

# Citizen participation in the Environment & Planning Act

*A research into the feasibility of citizen participation in the upcoming Environment & Planning Act*



Master thesis Spatial Planning  
Utrecht University  
Daan Geraads, 6322425

*5<sup>th</sup> of July 2019*

## **Citizen participation in the Environment & Planning Act**

*A research into the feasibility of citizen participation in the upcoming Environment & Planning Act*

### **Student:**

Daan Geraads, 6322425  
Utrecht University (UU)  
Spatial Planning  
d.j.a.geraads@students.uu.nl &  
daangeraads@gmail.com



**Utrecht University**

### **Supervision:**

Dr. Yanliu Lin - Assistent professor  
Utrecht University (UU)  
Faculty of Geosciences  
Department of Human Geography and Spatial Planning



**Utrecht University**

## **Preface**

During my bachelor thesis on the development of solar fields in combination with invitation-planning, I already stumbled upon the new Environment & Planning Act and the topic citizen participation several times. The Environment & Planning Act grabbed my attention because it is a major transition in Dutch planning and I wanted to learn more about it because I am probably going to work with the law in my future career. Although sometimes it was a lonely writing process without an internship, I really enjoyed working on this thesis and collecting the empirical data in Limburg. This master thesis is the result of five months of work, but without the help of several people, it would not have been possible to produce this thesis. Therefore, I would like to thank those people that either helped me with the process of the thesis or providing me with very useful data.

First, I would like to thank Dr. Yanliu Lin, my supervisor during this thesis. Yanliu always provided me with great feedback and helped me to structure my research, especially the literature review. Due to Yanliu's flexible manner of working, my questions always received a quick response and problems were solved in no time.

Further, I would like to thank all respondents that participated in this research. A special thanks to local officials from the municipality of Venlo, the citizens of Boschpoort, the local officials from the municipality of Maastricht and the local officials from the Parkstad Limburg region, the municipality of Kerkrade and the municipality of Landgraaf. I appreciate the willingness to participate and the valuable input that you have given. All three cases contributed greatly to this thesis.

I hope you enjoy reading this thesis,

Daan Geraads

Roermond, 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2019

## Summary

In 2021 a new law in the Netherlands will start operating, the Environment & Planning Act. For the first time, citizen participation in an early stage in Dutch planning processes will be a legal requirement within this law. The Environment & Planning Act focuses on a healthy physical environment that meets the needs of society. A shift from government to governance is noticeable in the Netherlands. The government is slowly moving towards a more facilitating and stimulating role and society is supposed to get a more prominent role. The new law aims to reduce the gap between the state, civil society and the market. Ultimately, the governance process is enhanced by the three stakeholders seeing each other as partners in the process, to improve trust and equality. Since the law is not operating yet, it is unclear if citizen participation will be utilized better and more how the relationship and roles between stakeholders may change in the upcoming Environment & Planning Act. Therefore, the objective of this research is to get an insight into the feasibility of citizen participation in the new law, in the context of shifting from government to governance.

This research provides opportunities and risks associated with the feasibility of citizen participation in the new law. To get a grasp of those opportunities and risks, qualitative research has been used for the researched topic. A combination of semi-structured interviews and document analysis have been used to collect the data. Three cases have been selected that focus on citizen participation and stakeholder relations within instruments of the new law. First the environmental plan for neighbourhood Boschpoort in Maastricht. Second, the environmental plan for the municipality of Venlo. Third, the environmental vision for the Parkstad region. Hereby, several levels of scale and different instruments were selected to compare the participation processes and stakeholder relations.

Based on the three cases, the governmental authorities have the ambition to collaborate more with civil society and the market by stepping into a more facilitating and stimulating role and seeing each other as partners in the process. Several opportunities and risks were found in this research. One risk that was apparent is the degree of citizen power. The degree of citizen power is conditional and depends on several factors such as the scale of a plan, the local context, the available funds and the role of the government. One of the most mentioned opportunities is the shift of focus from participation in the formal process (current legislation) towards participation in the informal process (EPA). In the informal process the government, citizens and business collaborate at the beginning of the planning process to get a grasp of the issues, opinions and ideas about the plan before detailed research is carried out. This way, more public support is created, legal resistance can be reduced, research costs can be decreased, the planning process is accelerated and local knowledge can be utilized in an early stage. All the opportunities and risks are represented in a comprehensive view on page 70.

In short, the EPA provides principles in which citizen participation can flourish. But since the EPA is not operating yet and this research is based on cases that are still in an experimenting phase it is hard to judge how feasible citizen participation precisely is in the new law. Roles and relationships between stakeholders are changing, ultimately, the EPA enhances the governance process in the Netherlands. Results show that citizen participation and the governance process are the most successful on the municipal scale. Primarily because of the subsidiary principle and because citizens are used to operate on this level. Therefore, the governance process on this scale is vital and a crucial factor to the successfulness of the EPA. By linking theories on citizen participation to different modes of governance, a further understanding of citizen participation in the governance process is given. The Dutch case studies can contribute to the international debate on citizen participation and the governance process.

# Table of contents

<b>List of figures and tables</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.1 Problem statement .....	7
1.2 Research objective & questions .....	8
1.3 Societal relevance .....	9
1.4 Academic relevance .....	10
1.5 Structure .....	10
<b>Chapter 2. Literature review</b> .....	<b>11</b>
2.1 Theories on citizen participation in planning and governance processes .....	11
2.2 Motivation of citizen participation .....	16
2.3 Citizen participation in Dutch spatial planning.....	18
2.4 Conceptual framework.....	24
<b>Chapter 3. Methodology</b> .....	<b>26</b>
3.1 Qualitative research .....	26
3.2 Data collection & analysis .....	27
3.3 Quality of the research .....	31
<b>Chapter 4. New Environment &amp; Planning Act: backgrounds, principles and methods</b> .....	<b>32</b>
4.1 New Environment & Planning act.....	32
4.2 Citizen participation in the new act.....	34
4.3 Participation methods .....	36
<b>Chapter 5. Case studies of Venlo, Maastricht and Parkstad</b> .....	<b>38</b>
5.1 Municipality of Venlo – Flexible environmental plan.....	38
5.2 Maastricht – Environmental plan for Boschpoort.....	46
5.3 Parkstad Limburg – Environmental vision for the Parkstad region .....	55
5.4 Comparative analysis .....	63
<b>Chapter 6. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>66</b>
<b>Chapter 7. Reflection</b> .....	<b>74</b>
7.1 Theoretical reflection .....	74
7.2 Methodological reflection .....	75
7.3 Recommendations for further research and practice .....	75
<b>References</b> .....	<b>77</b>
<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>82</b>
Appendix 1: Topic list public sector .....	82
Appendix 2: Topic list civil society .....	84
Appendix 3: Coding scheme interviews .....	85

