”* (Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker, 2006, p.281). These conditions are summarized as key factors “can do”, “like to”, “enabled to”, “asked to” and “responded to” in the table below that guides the understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the participatory governance structure (Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker, 2006).

Key factor	How it works	Policy targets
<b>Can do</b>	The individual resources that people have to mobilise and organise (speaking, writing and technical skills, and the confidence to use them) make a difference	Capacity building, training and support of volunteers, mentoring, leadership development
<b>Like to</b>	To commit to participation requires an identification with the public entity that is the focus of engagement	Civil renewal, citizenship, community development, neighbourhood governance, social capital
<b>Enabled to</b>	The civic infrastructure of groups and umbrella organisations makes a difference because it creates or blocks an opportunity structure for participation	Investing in civic infrastructure and community networks, improving channels of communication via compacts
<b>Asked to</b>	Mobilising people into participation by asking for their input can make a big difference	Public participation schemes that are diverse and reflexive
<b>Responded to</b>	When asked people say they will participate if they are listened to (not necessarily agreed with) and able to see a response	A public policy system that shows a capacity to respond – through specific outcomes, ongoing learning and feedback

Figure 1. CLEAR-model (Lowdes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006).

Whereas the key factors of “asked to” and “responded to” are influential variables which are directly related to the approach of the government actor that is in charge of the participatory project. The key factors “can do” “like to” and “enabled to” on the other hand are (partially) depended on circumstances related to human and social capital.

The choice for certain participation methods and use of an open invitation or use of an invitation to a selected group of citizens are decisive for the key factor “asked to” and thus for the manner by which citizens are mobilised to provide input. Mobilisation matters because people tend to participate more when they are asked to engage (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006). Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker emphasize that a variety of participation methods is important to engage more people, since some people are more comfortable with public meetings whilst others prefer an online platform. Other important elements are the focus of “the ask” and the sustainability of the participation project (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006).

Also, the “responded to” key factor, the manner by which citizen’s input of the participatory project is taken into account or visible in new policy actions is completely depended on the government actor. The actor who is responsible for the decision-making, which is often a government actor, has the power to create sustainable participation by showing the citizens that their involvement makes a difference (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006). The responsiveness of the government actor is about providing feedback, which entails the

explanation of certain policy decisions and outcomes (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006). This is even more important when certain policies can not be changed or do not have the expected result, which means that a response should help the public to deal with disappointment and do not lose trust in the government actor.

The “enabled to” factor is defined by the knowledge that participation is facilitated through groups or organisations (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006; Parry et al., 1992; Pattie et al., 2004). This claim is supported by the understanding that networks of social relations are responsible for the communication of (political) information between and within groups of people (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998). The presence, but also the investment by authorities in these social networks such voluntary councils and civic societies or groups with a political, cultural or sports purpose are necessary because they can act as participatory platform where policymakers have access to the public’s opinion (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006).

The “like to” key factor is the willingness to participate and often relates to people’s sense of community (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006). Citizen engagement can therefore be improved by promoting a sense of civic citizenship and solidarity within the neighbourhood community (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006). The presence of cohesive social networks within a community are often useful in the promotion of civic citizenship and the sense of community that can result in the willingness to be involved in policy decisions. Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker (2006) however emphasize that although people do have a strong sense of community, they might not be interested in participation because they have trust in the representatives of the community and are satisfied with the current situation.

Lastly, the “can do” factor strongly refers to the social capital of citizens, or in other words socio-economic reasons that are decisive for participation at the local level (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998; Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006). The socio-economic status can influence the skills and resources to participate on an individual level. “These skills range from the ability and confidence to speak in public or write letters to the capacity to organise events and encourage others of similar mind to support initiatives” (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2006, p.286).

When analysing the width and depth of participation it is recommended by Fung to organize our thinking about participatory design choices along three dimensions (1) Who participates? (2) How do they communicate and make decisions? (3) What influence do they have on the final decisions (Fung, 2015, p.214).

### 2.3 Democratic legitimacy of interactive decision-making

The rationale behind the use of interactive decision-making in a collaborative governance network is based on the belief that involvement of citizens makes decisions 1) more legitimate, as decisions are directly governed by those affected and 2) more effective, as decisions are informed by knowledge of local communities (Dietz & Stern, 2008; Innes & Booher, 2016).

With use of interactive governance, the gap between government and citizens or other stakeholders can be bridged (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016). Edelenbos explains that the enhancement of democratic legitimacy gives an impulse to direct democracy, which does not only give government actors the opportunity to bridge the gap with citizens but has other effects that might be a motive to ensure that interactive governance decisions are democratic legitimate (Edelenbos, 2000). These motives are interrelated and are therefore presented in a chain.

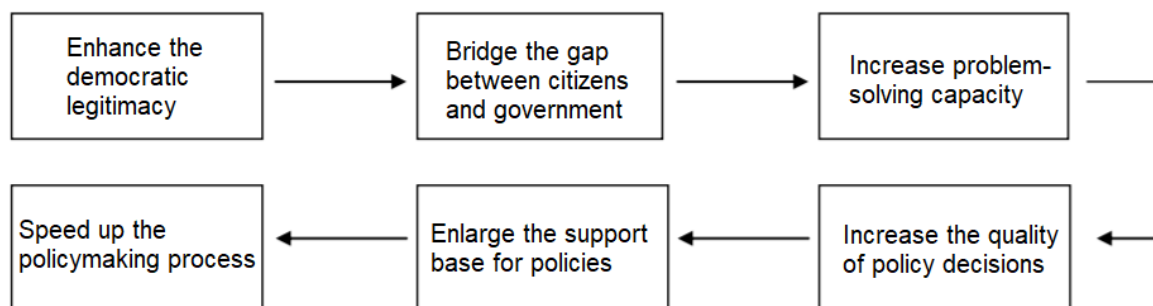


Figure 2. Chain of motives for interactive policymaking (Edelenbos, 2000).

Because more people start to question the ability of the representative democratic institutions to govern the society with its increasingly complex issues, also referred to in literature as “wicked problems”, citizens see new forms of participative and interactive decision-making as an opportunity to enhance the quality of democracy and therefore demand more participation (Geissel, 2009). Democracy is constantly changing and reacting to new demands of the society, one of these changes is the more frequent use of citizen participation (Hajer, 2006). According to Hajer (2006) it is essential that new forms of democracy, such as participatory democracy, are judged on effectiveness and legitimacy. From a representative democracy viewpoint, the participatory governance method of interactive decision-making contains a risk of dominance by interest groups or individuals with good resources and organizational strength (Geissel, 2009). When governance is not only carried out by chosen representatives, but also by citizens and other stakeholders the risk of exclusion increases. Interactive decision-making can become inefficient and less legitimate if too many interests, opinions and values must be dealt with

(Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016). Also, research on interactive decision-making reveal two important things; (1) that local political leaders fear that participatory governance will threaten their political primacy and (2) that the outcomes of the interactive decision-making process are often not used in the public policies that follow (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000). This emphasizes the importance of trust in the use of participatory governance of both citizens and stakeholders as the initiating government institution.

In political culture research, legitimacy is defined as the acceptance of the political system, which involves trust and satisfaction with political decisions (Geissel, 2009). Also, Michels (2011) assesses legitimacy as the extent to which participants accept and support the process and outcome of the decision-making. Michels developed a framework by which the contribution of citizen participation to the democracy is evaluated. Legitimacy is one of these democratic values, and thus Michels evaluates how citizen participation has contributed to the acceptance and support of participatory governance decisions (2011). Other democratic elements that are evaluated by Michels in relation to citizen participation are influence on decision-making, inclusion, skills and virtues and deliberation.

To assess the legitimacy of collaborative governance decisions this thesis follows Scharpf's understanding that legitimacy of decision-making is derived from both the input – and output side (Lund, 2018). According to Scharpf's understanding, interactive and collaborative decision-making should be guided by the notion of “governance of the people” which means that the public decisions should be assessed against the extent to which people who are subject to these decisions are also involved in the formulation (Dryzek & List, 2003; Scharpf, 1999; Strebel et al., 2019). As interactive and collaborative governance uses citizen participation to improve the input and output legitimacy of decision making, it is relevant to assess how the equality and effectiveness is perceived by participants (Boedeltje & Cornips, 2004; Scharpf, 1999). The interactive process of decision-making entails deliberation between government and stakeholders, therefore it can be characterized as a form of deliberative democracy. The legitimacy of policymaking decisions is, within deliberative democracy, dependent on the dimensions fairness and competence (Boedeltje & Cornips, 2004). Participatory governance is thus perceived as a form of deliberative democracy which has the potential to supplement the legitimacy of representative democracy via the dimensions of fairness of participation and competence of the decision-making outcomes. Because the *wijkagenda's* from both neighbourhoods are not finished or completed, it is only feasible to analyze the fairness of the process. The fairness of the decision-making process can be assessed with use of input – and throughput legitimacy. The input legitimacy emphasizes the importance

of “government of the people” (Scharpf, 1999), and is therefore focused on the democratic elements mentioned by Michels; inclusiveness (or representativeness) and influence on the decision-making process. The throughput legitimacy is concerned with the quality of the governance process and can be enhanced by transparent, fair and argumentative deliberation and the creation of a collective responsibility and ownership (Strebel et al., 2019; Héritier, 2003; Papadopoulos & Warin, 2007). Representativeness, influence, deliberation and civic skill and virtues are therefore the four indicators that will guide the analysis on the contribution of citizen participation to the democratic legitimacy of interactive and participatory decision-making.

### 1. Influence

This element of democracy can be explained as the possibility for all people to share their wishes and opinions (Eshuis & Edwards, 2013). The more opportunity available to influence the policy agenda with personal interests and opinions, the more legitimate the perception of the policy process will be. The agenda setting needs a certain level of fairness, meaning that everyone has equal opportunity to influence the agenda (Boedeleetje & Cornips, 2004). The collaborative governance process should then also allow for the presence of multiple problem perceptions and interests that need to be discussed (Bekkers & Edwards, 2016). The impact on policy is referring to a connection between citizen participation and decision-making outcomes (Michels, 2012).

### 2. Representativeness

The representativeness of democracy is indicated as fair by the experienced representation and inclusiveness of the governance process. To say something about the inclusiveness of the interactive policymaking process, it is important to question if all the relevant stakeholders had the opportunity to participate (Bekkers & Edwards, 2016). Inclusion therefore first refers to the openness of forum to all residents (Michels, 2012). Additionally, representativeness should say something about how representative the forum is for the population at large and if no relevant groups have been excluded (Michels, 2012). One should therefore wonder “*were weak interests properly heard and represented*” (Bekkers & Edwards, 2016, p.49). This refers to the notion that residents believe that their perspectives are adequately represented in the decision-making process (Mosley & Wong, 2021). This also means that not all the residents need to be included in the decision-making process as long as someone will represent their interests and perspectives for them. In other words, all interests of the varying groups in a neighbourhood

can be represented, without the need for their physical presence in the collaborative governance network (Bekkers & Edwards, 2016).

### 3. Deliberation

Within the collaborative participation process, it is important that fair and good collaboration and discussion takes place. Not only the stakeholder with “the loudest voice” or the resident who has the best skills to articulate his opinion will be listened to, everyone has an equal opportunity to voice his or her opinion (Reisse & Kleine, 2007). People should listen to each other’s arguments and exchange opinions in order to formulate an effective substantive decision (Eriksen & Fossum, 2004). Additionally, to ensure a good deliberative discussion it is important that the collaborative decision-making process is transparent, meaning that all information and knowledge on the policy issues is available to the involved parties (Fuchs et al., 2009; Eshuis & Edwards, 2012). This means that all collaborating parties need to be informed and involved in all the steps of the decision-making process and made aware of their role and ability to voice opinion (Eshuis & Edwards, 2012).

### 4. Civic skills and virtues

Lastly, citizen participation can contribute to democratic legitimacy of the decision-making process in terms of civic skills and virtues. This element of democracy can be explained as the integrative function of democracy (Michels & de Graaf, 2010). Meaning that citizen participation can contribute to feeling as part of a community with public responsibilities (Michels & de Graaf, 2010; Michels & de Graaf, 2017). The feeling of responsibility can be indicated by the degree of ownership that is experienced during the participatory process (Foster-Fishman et al., 2009). Shared ownership is depended on the interests of citizens, being either focused on the common-good or personal incentives.

## **2.4 Governance of superdiversity**

The governance of cities and neighbourhoods is becoming more complex, since they are irreversibly becoming more diverse and changing into super-diverse areas. Super-diversity is not only meant in terms of ethnicity or socio-economic factors, but also in terms of gender, age, household composition, lifestyle and identity (Vertovec, 2007; Tasan-Kok et al., 2013). An increasing number of cities within Europe can be defined as a majority-minority city, with more than half of the cities’ population has a migration background. This includes the city of The



Hague where 55,6% of the population has a first- or second-generation migration background (Allecijfers, n.d.).

The concept of governance can be defined as a process of co-ordinating actors, social groups, and institutions to achieve collective goals which are discussed in a fragmented, uncertain environment (Le Galès, 2002). Since the local level deals with the complexities of diversity and diverging demands within the community, the governance calls for an interactive and collaborative approach. As described by Scholten (2018), this local turn on governing diversity, or more specifically migration-related diversity requires a structural approach embedded in generic policies. In this light, urban governance can be defined as an “interactive process of problem definition, policy formation and problem solving between government and society at the urban level” (Scholten, 2018, p.11). Urban governance therefore includes actors representing not only the public sector, but also the private, voluntary sector and the involvement of residents within the governance area (Dekker & van Kempen, 2004).

Theories of diversity have led to the understanding that social cohesion is difficult to attain within super-diverse neighbourhoods, since citizens withdraw from social life in diverse contexts (Putnam, 2007; Van de Meer & Tolsema, 2014). Consequently, the super-diverse environment can be a problem for social interaction and participation in neighbourhoods, such as Bouwlust and Vrederust (Dekker, 2007). This challenges local policymakers to mobilize and include all citizens to participate in interest, activist and leisure organizations (Savelkoul et al., 2014). At the regional level, ethnic diversity decreases active participation in interest organizations that protect the socioeconomic interests of citizens (Savelkoul et al., 2014). The understanding that ethnic diversity is related to a lower degree of participation is supported by the research of Alesina and La Ferrara (2000) on participation in heterogeneous neighbourhoods. Their research revealed that participation is significantly lower in more economically unequal and racially or ethnically fragmented localities. This relates to the notion that more homogeneous neighbourhoods show more trust and social interactions which leads to more social capital and can be recognized by higher levels of participation (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000). Since participation in neighbourhood activities is highly correlated with political participation, the lower degree of participation in diverse and heterogeneous neighbourhoods has critical implications for policy decisions (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000). Alesina and La Ferrara have the following explanation for these implications:

*“If the wealthy or more educated have a disproportionate propensity to join groups and engage in political action, then public policies may be tilted in their favour. This may lead to vicious circles, in which disadvantaged minorities participate less, have less “voice,” and become*

*even more disadvantaged, leading to a variety of social problems”* (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000, p.849).

Research by Snel, Custers and Engbersen (2018) in Rotterdam revealed, as expected on the basis of the earlier discussed literature from Putnam but also based on Wilson (1996), that respondents from deprived and diverse neighbourhoods participated less than respondents from more prosperous and homogeneous (‘white’) neighbourhoods (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). However, the research revealed that citizen participation at neighbourhood level is primarily an individual phenomenon. Meaning that differences in citizen participation are predominantly explained by individual characteristics such as age or educational level (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). Based on this research the proclaimed neighbourhood effects of deprivation and diversity as described by Wilson and Putnam can be criticised, since predominantly an “composition-effect” of individual characteristics seem to be the explanatory reason for less citizen participation (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). Nevertheless, deprived and diverse neighbourhoods do show lower numbers of citizen participation since they are more likely to be the place where citizens with negative characteristics live, such as (1) low education, (2) being of a young or old age category, (3) having a migrant background, (4) have fulltime work and (5) not being healthy (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). Since these characteristics will result in less participation, they share Alesina and Ferrara’s concerns that the wealthier and higher educated have an advantage that makes them more capable to participate and influence the governance process. Snel, Custer & Engbersen (2018) compare this with the Matthew effect that claims that the rich get richer and poor get poorer.

Previous research by Dekker and van Kempen (2009) on citizen participation in local decision making in Bouwlust showed that residents were not sufficiently represented. Women and immigrants were clearly not included in the participatory governance due to a lack of confidence in their capacities and networks and because the diversity of ethnicities and lifestyles are perceived as a threat for the decision-making process (Dekker & van Kempen, 2009). Dekker and van Kempen claim that policymakers struggle with the diversity of the population since they believe that it diminishes the chance for “quick results” (Dekker & van Kempen, 2009, p. 126). This means that marginalized and minority groups are not included by policymakers to avoid that the effectiveness of the decision-making process is jeopardized by conflict that might arise from the diversity of citizen’s input.

This thesis’ research will therefore look at a heterogeneous and homogeneous neighbourhood that is expected to show differences in citizen participation due to the “composition-effect” of individual characteristics on participation and the challenging positions

for policymakers to include all groups in the decision-making process. Since citizen participation in a representative democracy is often used to enhance the democratic legitimacy (Edelenbos, 2000), it seems relevant to analyse citizens experiences with the legitimacy of the participatory and interactive decision-making process in both neighbourhoods.

## 2.5 Theoretical expectations

The following expectations can be formulated on the basis of the literature explained in this theoretical framework.

- 1) The superdiversity of the neighbourhood forms a challenge for policymakers and project managers to include all citizens in the collaborative governance network of the *wijkagenda*, since citizens are expected to withdraw from social life in superdiverse contexts (Putnam, 2007; Tolsema & van der Meer, 2014). Therefore it can be expected that a higher level of ethnic diversity will lead to lower levels of participation which will lead to more challenges in terms of inclusiveness and equal influence in Bouwlust-Vrederust in contrast to Houtwijk. However it can be expected that individual characteristics such as age, ethnicity, educational level, and lifestyle will also have a negative impact on citizen participation in Houtwijk, and create a challenge for inclusiveness there too (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018).
- 2) Policymakers share less decision-making power with a diverse group of citizens in order to maintain the efficiency of the deliberative discussion (Edelenbos, 2000; Edelenbos, 2006; Berry et al., 1993; Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker, 2006). Thus it can be expected that citizens in Houtwijk have more influence on the policy agenda than the citizens in Bouwlust.
- 3) Participatory governance that involves citizen participation in the interactive decision-making process can contribute to the democratic legitimacy of neighbourhood policies and planning if citizens have positive experience with conditions of input – and throughput legitimacy (Boogaard et al., 2016; Agger 2012, Michels 2012). Since Bouwlust-Vrederust is expected to deal with more challenges in terms of citizen's representation and influence within the decision-making of the *wijkagenda*, it is expected that the Bouwlust-Vrederust is experienced as less legitimate and will receive less public support.

### Chapter III Methods

This chapter will elaborate on the research question and the corresponding sub-questions of this thesis, on the operationalization of the relevant variables in measurable and observable indicators and the different components of the research design.

#### 3.1 Research question

*How does citizen participation in the collaborative governance network of the Wijkagenda contribute to the legitimacy of the interactive decision-making in the neighbourhoods Bouwlust-Vrederust and Houtwijk?*

- 1) What kind of participatory design has the collaborative governance network of the *wijkagenda* in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust?
- 2) To what extent is the interactive decision-making process of the *Wijkagenda* legitimate in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust?

#### 3.2 Operationalisation

The research question consists of two variables, the independent and the dependent variable which need to be defined and specified with observable indicators to carry out an empirical analysis. The citizen participation in the collaborative governance network is the independent variable in this case study research and the operationalised indicators of this concept are used to analyse and describe the citizen participation in both neighbourhoods which will explain how it contributes to the democratic legitimacy of the interactive and local decision-making in Bouwlust Vrederust and Houtwijk.

Definition	Dimensions	Sub-dimensions	Indicators
Is largely practiced as a means to achieve better democratic governance, since it ensures that formulated policies are grounded on citizens preferences (Li, 2015; Fagence, 2014).	Depth of participation (participation ladder) (Edelenbos, 2000)	Non-participation	Citizens are not involved in the policymaking or planning process.
		Informing	Government actor decides on policy agenda and informs the citizens.

			The citizen has only the ability to be informed and listen.
		Consulting	Government actor decides on policy agenda but consults citizens in developing the policies. The citizen has the power to provide consultation.
		Advising	Government actor decides on the policy agenda but provides the opportunity for citizens to propose issues and potential solutions.
		Co-creation	Government actor and citizens collaboratively decide on the policy agenda and work on solutions for policy issues.
		Co-decision	The government actor leaves the development and decision making on policies to the citizens and fulfils an advisory role.
	Width of participation (CLEAR-model)	Can do	Citizens have the knowledge and resources to participate.
		Like to	Citizens have a sense of attachment that reinforces participation.
		Enabled to	Citizens are provided with the opportunity for participation.
		Asked to	Citizens are mobilized through public channels and agencies.
		Responded to	Citizens see evidence that their views have been considered.

Table 2: Operationalisation of citizen participation (in interactive decision-making).

Definition	Dimensions	Criteria	Indicator
Input-legitimacy (inclusiveness)	Emphasizes the importance of “government of the people” (Scharpf, 1999), where decisions are assessed against the extent to which people subject to these decisions are (in)directly involved in their formulation (Strebel et al., 2019; Dryzek & List, 2003)	Influence	The ability to have impact on the agenda
			The ability to have impact on the decisions
		Representativeness	Openness network: inclusivity of the reflection of affected population

			All interests of the affected population are represented
Throughput-legitimacy (Fair deliberation)	Concerns the quality of the governance process and can be enhanced by transparent decision-making and good quality deliberation (Strebel et al., 2019; Héritier, 2003; Papadopoulos & Warin, 2007).	Deliberation	Equal opportunity to voice opinion
			Fair and argumentative reasoning
		Civic skills and virtues	Feeling of responsibility for the community and environment
			Involvement in decision-making process through ownership over policy decision or actions

Table 3: Operationalisation of ‘input – and throughput legitimacy’

### 3.3 Research Design

This thesis employs an explanatory case-oriented analysis within the area of The Hague, in which I will attempt to learn about all the factors that come into play in determining the citizens participation and how this contributes to the legitimacy of the interactive policymaking process (Babbie, 2012). The choice of research methods is mainly dependent on the nature of the research question. Since this thesis research question has an explorative character, the use of qualitative methods is the most suitable choice (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In particular, this thesis will use the method of interviewing to collect the perceptions on democratic legitimacy and the experiences with citizen participation in neighbourhood planning and policymaking. The choice for one-to-one interviews is suitable for this research since it is “*a valuable method of gaining insight into people’s perceptions, understanding and experiences with given phenomena*”, which in this case will be focused on the phenomena citizen participation and democratic legitimacy (Frances, et al., 2009, p.309). The research question is mainly of

exploratory nature. The goal of this research is not to provide conclusive evidence but to understand the research problem more efficiently. The in-depth interview method will contribute to this understanding. The interviews will have a semi-structured approach, to ensure the comparability of the data. Supplementary to the interviews, a document analysis of the municipality's plan and the description of the *wijkagenda* and specific neighbourhood plan of actions have been carried out. The qualitative research methods of interviewing and document analysis can result in the profound understanding of the complex issue that is the subject of this thesis (Creswell, 2011). The document analysis is an important manner to analyse relevant and existing information in a case-study (van Thiel, 2015). The document analysis provided essential background information of the *wijkagenda*'s and helped to answer the first descriptive sub-question "*What kind of participatory design has the collaborative governance network of the Wijkagenda in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust?*". The analysis of the interview data was essential to answer both sub-questions, thus also essential to formulate an answer to this research main question. Lastly, the empirical research through interviewing and document analysis has been supplemented by nonparticipant observations of one meeting (*wijktafel*) for the *wijkagenda* in Houtwijk. Nonparticipant observation is used in qualitative research to gather primary data of the public research setting (Given, 2008). Data was collected with use of the fieldnote method, writing down notes on the observable indicators of the operationalization of the research concepts. To prevent subjectivity as a result of my participation, the observation took place after the interview guide was finalized and most interviews were conducted. The observations of the collaborative meeting therefore primarily served my personal understanding of the decision-making process and supported the interpretation of the respondent's answers during the coding process.