## List of figures and tables

Figure 1:	Ladder of citizen participation.	12
Figure 2:	Five modes of governance.	15
Figure 3:	Stairs of governmental participation.	21
Figure 4:	Transitions contributing to the Dutch shift from government to governance.	23
Figure 5:	Conceptual framework.	24
Figure 6:	Location of Tegelen, municipality of Venlo	39
Figure 7:	Stakeholder relations, environmental plan Venlo	41
Figure 8:	Location of Boschpoort, municipality of Maastricht	47
Figure 9:	Stakeholder relations, environmental plan Boschpoort	49
Figure 10:	Location of the seven municipalities, Parkstad Limburg region	56
Figure 11:	Stakeholder relations, environmental vision Parkstad	57
Figure 12:	Integrated approach matrix Parkstad	60
Table 1:	List of analysed documents	28
Table 2:	List of public speakers & interviewed respondents	30
Table 3:	Opportunities and risks associated with the feasibility of CP	70-72

# Chapter 1. Introduction

This first chapter is the introduction of the research. To start the problem statement of the research is stated, afterwards the research objective and questions are posed. Thereafter, the societal and academic relevance of this research is elaborated upon. Finally, the structure of the research is described at the end of this chapter.

## 1.1 Problem statement

Citizen participation has the power to create better decision-making, increase the legitimacy of plans, utilize local knowledge, is a tool to strengthen the democratic process and the list goes on (Ryding & Pennington, 2000; Michels, 2006; Ohmer, 2008). Aristotle (Alehsire, 1970) gives a quote that emphasizes the importance of citizen participation in planning processes and policy-making: *"If you want to know how a shoe fits, ask the man who wears it, not the man who made it"*. This is applicable to citizen participation, policy-makers tend to act in a technocratic and bureaucratic way to create the 'desired' neighbourhood or spatial plan for society. However, citizens are the experts of their own environment and should be part of the policy-making and spatial plans. Citizen participation has known several paradigms, such as advocacy planning, participatory planning, collaborative planning and radical planning.

Besides the several paradigms of citizen participation, there is an ongoing process of shifting from government to governance. Moving away from traditional state-led planning based on vertical relations towards interactive governance based on horizontal and equal relations. A less dominating role for the state and more equal relationship with civil society and the market. Governance is about constructing a relationship between governmental and non-governmental actors to solve collective action problems (Capano et al., 2015). The shift from government to governance is also noticeable in the Netherlands, three aspects contribute to this shift. First, the transition of planning systems towards invitation-planning. Second, a new role of the government focussing on facilitating and stimulating and finally the third generation of citizen participation: "Direct participation". However, current planning legislation (Wet ruimtelijke ordening) is risk-averse, lacks flexibility, uses a sectoral approach that lacks coherency and uses citizen participation in a symbolic way at the end of a planning process resulting in plans that are created from a one-sided perspective (Ministry of infrastructure & environment, 2017). These are one of the many reasons why a new law scheduled to start operating in 2021 in the Netherlands, *"De Omgevingswet"* (Translated: The Environment and Planning act (EPA)).

The main goal of the EPA is to modernise, harmonise and simplify current rules on spatial development and to continue and improve a healthy physical environment for citizens. In total, 26 laws will be incorporated into the new Environment & Planning Act, to make spatial policy simpler, better and more flexible. Environmental law currently exists of all kinds of separate laws relating to construction, soil, infrastructure, spatial planning, noise, mining, preservation of historic buildings and sites, the natural environment and water management (Rijksoverheid, 2017). An integrated approach is vital to solve complex problems and approach the physical environment in a more coherent approach. A decentralized mode of governance was already apparent in the Netherlands, the EPA further builds upon this mode. The municipalities are primarily responsible for the physical environment, even more power and tasks are delegated towards the municipal level. Citizen participation will primarily operate on this scale, the municipal level is most tangible to society and the market. This also asks for a new role of the municipalities and a different attitude towards permitting plans, the change from the Dutch *"Nee, tenzij"* (translated: *"No, unless"*) principle towards the *"Ja, mits"* (translated: *"Yes, provided that"*) principle. This shift in principle facilitates bottom-up planning which contributes to invitation-planning.

Citizen participation is stimulated and facilitated in the new law, which is described in the Explanatory Memorandum of the EPA (Ministry of infrastructure and environment, 2017). The EPA aims to close the gap between the government and society, operating as partners in the process and sharing responsibility. The government stimulates participation in the early stage of developments to get a grasp of the interests and opinions of citizens and other stakeholders, but also to improve creativity throughout the process. The new act incorporates a *“motiveringsplicht”* (translated: duty to state reason), i.e. the initiator of a plan has to state how citizens are involved in a plan and how the input is used. The duty to state reasons also contributes to the governance process. As mentioned before in current legislation citizen participation is organised in the formal process, at the end of a planning process. With the new law, the focus shifts towards citizen participation in the informal process, at the start of the planning process. This shift of focus has the potential to accelerate the planning process, gives non-governmental stakeholders the option to participate at the start and can reduce resistance or legal action against the plan. The participation process itself is also left completely open in the EPA, there are no guidelines on how to organize the participation process because every project is unique and needs *“maatwerk”* (translated: tailor-made solutions) (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2019).