My research design does not apply a comparative approach to establish the circumstances in which a theory will or will not hold (Bryman, 2012). Instead, I choose to analyse the contribution of citizen participation to the legitimacy of interactive decision-making in two 'exemplifying cases' of a heterogeneous and a homogeneous neighbourhood which can result in a relevant contribution on the debate about neighbourhood specific approaches for participatory governance. The exemplifying cases are therefore chosen because they provide a suitable context for the research question (Bryman, 2012). Analysing two cases which are able to exemplify the factors that are decisive for the citizen participation within a neighbourhood will enrich the understanding of this complex societal phenomenon and result in direction for future research.

### 3.4 Data collection

I have approached a wide range of respondents by means of purposeful sampling to ensure that the policymakers, professionals and participatory citizens involved in the *wijkagenda*'s were targeted for the interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The two project leaders of the *wijkagenda Bouwlust-Vrederust* and the *wijkagenda Houtwijk* have helped me reach out to the diverse group of stakeholders by either sending out an invitation for the interview on my behalf or providing me with the contact information. Additionally, with use of the snowball method, each respondent was asked to suggest another potential respondent who they felt was different from themselves (for example in terms of age, lifestyle, ethnicity, gender) or would have relevant information on the collaborative meetings (the *wijktafels*) where the planning and deliberation took place. This sampling process has been continued until as many perceptions and experiences as possible have been gathered and data saturation was reached (Ghaljaie et al., 2017).

For the neighbourhood Houtwijk 6 out of 7 respondents were reached with help of the project leader. The seventh respondent was reached via a recommendation of one respondent who was convinced that this person could provide me with relevant information on his experience and involvement in the *wijkagenda*. As the collaborative governance network in Houtwijk consists of policy officers of the municipality, practitioners of welfare organizations and housing corporations and some citizens, I tried to have respondents of all three groups for my interviews to ensure a good representation of the network. Eventually I succeeded to interview at least two respondents from each group, an overview of the exact composition of the group of respondents is attached in the table below. Lastly, it is relevant to explain that four out of seven respondents from Houtwijk were interviewed before the last collaborative meeting, whereas three respondents were interviewed after the third meeting (*wijktafel*). The only difference between the two groups of respondents was that the latter had slightly more specific knowledge on the eventual policies, plans and actions that will be the result of the *wijkagenda*, however this was also already discussed in a more general manner during the second *wijktafel*. As both *wijktafels* had the same online set up, approach and content focus, this has not been experienced as troublesome for the results. In Bouwlust-Vrederust, all four respondents who were participants in the first *wijktafel* were interviewed after the first and only collaborative meeting and the project leader was interviewed in the last week of August to provide information on the developments and future plans for the formulation of the *wijkagenda*. Appendix 1 provides an oversight of the respondents from both neighbourhoods.



### 3.5 Data analysis

The analysis of this research employs a deductive approach to analyse the data and recognize patterns. This approach has helped to focus on those elements that were known to be important in the existing literature (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). This coding approach is useful to generalize analytically across the two cases, which are the neighbourhoods Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust and compare the theory driven categories of coding (Linneberg & Korsgaard). The analysis of the interview data has been carried out by transcribing the voice recordings after which the empirical data was coded with use of Atlas.ti, in accordance with the deductive approach with axial coding and selective coding. First the theory-driven concepts of the operationalization table and the interview-topic guide were converted into the main categories of the coding scheme. After which axial coding was used to make connections between and within coded categories and concepts drawn from the theoretical framework (Straus & Corbin, 2007; Boeije, 2005). The interpretation and comparison of diverse sub-categories are essential for the understanding of the data and the validity of the analysis' results. Finally, selective coding is used to develop an understanding of the relations between the described categories and codes of the axial coding process (Boeije, 2005). This last step was important to elucidate the central codes, analysing and selecting the axial codes based on their relevance to answer the research question. This last phase of the coding process is essential for the comparison of the analysed relations to the theoretical framework and the formulation in the empirical results section of this thesis research.

### 3.6 Case selection

The selection of the neighbourhoods Bouwlust-Vrederust and Houtwijk were determined by two factors.

- a) Neighbourhoods which are involved with interactive policymaking process that takes place with use of the *wijkagenda's*, which are useful in the research on citizen participation in such collaborative governance network.
- b) The expected deviance in the independent variable "citizen participation".

Since Bouwlust-Vrederust can be described as a heterogeneous and diverse neighbourhood in terms of the ethnicities and migration backgrounds, socio-economic status and educational level of the residents, whereas Houtwijk is relatively more homogeneous on some of these indicators, it is expected that they show differences on indicators of citizen participation such as the role

of citizens, the ability and willingness to participate and the influence of citizens on the decision-making process.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

Since I have conducted semi-structured interviews the question of consent is relevant to discuss. Due to the measures relating to the Covid-19 pandemic, interviews have taken place both online as in real-life. In both circumstances I made sure that respondents received the information- and consentform in advance and made sure I received a signed form prior to the interview. The interviews have been recorded on my computer and with the recording application on my telephone, interviewees have explicitly been made aware of this. After the interview, the recordings have been safely stored on an encrypted USB-stick.

Another ethical consideration in this research is my personal bias. Since I have been conducting this research for the collaborative partnership between the LDE Centre Governance of Migration and Diversity and the municipality of The Hague I need to be aware of the possibility that this clouds my judgement or pushes me to formulate desired policy recommendations. However, the awareness of this bias and the avoidance of normativity in my research question have guided me in carrying out a professional academic thesis research

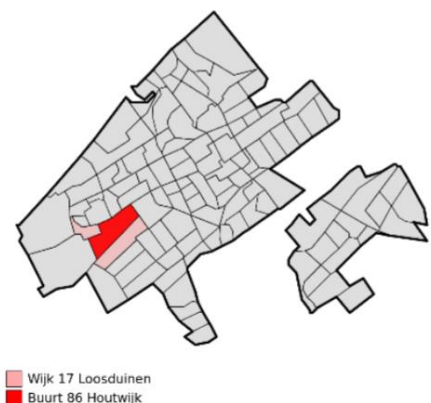
## Chapter IV Context: Descriptive analysis of the *wijkagenda*

### 4.1 Neighbourhood oriented policymaking in The Hague

The coalition agreement 2019-2022 formulated the ambition to improve the relationship between policymakers at the municipality and the neighbourhoods (Samen voor de Stad, 2019). To fulfil this ambition the municipality has set up the *Programmaplan Wijkagenda en Informatiegestuurd Werken*, which is a policy plan to develop neighbourhood agenda's which are based on quantitative and qualitative data of each neighbourhood (Den Haag, 2021). Residents, entrepreneurs and societal organizations were often informed with new plans and policy ideas without their consultation (Den Haag, 2021). The *Wijkagenda*'s are developed to change this trend and engage with citizens and other stakeholders to create an integrative, neighbourhood oriented and data centred approach (Den Haag, 2021). This approach corresponds with the ambition of *Haags Samenspel*, to improve the quality of participation in the Hague (Den Haag, 2020). This ambition is stated as follows “*We want to enlarge the control and involvement of citizens and entrepreneurs on issues of safety and liveability.... We improve participation trajectories and participation initiatives by making them more accessible*” (Den Haag, 2020, p. 1). The municipality believes that this plan will lead to more efficient policies since they are informed by citizens who have knowledge and experience with specific problems or challenges in their neighbourhood. The new *Haags Samenspel* approach to citizen participation will lead to more ownership, acceptance, support base and trust in the municipality (Den Haag, 2020). This will require a well-balanced relation between representative and participatory democracy (Den Haag, 2020).

### 4.2 Wijkagenda Houtwijk

The neighbourhood Houtwijk is located in the city area “*stadsdeel*” Loosduinen. The neighbourhood Houtwijk consists of 12 875 residents with 63,5% citizens that have no migration background (Allecijfers Houtwijk, 2020). In 2016, the percentage of people with no migration background in Houtwijk was 81,1%, so also in Houtwijk the general trend of the diversifying city of the Hague can be recognized (Den Haag, 2016). Houtwijk being already in 2016 the neighbourhood with the most residents with a migrant



background in the city area Loosduinen. These statistics emphasize the relative “white” and homogeneous character of this city area. The neighbourhood knows a relative equal spread of

age categories, with the two biggest categories of the ages between 25-45 and 45-65 (Allecijfers Houtwijk, 2020). Only 33,2% of the neighbourhood is identified as low-educated, whereas 66,8% has followed an education that is characterized as “average educational level” or “high-educational level” (Allecijfer Houtwijk, 2020).

The *wijkagenda* has been initiated by the manager of stadsdeel Loosduinen commissioned by the municipality of the Hague and is aimed to formulate a 4-year action plan with prioritised themes, goals and actions on the social and physical liveability of the neighbourhood (municipality the Hague, personal communication)<sup>1</sup>.

According to the process description of the *wijkagenda* Houtwijk (municipality the Hague, personal communication), the following participation methods have been used.

- Public survey (online and on paper for every household)
- Online neighbourhood platform “Hoplr”
- Three collaborative meetings (the “*wijktafels*”)

All citizens were able to vote for three priority themes in a survey list that was sent to all residents. The *wijktafels* were used to formulate plans and actions based on the results of the survey in combination with the neighbourhood profile, which is an overview of the societal and physical status of the neighbourhood based on statistical data (municipality the Hague, personal communication). All citizens were invited to the *wijktafels* with use of an application invitation on the survey and the website [wijkagendahoutwijk.nl](http://wijkagendahoutwijk.nl). This means that all residents were enabled to participate in the interactive decision-making process, however the first and second *wijktafels* only had an average of 30 participants amongst whom also stakeholders from services of the municipality, a welfare organisation, a housing corporation and a resident’s association. Within this group of stakeholders, only 3 to 4 residents participated during the three collaborative meetings (respondent 7, personal communication June 1, 2021 & personal observation, May 31, 2021). The low attendance rate of residents could be explained by the lack of knowledge about the *wijkagenda* and resident’s unfamiliarity with the process. Recent research on the participation methods of all *wijkagenda*’s of 6 neighbourhoods, amongst whom Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust, have revealed that only an average of 11% of the residents in all neighbourhoods were familiar with the concept of the *wijkagenda* (Kondratiuk, 2021). In Houtwijk this percentage turned out as 17%, higher than average, but still 57% did not know

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<sup>1</sup> Project definition and process description *Wijkagenda Houtwijk*. This is an internal document of the municipality without accessible link. This source is confidential.

what the *wijkagenda* was (Kondratiuk, 2021). Other explanatory factors such as people's availability, interest or ability to participate in such an interactive participation project is discussed with respondents of my interviews.

The low attendance rate of residents at the *wijktafel* did not go unnoticed by residents themselves. Kondratiuk's research revealed that one resident mentioned the "*low attendance of residents in comparison to present organisations such as the municipality*" and made clear that he would like to see more residents in order to create a broader support base during the interactive sessions (Kondratiuk, 2021). In line with the municipality's goal related to "Haags Samenspel" to end the trend where policies and plans are made without the consultation of residents, it seems only logic that residents are critical about the low participation rate (Den Haag, 2021; Kondratiuk, 2021).