Since the EPA is not operating yet and there are still several uncertainties of how citizen participation will play out. Loads of municipalities are currently experimenting with the new role of the government, how to organize the participation process, using the new instruments, improving the relationship with civil society etc. The EPA provides opportunities and risks associated with the feasibility of citizen participation, which is the main focus of this research.

## **1.2 Research objective & questions**

The objective of this research is to get an insight into the feasibility of citizen participation in the new law, in the context of shifting from government to governance. Therefore, stakeholder relations between the state, civil society and the market in current experiments of the EPA will be researched on the municipal and regional level. The experiments are about the development of environmental visions and plans in the province of Limburg and how the involved stakeholders cooperate in the development of these instruments. Venlo and Maastricht are selected for the municipal level and Parkstad is selected for the regional level. Results give involved stakeholders insight on the feasibility of citizen participation in the EPA, and these insights can be used for further development of environmental plans and visions. The acquired knowledge also contributes to the role of the state, civil society and the market in the academic governance debate. The problem statement and the research objective lead to the following central question:

*“What is the feasibility of citizen participation in the upcoming Environment & Planning Act, in the context of shifting from government to governance?”*

The central question is split up in several sub-questions, the sub-questions will contribute to answering the central question of this research.

1. How is citizen participation related to planning?
2. How are stakeholder relations organised within different modes of governance?
3. What is the motivation of citizen participation?
4. How is citizen participation organized in the Dutch planning and institutional context, in the context of shifting from government to governance?
5. What could be the influence of the new Environment & Planning Act on the feasibility of citizen participation?



The first sub-question describes how citizen participation is related to urban planning in the government to governance context. The second sub-question is formulated to show the several modes of governance and the relations between stakeholder in those modes of governance, also the most common mode of governance in the Netherlands is elaborated upon. The third sub-question gives an answer to the motivation of citizen participation, both from a governmental and societal perspective. The fourth sub-question gives insight on how citizen participation is organized in Dutch planning and the Dutch government to governance context. The final sub-question describes the influence of the Environment & Planning Act on the feasibility of citizen participation.

In order to answer the sub-questions, a case study is conducted consisting of three cases. The first case is about the development of the environmental plan in Venlo, focussing on the use of invitation-planning, the new role of the government and giving new impulses to citizen participation. The second case is about the development of the environmental plan in the neighbourhood Boschpoort (Maastricht), the experiment serves as the backbone for the overarching environmental vision of Maastricht. Within this case the role of the citizens is strong, and the interplay between the government and citizens is high. Finally, the development of the environmental vision in the Parkstad Limburg region. Simultaneously, the region is creating an overarching vision in collaboration with the municipalities and other chain partners and the municipalities are creating an environmental vision on the municipal level. The degree of citizen power differs between both scales.

### **1.3 Societal relevance**

The Dutch government is currently preparing for the EPA, not just on a national level but also on a provincial, regional and especially municipal level. Current environmental law is scattered and spread over numerous laws. This results in plenty of laws, rules and procedures which have a fragmented and complicated sphere that is not considered user-friendly. The EPA has the ambition to make legislation *"Simpler and Better"* and shift away from certainty towards growth that focuses on sustainable development. The *"Simpler and Better"* credo combined with a transition from sectoral policy-making towards integrated policy-making, increases the user-friendliness to initiate projects for the government itself, but also for society and the market (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, 2017). To reach sustainable development, tailor-made solutions for projects are necessary and more importantly for this research, the involvement of stakeholders early on in the planning process. Therefore, governance plays a vital role in the EPA. Governance will especially play a vital role on the municipal/local level because of the subsidiary principle of the EPA, this principle *"involves 'higher' authorities not having to carry out tasks that could be taken care of by 'lower' authorities"* (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, 2017, p.104). Governance is described as the following by the Commission on Global Governance (1995, p.14): *"Governance is the sum of the many individuals and institutions, public and private, managing their common affairs. It is the continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken"*. Collaboration between the state, society and the market to solve collective action problems is one of the crucial aspects of the EPA. This aspect asks for a new role of the state but also from society. Citizen participation and governance will be vital in reducing the gap between the government and citizens, whereas both parties should see each other as partners in the process. For the first time, citizen participation in an early stage will be a legal requirement in Dutch spatial planning with the upcoming EPA. Citizen participation is stimulated and facilitated by the EPA. This research provides opportunities and risks related to the feasibility of citizen participation in the new law. This research is in the interest of the society, but the results of this research also contribute to policy-making for governmental authorities on the municipal and regional level.

## 1.4 Academic relevance

Both citizen participation and governance are extensively debated themes in planning literature. Citizen participation has known several paradigms, degrees of empowerment, techniques and motifs over the last six decades in planning theory. Starting with *advocacy planning* in the 1960s, planners acted as representatives of excluded groups in society and supported these groups to enter the planning process (Parker & Street, 2018). *Participatory planning* in the 1970s, this paradigm tries to move away from the planners' dominant professional knowledge by including local knowledge. Involving society is a key feature in this approach (Fenster & Misgav, 2014; Smith, 1973). In the 1980s, *collaborative planning* was evident, the collaboration between involved stakeholders and the dialogue and relation between those stakeholders was the keystone of this form of citizen participation (Healey, 1997; Parker & Street, 2018). However, collaborative planning was not prone to powerful actors dominating the planning processes, therefore, in the 1990s, *radical/activist planning* arose. The empowerment of citizens is central in this paradigm, citizens showing resistance against injustice, tokenism and a lack of voice in planning (Monno & Khakee, 2012). Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation is seen as one of the starting points of citizen participation in planning theory. The empowerment or disempowerment by using the different ranks of Arnstein (1969) is still used in current planning processes. This is also noticeable in the EPA, Edelenbos & Monnikhof (2001) created a reduced version of Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation focused on the Dutch context. This Dutch version of the ladder is used to describe the empowerment of citizens in the EPA.