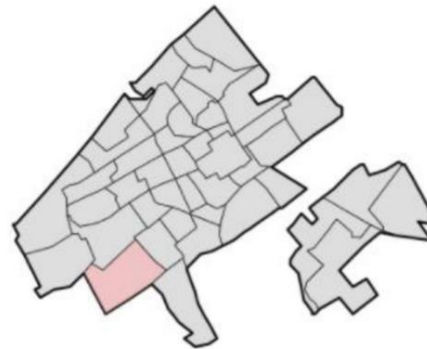
Furthermore, as for the citizen participation in relation to the survey, it is analyzed that the three priority themes; maintenance of green spaces, a clean neighbourhood and parking have been rated as most important out of all ten themes, despite differences in age, household or type of house (owner occupied / rent/ social rent) (Stemwijzer Wijkagenda Houtwijk, 2021). However, it must be emphasized that the survey has notably less response by "young" (age below 20) and "old" (age 65+) people and by people who live in social rent houses, although statistics of the neighbourhood planning program for the period of 2016-2019 show that over 20% of the residents is younger than 25 and almost 40% of the houses is social rent (Wijkberaad Houtwijk, n.d.). Therefore, it seems that response from these groups is not representative which makes it difficult to claim with certainty that these three themes are prioritised by the whole population of the neighbourhood Houtwijk (Stemwijzer Wijkagenda Houtwijk, 2021).

Lastly, it is relevant to explain that Kondratiuk's research (2021) revealed that non-voters of the *wijkagenda*'s survey express less satisfaction with the neighbourhoods and its environment than residents who did vote on prioritising themes in the survey. Whereas non-voters (N=36) rate the general satisfaction with their neighbourhood with a 6.8, the voters (N=63) of the *wijkagenda* survey rate it as 7.3. This outcome can be explained as people that are less satisfied with the neighbourhood also have less trust in participatory projects such as the *wijkagenda* to solve the issues that cause their dissatisfaction. However, this is only an interpretation of the data and remains speculative until further research could prove this assumption. Kondratiuk's research also shows that people are not very positive about the participatory process. For the question "Which grade would you give for the voting process of the *wijkagenda*?" the result was

6.6 and when asked “To what extent do you feel you can discuss and co-decide about the themes you prioritized?” the respondents gave an average grade of 5.9. This thesis’ interviews with residents and other organisations which participated will attempt to elaborate on the personal experiences and opinions of people on the participation process and ability to influence decision-making.

#### 4.3 Wijkagenda Bouwlust-Vrederust

The neighbourhoods Bouwlust and Vrederust are located in the city area The Hague South West. Although these are two separate neighbourhoods, they are very similar in terms of population and socio-economic circumstances. The municipality decided to formulate one *wijkagenda* for both neighbourhoods. Bouwlust-Vrederust consist of 29500 residents with only 27,6% citizens that have



no migration background (Allecijfers Bouwlust-Vrederust, 2020). In the period 2013-2020 the percentage of people with no migration background has decreased with 15%, meaning that also these neighbourhoods support the understanding that cities such as The Hague are diversifying and makes Bouwlust-Vrederust a clear example of what a majority-minority city looks like.

The statistics on Bouwlust-Vrederust show that citizens mostly belong to the age categories 25-45 and 45-65. However, in contrast to Houtwijk, in Bouwlust-Vrederust the percentage of children is higher than the percentage of citizens within the age category 65+. In terms of educational level, Bouwlust-Vrederust significantly differs from Houtwijk. 47,4% of the neighbourhood is identified as low-educated (33,2% in Houtwijk), whereas only 15% is identified as high-educated (in comparison to the 25,5% in Houtwijk). Furthermore, it is relevant to explain that Bouwlust-Vrederust that is situated in the are The Hague South West, is an area that deals with deprivation and socio-economic issues for which the government and the municipality invest resources via the Regio Deal to solve these problems (Balster, 2020).

The project of the *wijkagenda* Bouwlust-Vrederust has been initiated by the municipality of the Hague and was led by three different project leaders within the period 2019-2021. The change of project leaders seemed to be one of the reasons that the process of formulating the *wijkagenda* has dealt with some delay. According to the process description that was shared via personal

communications and an interview with the last project leader (R12), the following participation methods have been used so far.

- Public survey (online and on paper for every household in Bouwlust)
- Neighbourhood Reporters (*wijkreporters*), residents who participated by collecting information on experiences and opinions amongst residents.
- Two separate meetings (*wijktafels*), one with residents and the other with professionals (civil servants, societal organizations, housing corporations).

Within Bouwlust (not in the neighbourhood Vrederust) a survey was shared with the neighbourhood that enabled residents to express their concerns and experiences with specific issues and challenges in the area. To complement the information retrieved from the surveys several “*wijkreporters*” were used to collect personal stories and specific concerns. The *wijktafels* were used to formulate plans and actions based on the results of the survey in combination with the neighbourhood profile, but in contrast to Houtwijk the first (and so far only) *wijktafel* was organized separately for residents on the one hand and professionals on the other (R12). The specific reason for this choice to organize separate meetings was not explained to the new project manager, but other respondents thought this was due to the restriction of a maximum of 30 people following the Covid-19 rules. However, the meetings could have been organized in two parts without separating the citizens from the professionals. Notably, in contrast to Houtwijk, the start of the process was dominated by physical participation in the form of neighbourhood reporters and physical meetings with residents and professionals.

The first meeting was attended by 10-11 residents, which is approximately 3 to 4 times as much as the attendance by residents in Houtwijk (R1, R8, R9). The second meeting was attended by a group of approximately 20 professionals (R10). The relative low attendance rate of 11 residents who represent the neighbourhood of 29500 people can be explained by the fact that only 11% of the residents in Bouwlust-Vrederust were familiar with the concept of the *wijkagenda* (Kondratiuk, 2021). Residents who were familiar with the concept “*wijkagenda*” were mostly informed via the local newspaper or a personal letter. These statistics unfortunately prove that these forms of communication do not suffice to inform the majority of the population in Bouwlust-Vrederust on participatory projects such as the *wijkagenda*.

Research within the population of Bouwlust-Vrederust made clear that residents rate their willingness to participate in the process of the *wijkagenda* with a 6,3, which is just like in Houtwijk (6,0) beneath the average of The Hague that was rated at 6,5 (Kondratiuk, 2021).

The most important findings of Kondratiuk's research on the participation process of the *wijkagenda* Bouwlust-Vrederust reveal that residents in general are unsatisfied with the participation in the *wijkagenda* and rate this process with a 5,3. However, residents who did participate actively in the first *wijktafel* rate the participation process with an average of 8,0 (Kondratiuk, 2021). These residents emphasize that they are satisfied with the subjects that have been discussed and the opportunity to share their opinion (Kondratiuk, 2021). These findings show that the interactive manner of participation improves the satisfaction with participatory governance amongst residents in Bouwlust-Vrederust.



## Chapter V: Results

In this chapter the analysis and results will be explained and will provide insight in how the theoretical concepts of citizen participation and democratic legitimacy have been recognized and how they might relate to each other. The results from both *wijkagenda's* will be discussed separately to enhance their understanding.

### 5.1 Participatory Design Houtwijk

This sub-chapter will discuss the respondents' perceptions about the width and depth of the participation process, and thus discuss the relevant elements that relate to the key factors from the CLEAR-model and elaborate on the role of participants with use of the participation ladder.

#### 5.1.1. The width of participation

##### Can do

When respondents were asked about their opinion and experience of the capacities and abilities that were needed to participate in the governance network, no respondent mentioned any strict criteria that residents needed to fulfil. However, respondent 1, a resident of Houtwijk, explained that some (social) involvement with the neighbourhood, was necessary in order to be able to take part in the discussion and decision-making. Respondent 7, supported this understanding that residents involvement is important by stating that people can participate if they contribute something relevant for the development of the neighbourhood.

However, respondents predominantly referred to individual characteristics or circumstances that are perceived as influential for the non-participation of other residents. The reason that respondents mainly answered the question in relation to non-participation instead of circumstances or characteristics that support participation, can be explained by the low participation rate of residents at the *wijktafels*. The residents, but also most of the other actors were aware of this and therefore were directly inclined to think of possible reasons why other residents weren't participating. According to respondent 1, the absence of other residents can be explained by a lack of time, he said "*people are occupied with their own lives and don't have time*". The time constraint was also an issue for young residents who were asked to participate by one of the employees (R05) of the welfare organisations, for the simple reason that the collaborative meetings were held during school – and working hours. Respondent 7 therefore addressed that meetings should take place after working hours in order to welcome more participants.

Interestingly, not all respondents thought about the individual characteristics related to residents with a migration background. Only one out of seven respondents referred to the

language barrier that results in less participation from this group (36%) within the neighbourhood. *“Yes, partially it will be because of a language barrier, the past years we have had a considerate influx of people with a non-Dutch background and it is difficult for them to read long letters with long sentences”* (R06). Another respondent did refer to the inability of residents with a migration background simply because they are hard to reach by the municipality with use of the open invitation that was sent out via different channels (online, neighbourhood newspaper, survey) which results in the lack of familiarity with the *wijkagenda* (R07). However, this was not only the case for residents with a migration background as respondent 7 also referred to another neighbour who did not know about the project of the *wijkagenda*. This experience of this respondent that people did not participate because they did not know or hear anything about the project corresponds with Kondratiuk’s research that showed that only 17% of the respondents knew what the *wijkagenda* was. Additionally, it appeared that one of the two participating residents was asked to attend the meeting, this resulted in a selective ability to participate in comparison to people who were not asked and also not informed because they did not read the open invitation.

### **Like to**

Firstly, the two residents expressed that they were willing to participate because they recognize the importance of participation for the liveability of the neighbourhood. One resident explained: *“I try to contribute to the liveability of my neighbourhood and its environment...and if I am able to so than I’d like to contribute. That is my reason to participate”* (R07). One of the professionals argued that the first and most important motivation to participate would be that they just want that the environment in which they live is experienced as pleasant (R04). This resonates with the overall incentive to participate for the residents and professionals at the collaborative meeting. They are willing to participate because they want to invest in the liveability of the neighbourhood.

Secondly, some respondents mentioned that irritations about certain issues in the neighbourhood motivated them or others to participate. The professional from the welfare organisation emphasized that children had some frustrations because they did not feel welcome in the neighbourhood (R05). This was an incentive for them to discuss these issues with the respondent, who would represent them at the *wijktafel*. The policy officer (R02) also mentioned

that people have irritations about the deprivation of the green spaces and the low budget for maintenance, however residents themselves did not mention they were irritated or frustrated.

The lack of interest that residents have for issues of the social and physical liveability is often mentioned by the actors that were interviewed. This was often related to the lack of urgency that these issues pose for people who do not participate. One of the policy officers even sympathised with non-participating residents by emphasizing that she does not understand why the project wants to discuss and make refurbishment plans while previous implemented plans are not finished yet (R02). Hereby she supports the understanding that residents believe that decision-making in the *wijkagenda* is not urgent enough to invest time and energy in.

Finally, the policy officer mentioned that in Houtwijk, just like in other neighbourhoods of the Hague people are not interested in participating in public and voluntary projects because they have their own issues and struggles at home that need their time and energy.

### **Enabled to**

As mentioned earlier, the information provided by Kondratiuk's report and available information online have shown that all citizens were enabled to participate by reacting on the open invitation. This means that all citizens were provided with the opportunity to participate and were therefore enabled to participate. However, the only citizens who did participate in the collaborative meetings were also members of social organisations within the neighbourhood. Both residents support the expectation that their involvement in the social network of the neighbourhood enabled them to participate. The first resident explained "*you are automatically contacted if you are a member of all those groups*" and later referred to himself as a "*famous Houtwijker*" and for that reason "*always can participate in these kind of things*" (R01). The other resident (R07) confirmed this understanding and stated that he did not remember applying for participation, but he believed he was contacted and asked to participate.

Other stakeholders emphasized that they experienced that the residents who did participate were already organised in resident organisations or other projects and were therefore also already familiar with people from the municipality, which makes it easier to get involved (R03, R06). This means that both residents were directly or indirectly enabled to participate in a selective manner, since their involvement and active character in the neighbourhood provided the opportunity to be informed or asked to participate.

### **Asked to**

As described in the previous paragraph, all citizens were enabled to participate by a general and open invitation which means that the municipality indirectly asked all citizens to participate. In general, the respondents did indicate that they were either unfamiliar with this invitation or emphasized that this manner of asking residents to participate would not be very fruitful. The employee of the welfare organisation emphasized that for some residents it would be a “big step” to reply on such an invitation that is posted on a survey or retrieved via mail (R05). This understanding was complemented by another respondent who emphasized that an open invitation was not enough to reach all residents, and therefore it would be good if the municipality reached out to residents in person by going around in the neighbourhood and engage in conversations there (R06). This respondent also emphasized that it would be better to ask a bigger group of citizens for interactive decision-making in a later stage that is more focused on the implementation, because citizens can be asked to think a long with more specific and focused policy plans.

Lastly, one policy officer expressed a concern that citizens were asked too much to participate which refers to a fear of participation fatigue. She explained that Houtwijk is already very active with participation projects that work on the green spaces and refurbishment of the streets, and therefore could understand that citizens were not interested in participation for the *wijkagenda*. One resident indeed explained that the neighbourhood is already working on 20 projects and said “*and now they come with the wijkagenda, and AGAIN everyone can vote*” (R01) hereby expressing somewhat of a confusion about the added value of the *wijkagenda*.

## **Responded to**

Participants expressed their satisfaction with the responsiveness of the interactive process. The provision of transparent feedback by the municipality during the collaborative discussion was perceived as a valuable factor, because residents directly received clear information about their questions and possible recommendations. Whereas one of the respondents emphasized the direct and transparent feedback by stating “*Instead of a civil servant that promises to check something and will get back to you in 2-3 weeks, you had the opportunity to ask more questions which was very useful*” (R06), another respondent said that it was a valuable process because the municipality could provide response by also explaining why some ideas or recommendations could not be implemented (R04).

However, it must be noted that the transparent response of the collaborative network was only provided within the meetings and not to the neighbourhood. One of the respondents therefore explained that it would have been good if the municipality communicated the

development of the process and decisions via the neighbourhood newspaper, which would also be an opportunity to reach out to new participants (R06).

Furthermore, the policy officer emphasized that it is important to make results visible by responding to wishes of the residents (R02). Other residents supported this expectation and referred to the success of direct actions that are already a result of the *wijkagenda* collaboration, such as the agreement with the football accommodation and the plan to engage citizens in the refurbishment of the streets (R04 & R05).

### **5.1.2 The Depth of participation**

The second and third collaborative meetings were divided in three groups, each discussed one of the topics. Notably, the level of citizen participation seemed to differ per policy topic. The most limited level of participation was expressed by participants in the group that focused on the topic ‘maintenance of the green-spaces’. Because this topic is well-known in the neighbourhood as problematic because of a low-budget that causes deprivation, several projects and plans were already in development. The discussion in the group was therefore mainly focused on retrieving new input and opinions about the current situation, this means that citizens mainly had a consulting role complemented with an advising role due to their recommendations on specific policy areas. One of the two residents specifically emphasized that it was the municipality’s task to make the decisions based on the participants’ opinions (R01). He also explained that everyone had a chance to share their thoughts and ideas, hereby providing advice on specific policy themes such as the maintenance of the sidewalks (R01). The other groups that discussed the topics ‘refurbishment of the neighbourhood’ and ‘focus on young people’ facilitated a more powerful role for citizens in the participation project, because they were more involved in the formulation of new action plans or decisions. However, no specific policies were formulated solely by residents during the *wijktafels*, because the formulated action plans were a first draft based on which the municipality would later create the official *wijkagenda*. This means that the *wijkagenda* in general provided no opportunity for co-decision as level of participation. This claim is supported by the understanding of both residents that it is the municipality’s responsibility to make decisions and create plans for the *wijkagenda* (R01, R07). Furthermore, the policy officer explained that the *wijkagenda* is set up to listen to residents wishes in their decision-making (R03). However, only the municipality decides if, how and when these wishes will be taken into account in specific policy decisions (R03). The group that discussed the policy topic ‘focus on young people’ made an agreement on the use of the football

accommodation, that resulted in an action plan via the employee of the welfare organisation (R05). This is an example of co-creation as level of citizen participation, because the municipality and stakeholders collaboratively worked on a policy solution.

## **5.2 Input legitimacy Houtwijk**

### **5.2.1 Influence**

The ability to impact the agenda was quite limited for citizens in the collaborative governance network because the agenda was based on the prioritised themes that were a result of the survey. This means that all residents of the neighbourhood who voted on the survey had impact on the agenda although they did not participate in the interactive discussion of the *wijkagenda*. None of the respondents expressed a negative experience with this process, however the consultant of the housing corporation expressed his concern that the other topics might get less attention than they need (R06). The ability to impact policy decisions was difficult to assess because the official *wijkagenda* and its long-term policies and action plans were not published at the time of the interviews, however several respondents expressed their satisfaction with the experience that their recommendations were put on paper or were taken seriously. Respondent 4, one of the employees did also mention that he did recognise the influence from his organisation and the children who are recognised as full-fledged residents because the municipality already showed up and promised the children to implement their plan for the refurbishment of the streets. The interviewed residents were however less positive about their influence on the *wijkagenda*'s policies, whereas the first stated that he did not have the feeling that he could co-decide on the policies (R01). The other resident emphasized that his input was already familiar to the municipality and therefore they recognised the issues, meaning that this input did not impact or change the policies in a significant way (R07). Interestingly, more respondents referred to limited influence because the prioritised topics resulted in predictable input from stakeholders that did not ask for significant changes of existing policies, but mostly for more attention, energy or budget to solve specific issues.

### **5.2.2 Representation**

This research started with the expectation that the neighbourhood Houtwijk would have less issues with ensuring a fair and inclusive representation in the collaborative governance meeting in terms of ethnicity because it is a more homogeneous neighbourhood. But also because the neighbourhood scored high on other individual characteristics such as age, educational level and work that are expected to be related to higher participation rates. However, respondents express that they have experienced to have mostly seen the familiar faces at the collaborative

meetings, which means that the usual suspects who often participate in neighbourhood projects were also present at *wijkagenda* meetings (R1,2,5,7). When asked about the diversity of the collaborative network most respondents answered that it was not very diverse, except for one employee of the welfare organisation who thought of diversity in terms of age and answered that all age categories were well represented (R03). However, this does not correspond with the experience of one of the residents who answered the question by simply describing the group as “50+” referring to the age of the residents (R01). Other respondents supported the understanding of a lack of diversity referring that they missed people who are not already involved in the neighbourhood through existing organisations and networks and people who live in the social rent houses. Respondent 7 explained “*Let me put it like this, in terms of residents it was not really representative, if I look at the people around the table and the composition of the neighbourhood. I recognized the people of the different organisations.....I did only see a few people who participated spontaneously*”.

Notwithstanding this low participation rate and the lack of diversity, none of the respondents expressed a clear concern that the interest of non-participants was not represented. This can be explained by the participation of various municipality services and other professionals. This resulted in a general trust that the network was representing the general interest of all residents, and therefore also thinking about the interests and needs of residents who were not participating in the decision-making process. The municipality officer for example explained that she was happy with the professionals from other organisations, since these were unusual suspects that she has not often the opportunity to talk with (R02). The belief that the neighbourhood was well represented in terms of interests was expressed multiple times by referring to the participants as experts or people with knowledge about the issues in the neighbourhood due to their involvement in other neighbourhood organisations. Additionally, the consultant of the housing corporation did recognize the low participation rate of people who live in social rent houses in general and admitted none of these residents were present at the *wijktafel*. However, he emphasized that their participation “*would probably not have led to much more input*” (R06).

### **5.3 Throughput legitimacy Houtwijk**

#### **5.3.1 Deliberation**

Firstly, the indicator ‘equal opportunity to voice opinion’ emphasized that respondents expressed their satisfaction with the discussion in relation to the provided ability of all participants to share their thoughts or experiences on certain subjects. The experience that the

municipality facilitated a fair and equal form of deliberation and discussion was broadly supported by all respondents. One of the respondents described the last meetings as follows: *“there was enough room to deliver input and discuss about the experiences and insights. I have experienced that as pleasant”* (R05).

Secondly, the indicator ‘fair and argumentative reasoning’ referred to the manner by which participants explained issues in the neighbourhood and argued for certain solutions. One of the policy officers of the municipality highlighted the importance of understanding what the issues of residents are and was under the impression that the right questions were asked by all participants to discuss these issues (R02). She further emphasized that this shared understanding is important to “get the right people around the table”, hereby she referred to colleagues of the municipality who will be able to help with specific policy solutions for the problems that were discussed. One of the employees of the welfare organisation (R05) emphasized that he felt that the collaborative meeting was a safe environment which resulted in an opportunity where participants also felt the opportunity to disagree with one and other and question certain things. This eventually led to more precise conclusions of the policy goals (R05). Interestingly, the consultant from the housing corporation emphasized that he was positively surprised by involved parties from the municipality because they really listened and collected the input from the residents during the discussion. *“There is always a risk with civil servants and policy officers that they already have a vision and seek for citizens who share this vision and want to implement this. However, this really felt like they wanted collect the input about the issues on which actions needs to be taken...”* (R06). These expressed experiences of the different participating actors in the collaborative meeting show that people took the opportunity to argue for certain policy issues and their possible solution, which was facilitated by the modest attitude of the municipality actors.

### **5.3.2. Civic skills and values**

Citizens talked about the manner by which the decision-making process led to more involvement with the community. The policy officer of the municipality (R02) explained that the approach of the *wijkagenda* was focused on the question “what can you do” and therefore created awareness that participants should address other citizens on their behaviour and collaborate on the decisions and actions that are formulated during the meetings. The same policy officer also emphasized that the involvement of citizens is not something that arises from the decision-making process, but will be something that needs to be ensured by making action plans more specific in the following phases of the policy-making process (R05). The consultant



from the housing corporation stated that *“residents were really eager to make choices about the implementation”* (R06). This shows that the interactive process that involves co-creation and advising has a positive influence on resident’s willingness to think about the neighbourhood and be involved with policy decisions. However, just like the policy officer, the consultant emphasized that residents will be more involved if plans and policy decisions are more specific and focused on implementation. Since the plans and policies of the *wijkagenda* were mostly long-term and not specifically formulated during the last collaborative meeting they did not directly create involvement in such manner that residents or other stakeholders ensured their involvement. This can be exemplified by the answer of one of the residents when he was asked if he had a feeling that he should take ownership over the decisions that were made, he answered *“for most subjects I care about the input, but I do not intend to do executive actions”* (R07).

Of course, this relates to the second indicator ‘feeling responsible for the environment’. In general respondents could not really explain if participants had a feeling of responsibility for the neighbourhood environment, they could only answer if they had a feeling that responsibility is taken for decisions and agreements of the *wijkagenda* meeting, as discussed in the previous paragraph. However, one resident said the feeling of responsibility was often taken away because the discussion often focused on what tasks the professionals could carry out (R07). This does not correspond with the experience of the policy officer (R03) who emphasized how the meeting created awareness on collective action. Therefore, I think that the municipality failed to get all parties on the same page in relation to the feeling of responsibility.

## **5.4 Participatory Design Bouwlust-Vrederust**

As explained in the descriptive chapter, the project has dealt with a significant delay in Bouwlust-Vrederust. The second *wijktafel* was initially planned in June and further formulation of action plans in the months July and August. However, a second meeting did not take place and the new project leader was still working on a new plan. Unfortunately, this jeopardized the significance of the results, as respondents could only express their opinion and experiences with the participation and decision-making in the only collaborative meeting. This means that the comparison with the process of Houtwijk is made more difficult, however relevant comparisons will be made in the analysis chapter. Moreover, I have interviewed the new project leader with use of my interview topic guide and was able to get informed on her new plans to finish the *wijkagenda*.