This research approaches governance as a comprehensive analytical concept, this concept focuses on the understanding of the role and relation between the state, the market and civil society to solve collective action problems (Nuissl & Heinrichs, 2011). Within the governance context, the relationship between the three main actors departs from the hierarchical approach towards a more interactive mode of governance. However the state will still play a major role and will not be stripped of all power, governance should not replace government but both should supplement each other (Torfing, et al., 2012). Therefore, the transformation from government to governance can be described as "less government" or less rowing to "more governance" or more steering (Jessop, 1998; Rhodes, 1996). The shift from government to governance is also evident in Dutch planning by transitioning towards invitation planning (Buitelaar et al., 2012), a facilitating and stimulating role of the government (Rob, 2012) and a more prominent role of society (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Dezeure et al., 2010). By linking theories on citizen participation to different modes of governance, a further understanding of citizen participation in the governance process is given. The Dutch case studies can contribute to the international debate on citizen participation and the governance process.

## 1.5 Structure

This thesis is structured as follows: first, the literature review in chapter 2 serves as the backbone of this research and describes relevant theories on citizen participation, the international shift from government to governance and also the Dutch planning and institutional context. Chapter 3 elaborates on the used research approach and methods. Chapter 4 describes the background, principles and participation methods in the new Environment & Planning act. The results of the cases in Venlo, Maastricht and Parkstad are described in chapter 5. Finally, the main and sub-questions will be answered in chapter 6, the conclusion and a reflection is given in chapter 7.

## Chapter 2. Literature review

Both citizen participation and governance are highly discussed topics in the field of Spatial Planning. Citizen participation plays a crucial role in the government to governance process because society is getting a more prominent role in planning processes. Both citizen participation and governance are the foci of the literature review of this research. Starting with the theory on the history of citizen participation in urban planning in the first paragraph. Afterwards, the shift from government to governance explained and the mode of decentralized governance is highlighted. The second paragraph describes the motivation of citizen participation from a governmental and citizen perspective. Following, the third paragraph describes citizen participation in Dutch Spatial Planning, focussing on Dutch institutional context and the shift from government to governance in the Netherlands. To conclude this chapter, a conceptual framework and a synthesis of the literature review is assembled.

### 2.1 Theories on citizen participation in planning and governance processes

This paragraph sets the basis for this research, it elaborates on several theories on citizen participation and the shift from government to governance. Starting off with the history of citizen participation in urban planning and the ladder of citizen participation by Arnstein (1969). Following, the government and governance concepts are described within the scope of this research. To end this paragraph, stakeholder relations and different modes of governance are described. Both the shift from government to governance and stakeholder relations contribute to the feasibility of citizen participation.

#### 2.1.1 Citizen participation in urban planning

Citizen participation has a long history in planning theory and shows great value in planning when it is not used as an empty ritual but used in such a way that people are widely engaged, listened to and responded to by the government (Parker & Street, 2018). Planners have a responsibility in the past, the current neo-liberal time and in the future to act in the public interest but at the same time to create sustainable development. Over the last six decades, several paradigms to citizen participation have arisen. Within those several paradigms, different motifs, techniques, degrees of empowerment and collaboration, a changing role of the planner and a changing society were evident (Parker & Street, 2018). The paradigms are briefly elaborated upon below.

The first planning form of citizen participation originated in the 1960s, *advocacy planning*. Before the origination of advocacy planning many planning, decisions were influenced by politics and powerful people and had a very technocratic atmosphere. Often, the opinions and wishes of citizens were neglected. With the help of advocacy planning, neglected citizens were supported and represented by planners. Parker & Street (2018) state that the identifying feature of advocacy planning was the challenge and the representation of the interest of the excluded, the planner acts as an advocate for excluded groups, representing and organizing these groups to enter the planning process. In the 1970s, a new form of citizen participation entered the urban planning paradigms, participatory planning. Fenster & Misgav (2014, pp.350) define participatory planning as the following: "*Participatory planning seeks to transform power and social relations by shifting the focus away from the planners' dominant professional knowledge to include local individual and community knowledge*". In general, participatory planning is about the involvement of any individual, group or community in planning processes. Plans or programs that have the endorsement, support and creation of citizens are fundamental factors of the legitimacy of participatory planning (Smith, 1973).

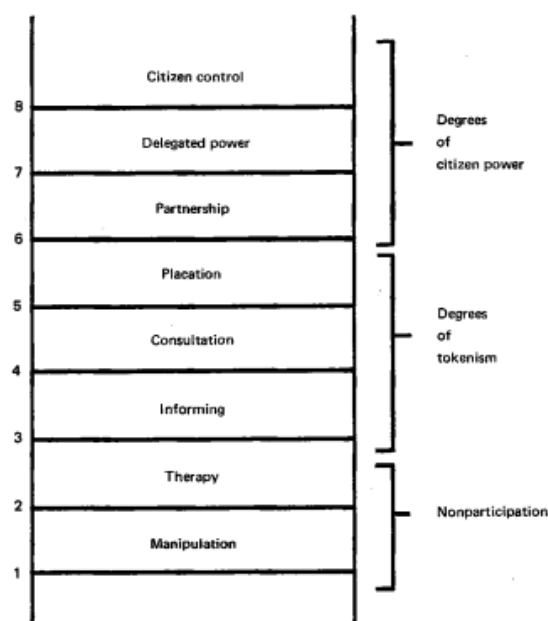
Since the 1980s a new form of citizen participation entered planning theory, also known as *collaborative planning or communicative planning*. Collaborative planning derived from social theorists such as Jürgen

Habermas and Anthony Giddens (Parker & Street, 2018). The main goal of this planning approach was the collaboration of interested parties to work through planning questions together, the dialogue between multiple actors was the keystone of this form of citizen participation. Collaborative planning also put pressure on local governments to create planning processes that were more deliberative and inclusionary and tried to reshape planning institutions, processes and decision-making in order to deal with the “fragmented society” (Healey, 1997). However, in neoliberal times a shift was necessary towards post-collaborative planning forms, mainly because collaborative planning was not prone to powerful actors dominating the planning process. Ultimately, this resulted in an unfair distribution of power between actors in planning processes and even exclusion of the weaker groups of society (Parker & Street, 2018). Frustrations with formal participation processes in neoliberal times led to *radical/activist planning* in the 1990s, which are considered post-collaborative forms of citizen participation. Citizens resisted themselves towards injustice, tokenism and a lack of voice in planning. Participation is seen as the root of planning in this approach, trying to empower the citizens that have been marginalized. The planner functions as a mediator within the radical form (Monno & Khakee, 2012).