### **5.4.1 Width of participation Can do**

As in the neighbourhood Houtwijk the characteristics and circumstances to participate were explained in terms of reasons for non-participation. Within Bouwlust-Vrederust the most important factor was the lack of time. Because the meeting was planned during working hours, residents with a job or children at school were not able to attend.

The other characteristic that was mentioned more often than by respondents in Houtwijk as a reason for non-participation was the migration background that resulted to an expected language barrier (R09). One of the professionals explained “*80% has a migration background and 70% does not master the Dutch language, these people won’t participate in the meeting*” (R11).

### **Like to**

Since only one respondent was able to participate in the interview of this research it was difficult to get a broad image of the reasons for which they were willing to participate. From the one resident who did participate it became clear that he was willing to participate because he was an active citizen who was involved in previous *wijkagenda*’s and other projects (R09).

The community builder explained that she noticed that some residents were less willing to participate in projects such as the *wijkagenda* because they didn’t receive the appreciation they expected (R08).

Another professional explained that many residents are not willing to participate because they lack the interest in projects as big as the *wijkagenda*, which is not specific and focused enough to represent the issues they have interest in (R11). This professional also emphasized that in general, the population in Bouwlust-Vrederust is occupied with personal issues and struggles “*behind their front door*”, like concerns about getting food on the table and therefore have less interest in participating in voluntary projects (R11).

### **Enabled to**

As described in the descriptive chapter, all citizens in Bouwlust-Vrederust were enabled to participate because they were informed about the opportunity via the local newspaper or a personal letter. In contrast to Houtwijk, the familiarity of the meeting was less limited to people within the active and social network of the neighbourhood. This understanding is supported by the explanation by the resident that he did not know all participants and some participating residents seemed to be less familiar with neighbourhood activities (R08).

The timing of the meeting, during working and school hours, was mentioned multiple times as an unfavourable time that provides a limited effort from the municipality to enable participation for many residents (R09,R10).

### **Asked to**

Although all residents were asked to participate via the local newspaper or personal letters many residents were not familiar with the project. The resident, who was personally invited by the project leader therefore emphasized that the number of participating residents would have been higher if more people were asked in a personal manner (R08). The new project leader was aware of the low turn-out and therefore has planned to approach people on the streets by setting up a place with coffee and a white board to collect input by inviting them directly and personally (R12). Additionally, she intends to invite residents via school and other social organisations or projects in the neighbourhood (R12).

### **Responded to**

This factor of the CLEAR-model was difficult to analyse in this early stage of the process in Bouwlust-Vrederust. Since the meeting with the residents was separated from the professionals and present services of the municipality, the direct responsiveness where the municipality and professionals could directly react to policy ideas was not possible as it was in Houtwijk.

The resident and two professionals did express their satisfaction with the transparent feedback in the first phase of the process, where participants were informed about the plans and received the minutes of the first meeting (R08, R09,R10).

However, the delay of the project has jeopardized this transparency and the responsiveness of the municipality. A recent update from the resident made clear that he and other participants did not receive formal information about the delay. This means that participants were still expecting to be involved in new meetings and were disappointed with this delay and bad communication (R08).

### **5.4.2 Depth of participation**

The results on the depth of participation were explained in a unanimous manner by all 5 respondents. The resident (R08) and the professionals (R09, R10, R11) emphasized that the meetings were focused on gathering input from participants. The project leader (R12) confirmed this and explained that the first *wijktafel* was meant to gather opinions and

experiences with the most important points of attention that were indicated by the survey and neighbourhood profile. The descriptions of the respondents mostly fit the ‘consulting’ level of participation, which means that the municipality will be responsible for decision-making and planning and residents only have the power to share their opinion and knowledge to influence these decisions indirectly. Although the initial plan from the first project leader was to organize the second meeting in a collective manner, with residents and professionals combined. Which means that this plan would have provided more interaction between residents, the municipality and professionals for which they could have retrieved more participating influence in the form of ‘advising’ or ‘co-creation’. However, the new project leader intends to mostly approach residents in smaller meetings, on the streets and in public areas to collect more input, and organize other separate meetings for professionals (R12). The new project leader therefore intends to facilitate citizen participation mostly in a consulting manner.

## **5.5 Input legitimacy Bouwlust-Vrederust**

### **5.5.1 Influence**

Just as the collaborative process in Houtwijk the ability to influence the agenda was open to everyone who filled in the survey. Since the survey for Bouwlust-Vrederust was only distributed in Bouwlust, the residents in Vrederust had no influence on the outcome of the survey (R08). Participants in both *wijktafels* indicated that the municipality already summarized the main topics and challenges for which they wanted to collect input (R09,R11). The resident explained that agenda items were very similar to the agenda items in previous *wijkagenda's* (called “*wijkprogramma's*” 8 and 4 years ago) and in his memory also “*led to more or less similar plans*” hereby referring to the predictable input from citizens (R08). Therefore, it seems that participants influence does not lead to significant changes of existing policies, but mostly to more attention, energy or budget to solve specific issues.

### **5.5.2 Representation**

Compared to Houtwijk, significantly more residents participated in the collaborative meeting. However, several respondents agreed that 11 participants were not enough to provide a representative image of the neighbourhood (R09, R11). This understanding was most strongly emphasized by the professionals who did not know which residents were present, but did explain that the neighbourhood is so diverse that 11 residents will not be sufficient to represent this diversity (R09, R11). The community builder explained “*for me Bouwlust is a very different neighbourhood than Vrederust, but even the districts within the neighbourhood are often different*” (R09). Both the community builder and the professional from the housing corporation thought it would be best if the *wijkagenda* was made on a smaller scale, because

people would feel more represented by the challenges and problems on the level of their street or district within the neighbourhood (R09,R11). This smaller scale would than make it easier to create representation of the diverse population within the neighbourhood.

The resident made clear that more people would have participated if the municipality had invited more people (R09). Also, he did not have the feeling that people were not welcome but did admit that mostly the active citizens and therefore the usual suspects were invited to the meeting (R09). Additionally, he emphasized that the meeting was a clear example of usual suspects in neighbourhood participation by saying “*neighbourhood participation is still the story of the Dutch white men and the less youthful citizens*” (R09). Remarkably, neither the resident nor the professionals indicated that the described underrepresentation of “unusual suspects” who are less active in the neighbourhood or people with a migration background was problematic.

Lastly the professionals agreed that the general interest of all citizens in the neighbourhood were presented by the diverse representation of professionals (R10, R11). However, the same professionals indicated that this representation could be improved if more children, schools and practitioners from care institutions were involved (R10, R11). This means that in terms of social liveability the interest of younger residents and older residents or residents with health issues could use better representation in the *wijkagenda* Bouwlust-Vrederust.

## **5.6 Throughput legitimacy Bouwlust-Vrederust**

### **5.6.1 Deliberation**

Since the separate interactive meetings were set up to collect input in terms of options and experiences, the indicator “fair and argumentative reasoning” was not relevant. One of the professionals explained that there was no room for an argumentative discussion on specific decisions or plans, “*it was mostly focused on collecting input*” (R11). According to the same respondent the “equal opportunity to voice opinion” was well managed and facilitated, however it was insurmountable that some participants had more to say than others (R11). The community builder shared the satisfaction with the well-managed deliberation by emphasizing the stories and ideas she was able to share (R08). Remarkably, the resident shared that he was satisfied with the limited opportunity to discuss specific plans in their meeting, because he imagined this could have led to “*an annoying situation*” (R09). He said “*no discussion seemed reasonable to me, everyone was just able to share their opinion*” (R09)

### **5.6.2. Civic skills and values**

Involvement through ownership over decisions is not accomplished in this early stage of the *wijkagenda* project in Bouwlust-Vrederust, because these decisions will be made during future meetings. The project leader did indicate that this was an important part of the project and the focus on citizen participation and the ability to voice their opinion during the following steps in the process should increase a sense of ownership (R12). This does not mean that the first collaborative meeting was not fruitful for the civic skills and values of participants, the communitybuilder told that the professionals agreed over the importance that residents take responsibility over the living environment (R8). However, the professional from the housing corporation was pessimistic about the ability to create responsibility amongst residents via the *wijkagenda* because “*these people have other priorities*” (R11). In his opinion, the *wijkagenda* should formulate action plans that are facilitated by the municipality and professionals in the first place, without asking too much help from citizens (R11).

## Chapter VI Analysis

This thesis has firstly analyzed which factors played a significant role in residents' ability and willingness to participate on the one hand, and the factors influenced by the municipality that provided the support, opportunity and incentive to participate on the other hand. Therefore, the first sub-question *“What kind of participatory design does the collaborative governance network of the wijkagenda in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust have?”* will be answered in the following paragraph.

The results have shown that several levels of participation, as indicated by Edelenbos' ladder of participation (Edelenbos,2005), were incorporated in the participatory design of the *wijkagenda* Houtwijk. Analysis on the depth of participation revealed that these residents and other stakeholders mostly experienced the role of citizens as consulting or advising, meaning that they could either react to the policy agenda and decisions or propose personal recommendations for solutions of certain policy issues. However, also the level of co-creation, that provides more responsibility and influence on decisions to citizens through collaboration, was recognized by participants in some of the groups within the *wijkagenda* network. This means that the municipality was selective in their decision to involve citizens on higher level of participation such as advising or co-creation in the policymaking process. Although the goal of the *wijkagenda* was *“to enlarge the control and involvement of citizens and entrepreneurs on issues of safety and liveability”* they didn't always involve citizens and other stakeholders in higher levels of participation. Whether the goal to enlarge the control and involvement of citizens will be reached in the *wijkagenda* Bouwlust-Vrederust is more questionable than in Houtwijk. The results revealed that residents only participated on a consulting level because the municipality pre-dominantly wants to collect input. Since the project-leader intends to collect more input from residents, but also intends to organize more separate meetings for professionals, the residents will not have the opportunity to discuss and create action plans and participate on the level of advising or co-creation.

According to Agger, the policymaking process should have involved citizens not only in the design, but also in the implementation and enforcement of public policies through co-creation and co-decision. The results show that the access to these levels of participation were still very limited at this time in process in both neighbourhoods.

The width of participation that is also relevant for the participatory design from the collaborative governance network of the *wijkagenda* is analyzed on the different key factors of the CLEAR-model to assess how the *wijkagenda*'s facilitate meaningful participation. The results in both neighbourhoods relating to the 'can do' and 'like to' mostly reveal elements

relating to individual circumstances or characteristics such as age, available time, migration background, living situation and personal occupations or even struggles that affect the perceived ability or willingness to participate. This relates to research from Snel, Custers and Engbersen (2018) that claims that participation can predominantly be explained by individual characteristics. Notably in Houtwijk the results show that young and older people in the neighbourhood were likely to be able or willing to participate, the former group because they were stimulated by a welfare organisations and the latter because they are the ‘usual suspects’ who are already very involved in the neighbourhood. Interestingly, Snel, Custers and Engbersen expect that the characteristic of a young or older age has a negative effect on participation, but for Houtwijk the residents with a more average age are less likely to participate which is also linked to their lack of time due to obligations at work. The expectation that the individual characteristic of ‘migration background’ has a negative effect on participation is recognized by several respondents in Houtwijk who emphasize that these residents who mostly live in the social rent housing area of the neighbourhood seem less willing or able to participate. This expectation is also recognized in Bouwlust-Vrederust where people emphasize that the people with a migration background have difficulties with participating because of the language barrier or personal struggles that ask much of their time and interest for which reason they can or don’t want to participate.