### 2.1.2 Ladder of citizen participation

Arnstein (1969) has created a well-known overview of the empowerment and disempowerment of citizens in economic, political and planning processes. The ladder of citizen participation contains eight levels of empowerment (Figure 1). According to Arnstein (1969) participation without the redistribution of power is a frustrating and empty process for the powerless/have-not citizens which allows the powerholders to claim a dominant role. But by making use of the ladder, a redistribution of power occurred which allowed even the “have-not citizens” to influence economic, political and planning processes. Arnstein (1969, pp.216) defines citizen participation in terms of empowerment of the citizens: *“It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out”*. For this research, The ladder of citizen participation by Arnstein (1969) will be used to describe the degree power of citizens in Dutch planning process and how this might change with the upcoming Environment & Planning.

Figure 1: Ladder of citizen participation



Source: Arnstein (1969).

As mentioned before the ladder contains eight different ranks and is categorized into three general levels of citizen participation. Starting at the bottom of the ladder with the level of non-participation including *manipulation* and *therapy*. Within this level, citizens do not have an opportunity to participate or conduct in planning processes, the powerholders educate and mostly persuade citizens to stay in control of the planning process (Arnstein, 1969). The following level of participation is termed degrees of tokenism, which is also known as symbolic participation. Within the ranks of *informing* and *consultation* citizens do have a voice but the involvement of citizens in planning processes is not strong. In this level, there is no assurance that the input of the citizens is used and the government mainly provides information to the citizens and not the other way around (Arnstein, 1969). Degrees of tokenism knows one higher rank, *placation*, citizens are allowed to advise but ultimately, the powerholders are still in charge of decision-making (Edelenbos & Monnikhof, 2001).

The three highest ranks in the ladder of citizen participation are considered degrees of citizen power. Citizens have the most power in this level of participation and have influence in planning processes but especially in decision-making (Arnstein, 1969). *Partnership* between citizens and the government in which they work and decide together, both parties stand on equal grounds. The second-last rank is *delegated power*. At the start of a planning process the government has the opportunity to set a framework with general guidelines, the citizens can freely work within the set boundaries. Ultimately, the citizens can be the dominant actor (Arnstein, 1969; Edelenbos & Monnikhof, 2001). Finally, the highest rank, *citizen control*, citizens have full control over decision-making (Arnstein, 1969).

Edelenbos & Monnikhof (2001) created a ladder of citizen participation focused on the Dutch situation. This model is based on the ladder from Arnstein (1969), but it leaves out the level of non-participation (*Manipulation and therapy*) and *citizen control* at the very top of the ladder. However, this research is focused on citizen participation in the shifting context from government to governance, incorporating non-participation would provide a more comprehensive approach to citizen participation. Also, *citizen control* might occur in some situations with the upcoming Environment & Planning act. Therefore, both ladders will be used in this research in which the ladder from Arnstein (1969) serves as the backbone and the Ladder from Edelenbos & Monnikhof is used for the EPA.

### **2.1.3 From government to governance**

The shift from government to governance is a much-discussed transition in social sciences and especially in planning theory. Citizen participation is of crucial importance to transition from government to governance, mainly because of the change towards a more network approach instead of a hierarchical approach. In an hierarchical approach, relations between the state and non-governmental actors are vertical and are based on top-down planning. In a network form, non-governmental stakeholders become less dependent on the state and can be self-organizing, building on horizontal relations and bottom-up planning (Rhodes, 2007). The shift from government to governance is also noticeable in Dutch society and the planning scene, this is further discussed in the third paragraph of this chapter. A general understanding of both the government and governance concept is elaborated upon in this paragraph, afterwards, the shift from government to governance is discussed.

#### **Government concept**

Before going into the governance concept and the shift from government to governance it is important to briefly elaborate on the government concept. Government is considered a formal institution. Heywood (2010) gives the following definition for a 'government': *government is referred to as a formal institution which operates at a national level, the core function of a government is to make law, implement law and interpret law*. This definition highlights the hierarchical approach of government, in which control and authority are leading.

The term government can also be seen as an actor in the governance process, it is sometimes seen as a synonym of the state. The government is considered the dominating actor in stakeholder relationships with the market and civil society, in which the market and civil society have a background role. (Rhodes, 2007; Obeng-Odoom, 2012).

### Governance concept

Governance is a frequently used term in planning literature, the term has different meanings and it is hard to pinpoint one general definition (Obeng-Oboom, 2012). According to Jessop (1998), governance has become a *"ubiquitous buzzword"*, it can mean anything or nothing. The vagueness of the governance concept is also what it makes it so complex. In general, governance describes a mode of government coordination used by the state to solve collective action problems, governance is about constructing a certain relationship between governmental and non-governmental actors in which the role and relationship between actors are vital (Capano et al., 2015).

Nuissl & Heinrichs (2011) provided an overview of the variants of the governance concepts, three approaches are distinguished. Starting with governance as the opposite of government. In this approach, there are other actors than solely the state that can contribute to maintaining order, participate in economic and social regulation and development. Second, governance as a normative concept, how governance should be and what are certain rules for good governance. The last approach is about governance as a comprehensive analytical concept, which is the main focus of this thesis. This concept focuses on the process and the understanding of the role and relationship between the state, market and civil society. Hereby, the following definition of governance by the Commission on Global Governance (1995, p.14) is used: *"Governance is the sum of the many individuals and institutions, public and private, managing their common affairs. It is the continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken"*.

### The shift from government to governance

The difference between government and governance is that the government is considered a body that exercises authority and control, while governance is a process between several stakeholders to solve collective action problems. Jessop (1998) uses the metaphor that comes from ancient Greek, the rowing and steering of a boat, in which the government concept is considered as a 'rowing' concept and the governance concept as a 'steering' concept.

The shift from government to governance is broad and can be approached in several ways, a specific focus within this research will be discussed, governance as a comprehensive analytical concept. This focus is on the relationship between the state, private sector and civil society but also the departure of the hierarchical approach (top-down) towards a more network form of governance. Moving away from situations with one leading actor (the state) towards a situation where a wide variety of actors is responsible for the governing of a certain area or policy. However, the government is not stripped from all power in this transition from government to governance and hierarchical government will not completely disappear, therefore governance should not replace government but both should supplement each other (Torfing, et al., 2012). Rhodes (1996, pp.655) mentions that *"the transformation of the public sector involves "less government" (or less rowing) but "more governance" (or more steering)*. The shift from less rowing and more steering is already apparent in the Netherlands but in the upcoming Environment & Planning act, this is even more emphasized.

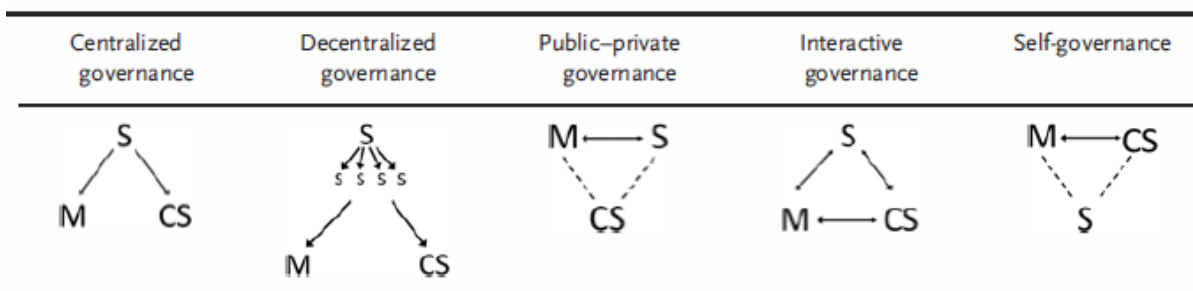
In the Netherlands, a shift from government to governance is noticeable, although some researchers discuss that a shift from government to governance is not new in planning. Hendriks (2014) even calls the shift from government to governance a cliché and mentions that it was already used in ancient Rome and the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. According to Hendriks (2014): *"Governance is far from new, although it is real, important and constantly developing"*. This is also the case for the governance

discourse in the Netherlands, the shift has been occurring over the last three decades but it is important and constantly developing.

### 2.1.4 Modes of governance and stakeholder relations

Decentralized governance in the Netherlands further builds upon government to governance discourse. In general, governance is a concept which acknowledges that the state is not solely responsible for the solution of societal problems. Stakeholder relations, interactions and involvement play a crucial role in the governance discourse. The state, the market and civil society are considered the three main stakeholder groups (Driessen et al., 2012). Driessen et al. (2012) note that the shift from government to governance exists of several modes of governance which are based on the role and relation between the state, market and civil society. In total five modes of governance are separated: centralized governance, decentralized governance, public-private governance, interactive governance and self-governance. Those five modes differ from each other in actor features, institutional features and content features. Figure 2 illustrates the five modes of governance. The figure shows a total of four stakeholders, S: central state, s: decentralized state, M: market and CS: civil society. The arrows and the dotted line illustrate the relationship between the different stakeholders, → dominant role, ↔ equivalent role and --- background role. The main focus of this research is on the decentralized and interactive modes of governance. The decentralized mode is predominantly applied in the Netherlands but with the upcoming EPA it might change towards a more interactive mode of governance. Nonetheless, other modes of governance are also used situationally.

Figure 2: Five modes of governance



Source: Driessen et al. (2012)

The Netherlands is considered a decentralized unitary state, the national government is ultimately supreme, but most political power is delegated towards the provinces and local governments, different tasks are carried out at different levels but also in collaboration between government levels. The association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG, 2018) mentions that nowadays there is a decentralized co-governance in which “The government assigns the implementation of a particular task to a municipal or provincial authority by means of an act”. The EPA builds further upon this principle also known as the subsidiary principle (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, 2017, p.104). The famous motto coming from the Dutch Fifth Policy Document on Spatial Planning is the guideline of Dutch planning: “Decentralized if possible, centralized if necessary”. Especially in spatial planning, municipalities play a major role in area development but also creating and implementing policy. According to Driessen et al. (2012) in decentralized governance, the state has a dominant role towards the decentralized states (the provinces and municipalities) and the decentralized states have a dominant role towards the market and civil society, decentralized governance is characterized by the following aspects:

- Initiating actors: the government at various levels (province and municipalities);
- Stakeholder position: (high likelihood of) stakeholder involvement;

- Policy level: the lower levels of government (municipalities);
- Powerbase: democratic representation at lower levels;
- Institutional features: local election, formal rules, municipalities and provinces decide within the top-down determined boundaries.

However, with the upcoming Environment & Planning act and in times of 'direct participation', the private actors and civil society are supposed to step into a more prominent role, having a greater possibility to initiate bottom-up projects. This may lead to a combination of decentralized governance and interactive governance. However, decentralized governance will still be the dominant mode of governance but the government is supposed to step into a more facilitating and stimulating role. Ultimately this could lead to a more equivalent role (interactive governance) between the state, market and civil society or even into a background role for the state (self-governance) (Driessen et al., 2012; Rijksoverheid, 2017).