Furthermore, the result that social networks in the neighbourhood Houtwijk had a positive effect on participation in the *wijkagenda* does also correspond with the understanding that neighbourhood characteristics have some effect on participation (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). In this case the absence of the neighbourhood characteristic ‘diversity’ could be related to strongly organised social networks such as a resident organisation or a neighbourhood prevention team in which people participate and are involved with the liveability of the neighbourhood. Whether the predominant homogeneous character of the neighbourhood has a positive influence on the social networks in the neighbourhood was not researched in this thesis, however the research did reveal that residents in both Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust confirm the understanding that Houtwijk has more and stronger organised social networks or organisations. Indeed, the results have shown that the social networks in Bouwlust-Vrederust had less effect on the participation of residents. Several residents were involved or asked via their social networks or contacts with the municipality, but in contrast to Houtwijk there were some residents who were less active and not always involved in neighbourhood activities and thus “unusual suspects”.



Lastly, the key factors ‘asked to’ and ‘responded to’ were related to the municipality’s effort to invite citizens to participate and respond to their wishes and recommendations. On the one hand citizens in Houtwijk were critical about the fact that an open invitation is not sufficient to reach all residents in the neighbourhood and some citizens appeared to be selectively asked to participate due to their “expertise” via their involvement in organisations within the neighbourhood. On the other hand, citizens were positive about the interactive character of the collaborative meetings that resulted in clear and transparent feedback and even direct action plans with visible results. In Bouwlust-Vrederust it appeared that some residents were also invited for their expertise as a result of their active role in the neighbourhood, however the presence of less active residents supports the understanding that the open invitation was successful in approaching unusual suspects. The responsiveness of the municipality was difficult to assess in this early stage of the process, however it became clear that the approach to organise separate meetings for residents and professionals compromised the interactive collaboration and opportunity for the municipality to directly respond to policy questions or issues.

All with all, the depth of participation that tells us something about the participatory design of the *wijkagenda* Houtwijk can be described as an approach by which the municipality facilitates limited influence on policy decisions via co-decision, but successfully involves citizens in a consulting and advising role by being very responsive with the use of varying relevant services of the municipality. This means that co-decision does not happen, because the final policy decisions are made only by the municipality. This means that the width of participation on the level of policy decisions is limited to policy officers from the municipality. However, the residents and other stakeholders were successfully enabled and asked to participate on lower levels of participation. Additionally, the results show that despite the efforts to have an open participation process and invite people via different communication channels, the participants in the interactive meetings did address that some people are not able, but mostly not willing to participate which results in a notable attendance of the usual suspects who are enabled to join via their previous involvement in the neighbourhood.

The participatory design of Bouwlust-Vrederust can so far be described as a limited in terms of depth of participation with only a consulting role for residents in the policymaking process. The width of participation is therefore focused on participation that leads to input from residents. The results have shown that more unusual suspects were asked or enabled to participate than in Houtwijk. Interestingly, the individual characteristics related to the ability and willingness to participate were similar to Houtwijk.

***To what extent is interactive decision-making process of the Wijkagenda legitimate in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust?***

Firstly, the input-legitimacy refers to the extent to which citizens are involved in the formulation of policy decisions by which they are affected (Strebel et al., 2019; Dryzek & List, 2003). In other words, the results should show that the legitimacy of the interactive decision-making is depended on the extent to which the *wijkagenda* is governed by the people (Scharpf, 1999). The influence of citizens on the decision-making within the collaborative governance networks of both neighbourhoods was in general limited. The result of the interviews show that residents experienced their impact on the agenda setting small, because the prioritised topics were chosen by the municipality on the basis of the survey. Every resident therefore could have some impact on the policy agenda, even if they did not participate in the collaborative network of the *wijktafels*. More importantly the impact on policy decisions was limited for participants. Because, firstly, it was hard to assess if policy changes were made on the basis of citizens' recommendations at this early stage of the process. Secondly, because the prioritised themes resulted in predictable input and discussions that did not change the plans in a significant manner. The fact that residents had limited impact on the decision-making is explained by Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) who emphasize (1) that local political leaders fear that participatory governance will threaten their political primacy and (2) that the outcomes of the interactive decision-making process are often not used in the public policies that follow.

The representativeness of the decision-making process in both neighbourhoods showed positive experiences in terms of the representation of the interests of all residents in the neighbourhood. Although respondents in Houtwijk confirmed that the attendance of residents was low, they did believe that all decisions were also representing the interests of non-participants due to the presence of municipality services and other professionals who were believed to defend the general interest of all residents. Most interestingly, when discussing the representation in terms of the diversity of the participation in relation to the population of Houtwijk, people firstly referred to the overrepresentation of older residents in comparison to younger adults (working-adults). But in second place they, also referred to the absence of citizens with a migration background. However, the absence of this group seemed to be perceived as less problematic because this group is perceived a small part of the community and it seemed that they did not believe that their representation in the group would result in different input. Therefore, the experiences of the respondents show that their perception does

not match with the reality that the population with a migration background is not small but comprises almost 40% of the population in Houtwijk.

In Bouwlust-Vrederust, the interviewed residents did not problematise the insufficient representation of people with a migration background or younger age categories. He acknowledged that the two participating residents with a migration background did not reflect on the population of the neighbourhood, but emphasized that this issue was common to all participation projects in the neighbourhood. The professionals did not have a clear image of the representation in the separate *wijktafel* but emphasized it was important to collect input from as many residents as possible. Most importantly they emphasized that the policy issues and challenges need to be represented on street and district level, therefore less emphasizing the importance that all diverse groups are represented in the *wijkagenda* meetings. Additionally, they agreed that it is difficult to reach certain groups and facilitate their participation, therefore it is important to involve active residents who are able to represent the diverse population because of their expertise and knowledge about Bouwlust-Vrederust.

Secondly, the throughput-legitimacy concerns the quality of the governance process and is assessed by looking at the results for the indicator deliberation and civic-skills and values.

The deliberation during the interactive governance process in both neighbourhoods can be recognized as a good practice. All respondents experienced a pleasant discussion in which all people had an equal and fair opportunity to voice their opinion. Also, did the *wijktafel* Houtwijk provide an opportunity for argumentative reasoning where the municipality engaged with citizens to formulate policies and action plans. Specific agreements and action plans are a successful result of this argumentative deliberation and prove the legitimacy of the collaborative network.

Additionally, the results of throughput legitimacy in terms of civic skills and virtues were less positive. Participants in Houtwijk emphasized that the *wijkagenda* only facilitated involvement in the formulation of policies because the collaboration did not involve citizens in the implementation or enforcement of policies and decision. Although the municipality was planning to set up action groups in which citizens would be involved in these later stages of the policymaking process, this was not part of the collaborative meeting and no specific agreements between the municipality and residents were made about this. The interactive decision-making was however successful in engaging citizens to be involved in the planning process and therefore proved to enhance the legitimacy of the decisions. The results show that a feeling of responsibility through ownership, which enhances the legitimacy, was mostly recognised by respondents if residents were involved in direct action plans and agreements. Since most plans

and policies of the *wijkagenda* were formulated broadly with focus on long-term improvement, the specific engagement of citizens through ownership was missing.

Since the *wijktafel* in Bouwlust-Vrederust was organized to collect input and missed the interaction with the municipality to create action plans and formulate specific policy ideas, respondents did not experience that the process led to a feeling of responsibility over the environment. There means that the interactive governance approach between residents, stakeholders and the municipality, which facilitates depth of participation through the levels of advising and co-creation are more successful in organising ownership amongst residents and a feeling over responsibility over neighbourhood issues.

## Chapter VII Conclusion

The participatory and interactive project of the *wijkagenda* was aimed at giving citizens more influence on policies and decisions concerning the social and physical liveability of the neighbourhood. This collaborative approach is in accordance with the coalition agreement 2019-2022 “samen voor de stad” to improve the relationship between the municipality and the neighbourhoods and change the negative trend where policies are implemented without consultation of the residents and other stakeholders (Samen voor de stad, 2019; Den Haag, 2021). Edelenbos and van Meerkerk (2016) indeed claim that interactive governance can bridge the gap between the government and its citizens if it can ensure the democratic legitimacy of the governance process. The democratic legitimacy of interactive governance does not only have the potential to bridge the gap between the government and its citizens, but can also result in a broader support base and more effective policy implementation (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016). The positive effect of citizen participation on democratic legitimacy can be assessed in respect to the democratic values of influence, inclusion, deliberation and civic skills and virtues (Michels & de Graaf, 2010; Michels, 2012). By analysing the citizen participation in terms of width and depth and evaluating the democratic values mentioned above, the main research question: “*How does citizen participation in the collaborative governance network of the Wijkagenda contribute to the legitimacy of the interactive decision-making in the neighbourhoods Bouwlust-Vrederust and Houtwijk?*” can now be answered.

The participatory design of the collaborative governance network of the *wijkagenda* provided the opportunity for residents to engage in policymaking and neighbourhood planning. However, the contribution to democratic legitimacy in terms of influence was limited because citizens were mostly provided with access in an advising and consulting role, for this reason their impact to change policies and co-create new policy plans was hindered by the municipality. This can be explained by the fear of the representative governance actor (in this case the municipality) that citizens take over too much political primacy and the understanding that participatory governance is mainly used to create a broad support base (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006). The limited influence also resulted in a disappointing effect on the value of civic skills and virtues because the limited influence on policy plans logically relates to the lack of involvement and ownership over certain decisions. This limited contribution of citizen participation to the democratic legitimacy means that the municipality did not fully succeed to bridge the gap between themselves and its citizens.

However, in general the contribution of citizen participation was more successful in terms of the experiences with deliberation and representativeness. Firstly, the citizen

participation in Houtwijk created a fair and equal discussion between relevant stakeholders, by which argumentative reasoning also led to relevant feedback from the municipality and some more specific agreements. In Bouwlust, the participation process did not facilitate deliberation in the form of argumentative reasoning but did provide the equal opportunity for participants to voice their opinion and discuss issues with fellow residents. Secondly, the respondents were satisfied with the representation because the participants (residents and professionals) did reflect the interests of all residents instead of personal or specific interests. As mentioned by Michels (2012) the representativeness should say something about how representative the collaborative network is for the population at large and if no groups are excluded, meaning that also the “weak” interests should be heard and represented (Bekkers & Edwards, 2016). Two factors seemed to have influenced the experience of representation. (1) Most residents in Houtwijk first mentioned age as an important element of representation in the collaborative network, referring to the usual suspects and the lack of younger residents. (2) Residents and professionals were aware that citizens with a migration background were not physically represented in the collaborative network but did not perceive this as a problem because they didn’t believe this would result in different input. In Houtwijk these two factors appear to be related to the perception from participants that their neighbourhood has mostly a homogeneous character. When respondents from Houtwijk think about representation, they do not think about the need to prevent exclusion from these groups or “weak” interests.

Furthermore, research in Bouwlust-Vrederust has revealed that the lack of diverse representation is not more problematised by residents in a more heterogeneous neighbourhood and therefore the process is not perceived as less legitimate. Residents and professionals in Bouwlust-Vrederust are familiar with the difficulty to organize representative participation and therefore seemed inclined to accept that active residents with expert knowledge and professionals make decisions for non-participating groups within the neighbourhood. However, the research results on Bouwlust-Vrederust did emphasize that the *wijkagenda* would be more successful if citizens recognize the issues and challenges from their living environment and therefore feel more represented by the formulated policy and action plans. Professionals therefore have indicated that this can only be accomplished if the *wijkagenda* would be formulated on a smaller scale. In the first place a separate *wijkagenda* for Bouwlust and another for Vrederust, but more ideally on district level such as for Venen, Oorden and Raden or even on street-level.

Although the *wijkagenda*’s Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust were difficult to compare because they were not in the same stage of the decision-making and planning process, this

research has shown that both neighbourhoods share similar issues with most importantly the democratic values influence and representativeness. To improve the democratic legitimacy of the *wijkagenda* Houtwijk via citizens participation, the municipality should involve residents in the decision-making process with more co-creation and co-decision power. Also, during the formulation of specific plans and the implementation phase, residents should be provided with more influence and responsibility to bridge the gap between citizens and the municipality.