## **2.2 Motivation of citizen participation**

Citizen participation is mostly viewed from a government perspective. How can the government use the local knowledge from citizens to solve complex problems? How can planning processes be more successful by making use of the knowledge and ideas of citizens. However, it is also important to take a look at the citizens perspective, what is the motivation and willingness of citizens to participate? The motivation of citizen participation is a key factor for the feasibility of citizen participation. Within this paragraph, the motivation of citizen participation is elaborated upon, from both perspectives.

### **2.2.1 Government motivation**

There is one main reason that citizen participation benefits public administration and that is the boost of the governance process. The boost of the governance process can be divided into two main aspects: First, *Better decision-making*. By incorporating the expertise and knowledge of citizens and the private sector in planning processes it can lead to better and more desirable policy outcome, mostly because of the local knowledge that non-governmental parties can provide. Ultimately, incorporating citizens in decision-making avoids inappropriate development, accelerates planning processes in the long run, creates support and understanding and provides better overall quality of the policy because of the use of local knowledge (Rydin & Pennington, 2000).

Second, *Legitimacy*. It is the democratic right of the citizens to be incorporated in planning processes (Rydin & Pennington, 2000). This may lead to a situation where citizen participation is used as a technocratic procedure to contribute to the legitimacy of policy. To create legitimate policy, the policymakers strive for consensus building and creating "*draagvlak*" (translated: support) this will increase the efficacy and quality of the policy. Participation can also influence the outcome, when citizens are involved and are able to present their ideas and opinions, this can lead to different policy-outcomes and may lead to less resistance from citizens (Enserink & Monnikhof, 2003). The sole instrumental use of citizen participation to legitimize planning processes is only beneficial for the policy-maker and not for society (Turnhout et al. 2010). When compared to the ladder of citizen participation of Arnstein (1969), focussing on the legitimacy of planning processes is considered as degrees of tokenism. As mentioned before, one of the crucial motifs to create successful policy is creating support from other stakeholders, support can reduce the resistance from society. Two sets of support can be distinguished: Content-oriented support & process-oriented support. Content-oriented support is about the result of a certain policy, for example the design of a neighbourhood. Process-oriented support is focused on the interactive process of the policy, for example the satisfaction of stakeholders during the participation process. Together those two sets of support are a key factor for the success of policy (de Graaf, 2007).



### 2.2.2 Citizen motivation

As mentioned before, citizen participation mostly is viewed from a governmental perspective. Aristotle (Aleshire, 1970) gives a quote that is suiting for citizen participation and policy-making: *“If you want to know how a shoe fits, ask the man who wears it, not the man who made it”*. This quote is applicable to citizen participation, policy-makers tend to act in a technocratic way i creating a ‘desired’ neighbourhood or spatial plan. However, in the end, citizens are the residents of that neighbourhood and know exactly *“how the shoe fits”* (Aleshire, 1970). Therefore, it is important that citizens are incorporated in planning processes and policy-making, but participating also shows benefits for the citizens themselves. The following three aspects show the motivation of citizen participation from a citizens perspective.

*Creating better citizens.* According to Ohmer (2008) participating in policy-making or planning processes has a positive effect on the personal empowerment, self-esteem, feeling of mastery over surroundings, socio-political control, education, commitment and responsibility for civic action and finally an increased sense of community. Also, citizenship is enhanced when citizens gain some responsibility for implementation or formulation of decisions, gaining this responsibility gives them an option to contribute to society and their local surroundings.

*Utilizing local knowledge.* Knowledge is constructed through communication. Participating in policy-making and planning processes opens a door to different kinds of knowledge, this goes both ways. The government can learn from creative ideas or local knowledge from the citizens and the citizens can be educated by plans from the government. The citizens benefit from the ‘technocratic’ knowledge and the government can benefit from the local knowledge (Ohmer, 2008).

*Gain some control over policy outcomes.* For the government and policy-makers, it would be the easiest and quickest to include as few stakeholders as possible for quick decision-making (Aleshire, 1970). However, this thought is solely based on cost-benefit analysis, when the ideas and information from citizens are incorporated in policy it positively affects the decision-making in the long run. Citizens can influence society by participating in planning processes. In the end, citizens are residents of areas or neighbourhoods, therefore, citizens should not only provide ideas and information but also be part of the decision-making. Citizens can check and balance out the idealistic plans of the technocrats and have the power to take the heat off hot issues and make the cold issues hot (Alshire, 1970).

The relationship between society and the government is already changing and may change even more in the upcoming Environment & Planning act in the Netherlands. Citizens are facilitated to initiate bottom-up projects that can contribute to making their neighbourhood more liveable. The government will provide more possibilities and room for initiatives and is supposed to give citizens their trust, but trust has to come in both ways. This may have a positive influence on the relationship between the government and citizens, slowly moving away from a vertical relationship towards a horizontal relationship. However, it is not guaranteed that all citizens are motivated to participate which has a negative influence on the representativeness of citizens in planning processes (Tonnaer, 2017).

## 2.3 Citizen participation in Dutch spatial planning

Citizen participation in Dutch spatial planning is discussed in this paragraph. Starting with the Dutch institutional context, afterwards several aspects that influence the Dutch shift from government to governance are elaborated upon. Starting with the evolution of Dutch Spatial Planning, afterwards the changing role of the Dutch government and finally the three generations of participation in the Netherlands. To conclude the Dutch situation, a short synthesis is given by making use of a model that combines the several transitions contributing to the government to governance shift in the Netherlands.

### 2.3.1 Dutch institutional context: democracy and participation

Before going deeper into the institutional context of the Netherlands it is important to define institutions. Institutions is a widely used concept in social sciences but there is no clear-cut consensus on the definition of institutions. Therefore, it is important to make clear which definition fits within the scope of this research. North (1990) gives the following definition for institutions: *“The rules of the game that guide human interaction”*. According to Hodgson (2006) institutions are *“systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions”*. Concluding from those two given definitions, institutions are about systems of rules, regulation, policies, procedures and processes that are shaped for social interaction but also the other way around, the rules, regulations etcetera are shaped by society. In short, those rules, regulations etcetera are made *for* and *by* social interaction. There is also a distinction between formal and informal institutions. Formal institutions are associated with rules and laws such as zoning plans and informal institutions are associated with norms of behaviour, a handshake for example (Hodgson 2006). To address the institutional context in the Netherlands the following aspect touched upon: the democratic system and citizen participation in the Netherlands. The decentralized governance model of the Netherlands is also considered as an institution, however, this part has already been discussed in paragraph 2.1.4 stakeholder relations and modes of governance. The Dutch planning culture is considered an informal institution and is part of the evolution of Dutch spatial planning, which is discussed in paragraph 2.3.2.