At this early stage of the process in Bouwlust-Vrederust, citizen participation can contribute to democratic legitimacy if the collaborative decisions represent issues and challenges that need to be solved for all citizens in the neighbourhood. To achieve this, it is recommended to include a smaller-scale focus to ensure that no one feels excluded and recognized the urgency of policy plans in the *wijkagenda*.

## **6.2 Policy recommendations to the municipality The Hague**

Based on the results and conclusions of this thesis' research in the neighbourhoods Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust several recommendations can be made that could improve the new *wijkagenda*'s of other neighbourhoods or similar participatory projects within The Hague.

### **1. Invest time, effort and resources to create an inclusive representation of the neighbourhood within the collaborative meetings of the *wijkagenda*.**

For policymakers and project leaders involved with the *wijkagenda*'s in The Hague, the main take away should be that it is beneficial to ensure that the citizens at the *wijktafel* reflect the composition of the neighbourhood population. Of course, it will be impossible to have a 100% fair representation of the exact neighbourhood population. This research has shown that citizen participation is influenced by individual characteristics, such as age, ethnicity and personal involvement in the neighbourhood. By targeting people who are expected to be unable or unwilling to participate with a personal invitation, the municipality could improve the representativeness in a project such as the *wijkagenda*. Additionally, it provides a response to resident's critique that only active citizens are selectively invited, which leads to the presence of usual suspects. Although random sampling for choosing residents to participate would be the most optimal approach to enhance fair representation, this might exclude citizens who are willing to participate and thus comprise the perceived legitimacy. Therefore, it is recommended to include active citizens in the formation of the collaborative network and use their contacts, resources and social networks to reach out to 'unusual suspects'.

This research has revealed that it will be difficult to formulate a *wijkagenda* that represents such a big area and diverse population as Bouwlust-Vrederust. The municipality needs to critically assess if a *wijkagenda* is the correct tool to formulate representative policies and action plans in neighbourhoods that show varying and complicated challenges. Possibly it needs more small-scaled *agenda*'s for specific areas and districts within neighbourhoods to create participatory governance that is able to create trust, legitimacy and bridge the gap with citizens. Therefore, the important take – away is that participatory governance is no one-size-fits-all approach, and the experiences of citizens should always be considered to enhance legitimacy.

## **2. Make sure that policy officers from different services of the municipality participate**

Citizen participation can provide advantages within the collaborative governance network if the municipality ensures its responsiveness to citizens questions, wishes and recommendations. This responsiveness enhances the democratic legitimacy of the *wijkagenda*. The well-organized representation of policy officers from municipality services within the process of the *wijkagenda* Houtwijk can be indicated as a good practice of the municipality, and should also be implemented in the *wijkagenda* meetings of other neighbourhoods. Not only does the participation of policy officers from the municipality improve the responsiveness, it also ensures that the general interest of the neighbourhood will be prioritized during the collaboration with citizens and formulation of action plans.

## **3. Facilitate co-creation in the early stages of the decision-making process**

The results of the research in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust have shown that the limited impact on policy decisions or changes with the lower level of participation roles lead to a more limited involvement in the neighbourhood, because people are not able to co-create action plans or projects for which they can take ownership.

If people have a more influential role in planning and policymaking, they are more inclined to take ownership and responsibility over issues in the neighbourhood. This will contribute to the democratic legitimacy, as the gap between citizens and the municipality is bridged. Since it is the municipality's goal to get citizens more involved in the social and physical livability of the neighbourhood, they should use the *wijkagenda* not only to make long-term policies, but make specific action plans and



agreements in collaboration with citizens. This means that the municipality should not only prioritize the input phase where citizens mostly have a consulting or advising role, but also invest in the collaboration during the later phases. Specific and elaborated action plans formulated within a *wijkagenda* will facilitate a more focused participation invitation towards citizens that enables the municipality to involve participants in the implementation and enforcement phase.

## Chapter VIII Discussion

This thesis' research has provided valuable insights into the decisive factors that shape citizen participation and the participatory design of the *wijkagenda* in Houtwijk and Bouwlust-Vrederust. Additionally, this thesis has provided insights in the citizens and stakeholders experiences with the democratic values of the decision-making process. This research therefore contributed to the debate on the contribution of citizen participation to democratic legitimacy. Specifically, this research focused on an expected difference between a more homogeneous and a heterogeneous neighbourhood, with the expectation that the neighbourhood characteristic of diversity would complicate the legitimacy of the democratic value 'representativeness'. Additionally, the neighbourhood characteristic of diversity is often related to individual characteristics that complicate citizen participation. By taking this effect of neighbourhood diversity into consideration with use of a comparative case study, this research also contributed to the literature of governance of diversity.

Reflecting on this thesis results in relation to the literature, it must be noted that some theoretical expectations have not been confirmed by the data from both neighbourhoods.

Firstly, the expectation that the diversity within Bouwlust-Vrederust created more issues with representation is not clearly confirmed by the data. Results showed that respondents in both neighbourhoods were aware that the meetings did not well represent the neighbourhood populations, but respondents were convinced that the interest of most residents were represented by the participating residents and professionals. This research therefore shows that, against this thesis third theoretical expectation, participatory governance can be experienced as legitimate although the citizen participation is not reflecting the diversity of the population. However, the expectation that predominantly individual characteristics such as age, ethnicity and lifestyle were influential for citizen participation was confirmed in this research and therefore supports Snel, Custers and Engbersen's research. Challenges for inclusiveness and representation in citizen participation also occurred in Houtwijk. Interestingly, Houtwijk mentioned the representation of age more often, whereas Bouwlust mentioned the representativeness more often in terms of ethnicity. The understanding that the perception of representativeness differs per neighbourhood or social environment is a contribution to the literature.

Also, it was expected that citizens in Houtwijk have more influence on the policy agenda and decision-making than citizens in Bouwlust-Vrederust. This was expected since policymakers would share less decision-making power with a diverse population to maintain the efficiency of the deliberation. Although citizens in Houtwijk indeed were provided with

more influential participating roles whereas citizens in Bouwlust-Vrederust only had a consulting influence, the data did not prove that this was a conscious decision that the municipality made based on the diversity of the population and the incentive to improve efficiency. Further comparative research between more *wijkagenda's* is needed to reveal if policy makers adjust the level of influence for residents based on the neighbourhood population.

Lastly, critical reflection on the research approach reveals that the analysis of experiences from non-participating residents in both neighbourhoods was a valuable and missing piece of this research. This analysis could have provided more in-depth insights in the inability or unwillingness of residents to participate in relation to the CLEAR-model. This could also have provided more information on their expectations on participation in policymaking and the possibility to ask if they feel represented by other residents. Although it is difficult to reach these non-participating residents, which was the reason I couldn't include them in this research, it would be a valuable addition in future research on the contribution of citizen participation to the democratic legitimacy of interactive decision-making at the neighbourhood level.

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## Appendix I: Respondent list

<b>Respondent number</b>	<b>Type of participant</b>	<b>Neighbourhood</b>
<b>1.</b>	Resident	Houtwijk
<b>2.</b>	Resident	Houtwijk
<b>3.</b>	Policy Advisor ‘gebiedsaccounthouder Stadsbeheer’	Houtwijk
<b>4.</b>	Policy Officer ‘Milieu – en Speelbeheerder stadsdeel Loosduinen’	Houtwijk
<b>5.</b>	Employee from a local welfare organisation	Houtwijk
<b>6.</b>	Employee from a local welfare organisation	Houtwijk
<b>7.</b>	Resident consultant from a housing corporation	Houtwijk
<b>8.</b>	Resident	Bouwlust-Vrederust
<b>9.</b>	Communitybuilder	Bouwlust-Vrederust
<b>10.</b>	Service advisor of care and welfare organisations	Bouwlust-Vrederust
<b>11.</b>	Neighbourhood team leader housing corporation	Bouwlust-Vrederust
<b>12.</b>	Neighbourhood manager and projectleader Wijkagenda	Bouwlust-Vrederust

## **Appendix II: Interview topic list**

### **Introduction**

- Introduction and explanation of research.
- Ask consent to make (voice) recordings of the interview.

### **Introductie en rol binnen de wijkagenda**

1. Can you introduce yourself? What is your name, age and profession?
2. How did you get involved with the wijkagenda and how would you describe your role?
3. When and in which manner have you participated in the interactive decision and planning process of the wijkagenda?

### **Burger participatie**

#### *Width of participation (CLEAR Model)*

4. Are there, in your opinion, any skills or knowledge needed to participate? If yes, what skills or knowledge?
5. What are your motives to participate in the wijkagenda?
6. How and why do these motives differ from citizens who do not feel the necessity to participate?
7. In which manner did the municipality enable you and other residents to participate in the decision-making process of the wijkagenda?
8. Are you sufficiently informed by the municipality on what they do with yours and other participant's input?

### **Input-legitimiteit**

#### *Influence*

9. To what extent did residents have the possibility to influence the agendasetting?
10. To what extent did residents have the possibility to influence the decision-making or planning process?

#### *Representation*

11. How would you describe the diversity of the participating residents at the wijktafel?
12. To what extent did you perceive that the participants were a representative reflection of the neighbourhood population?
13. To what extent have the interests of the neighbourhood been represented (in contrast to personal interests?)
14. Do you believe that certain interests were disproportionately represented?
15. To what extent did you and other present residents look after the interests of people who did not participate in the decision-making process?

## **Troughput-legitimiteit**

### *Quality of deliberation*

16. To what extent did residents have the opportunity to voice their opinion and argumentation?
17. Did every citizen have an equal chance and equal time to voice his or her opinion?
18. To what extent was the debate based on argumentative reasoning?

### *Civic skills and virtues*

19. To what extent did the decision-making process result in a feeling of responsibility for the neighbourhood's social and physical liveability?
20. In which manner will you take responsibility or ownership over decisions or action plans formulated in the wijkagenda?

### **Closing question (on legitimacy in terms of acceptance and support)**

21. Are you satisfied with the manner by which the municipality involved citizens in the decision-making process of the wijkagenda? Do you support your neighborhood's approach to participatory governance?

### Appendix III: Coding Scheme

Categories	Codes	Purpose
<b>Influence</b>	Ability to impact the agenda, Impact on policy decisions, Impact on action plans, predictable input.	This text has been coded when respondents talked about the openness of the participation project and residents influence and role with the decision-making process.
<b>Representativeness</b>	Age, usual suspects, experts, not inclusive, representing general interest, diverse group of professionals, diverse representation, young people included, need for more unusual suspects.	This text has been coded when respondents referred to the openness of the participation process in terms of inclusivity and diversity of the collaborative network.
<b>Deliberation</b>	Fair and equal opportunity to voice opinion, argumentative reasoning, transparent feedback	This text has been coded when the fairness and the reasoning, and thus the quality of the discussion during the collaborative meetings was discussed.
<b>Civic Skills and Virtues</b>	Involvement through ownership over decision and/or actions, feeling of responsibility for the environment.	This text has been coded when respondents refer to their own or the community's responsibility for policy decisions also in relation the municipality role.
<b>Can do</b>	Age, social involvement, time, language barrier, digital/online meeting and communication, lack of familiarity, migration background	This text has been coded when respondents talked about the capacity or ability to participate (in relation to themselves and other residents).
<b>Like to</b>	Lack of interest, lack of urgency, personal issues or struggles, importance of neighbourhood liveability, motivated by irritations	This text has been coded when respondents referred to possible reasons for which other residents did not participate.
<b>Enabled to</b>	Social network	This text has been coded when respondents referred to social networks or relations that led to their participation in the <i>wijkagenda</i> .
<b>Asked to</b>	General and open invitation, selected group, asked too much, specific and focused participation plans	This text has been coded when respondents talked about the government role in the invitation of residents in the participation process of the <i>wijkagenda</i> .
<b>Responded to</b>	Transparent feedback, make results visible, direct action	This text has been coded when respondents referred to the importance and elements of the government's responsiveness during the participation process.
<b>Depth of participation</b>	Informing, advising, consulting, co-creation	This text has been coded when something was said about either the role of residents or the role of the municipality in the participatory governance network.