The Netherlands is considered an established democracy, or more precisely a representative democracy in which the citizens vote for government representatives who are at the end responsible for legislation, protection of the environment, spatial development and rule the country or a part of the country. Citizen participation is seen as an instrument to strengthen, support and improve the functioning of the representative democracy (Michels, 2006). However, citizen participation in representative democracy has a tendency to merely focus on the political part, meaning voting for elections, resulting in a limited role for the participation of citizens (Michels, 2006). This results in a tension between the impact of direct participation in a representative democracy. In the 1970s and 1980s, top-down policymaking was apparent in the Netherlands, this changed during the 1980s, citizens were criticizing the lack of involvement of other actors than sole politicians and the government. Nowadays there is still a hierarchical and vertical way of policymaking, the national and local governments are still responsible and take the initiative. However, with the change from a welfare state towards a participatory society (Rob, 2012) combined with the upcoming Environment & Planning act, the focus will be no longer be on the government but shifts towards non-governmental stakeholders on the local level. Citizen participation is no longer just an instrument which provides information for the government. *“Do-ocracy”* is a form of democratic collaboration that promotes new ways of collaboration between citizens, governments and other actors, no longer standard solutions for problems but a tailor-made approach in which the government can think along (Government, 2019). Michels & De Graaf (2010) state that citizen participation is not a solution for every governmental issue, situations of social exclusion may occur because weaker or quiet groups may not participate. However, Michels & De Graaf (2010) point out three positive aspects of citizen participation that contribute to democracy:

- The involvement of citizens increases public engagement and makes people feel more responsible for public matters;
- Creating a mutual understanding, encouraging actors to listen to each other;
- Citizen participation contributes to greater legitimacy of decision-making.

### 2.3.2 The evolution of Dutch Spatial Planning

In this paragraph, the rise of invitation-planning (uitnodigingsplanologie) in Dutch Spatial Planning is elaborated upon. Dutch spatial planning consists of roughly three time periods. Starting with permission-planning (toelatingsplanologie), changing towards development-planning (ontwikkelingsplanologie) and nowadays changing towards invitation-planning (uitnodigingsplanologie). The change towards invitation planning is crucial for the upcoming Environment & Planning act which is accompanied by the change from government to governance with a more prominent role for society. The three planning approaches are discussed below. However, before going into the evolution of Dutch Spatial Planning, the planning culture in the Netherlands (which is also an informal institution) is clarified. The transition towards 'Organic urban development' contributed to the evolution of Dutch Spatial Planning.

#### Planning culture

Dutch planning has acquired an international reputation because of their strong planning guidance and the ability of the national government to oversee the role of different governmental tiers and the collaboration between the different tiers in planning (Balz & Zonneveld, 2018). Buitelaar & Bregman (2016) mention three pillars of Dutch planning and land development: integration, comprehensiveness and the active municipal land policy. However, Buitelaar & Bregman also mention that those three pillars of Dutch planning can show weakness when unexpected events occur: *"The crises of 2008 has shown (rather than caused) that the large scale and interconnectedness of land-development projects have created a "tightly coupled system" in which a shock in one part travels to other parts and causes the whole system to shake or even collapse"* (Buitelaar & Bregman, pp. 1281, 2016). Before digging deeper into the planning culture of the Netherlands, it is critical to define planning culture. Buitelaar, Galle & Sorel (pp. 930, 2011) define planning culture as *"a set of informal institutions that guide, and are (re)produced through, decisions by government, private actors and citizens on the end and means of planning"*.

The comprehensive integrated approach that is used in Dutch Spatial Planning is not so much focused on economic development, but more on spatial development. There is a formal hierarchy of plans and large public investment for the implementation and succession of those plans, which is conducted in a very systematic way. The three pillars of Dutch Spatial Planning are briefly elaborated upon. Active land policy is an approach by municipalities in which they buy land, prepare the land and sell it to a private developer. The main reasons for municipalities to use this approach is to guide urban development towards the municipalities' desires. The comprehensiveness of Dutch planning is focused on large scale development, such as Vinex-neighbourhoods. The last pillar is integration, which incorporates actors and financial recourses. This type of land development is called *"gebiedsontwikkeling"* (translated: area development), it is a land development approach that mixes a variety of functions which are realised in conjunction with each other (Buitelaar & Bregman, 2016). This 'integrated approach' resulted in collaboration between public and private actors also known as a public-private partnership. However, the economic crisis in 2008 affected all three of those pillars. The "blueprint planning" approach was no longer effective, and the government was in need of a new approach to land development that was more prone to those "shocks in the system". "Organic urban development" is now the dominant approach toward land development. Buitelaar & Bregman (2016) provide some characteristics of organic urban development:

- It is a gradual approach (not developing at once);
- Focuses on small scale development instead of large scale;

- Focuses on process management;
- It is a strategic plan type instead of blueprint-plan;
- It incorporates small developers and citizens;
- The government takes a facilitating role.

Organic urban development is considered a “loosely coupled system” which is prone to shocks that could cause the whole system to shake or collapse (such as an economic crises), integrated urban development is considered a “tightly coupled system” which is not prone to those shocks (Weick, 1976). The evolution of Dutch spatial planning is discussed below.

#### Permission-planning

Permission-planning arose after the Second World War, living conditions were low and it was a time of housing shortage. This led to a situation in which the Dutch government had to provide more steering and regulation in spatial planning to reach a better situation, the government had a leading role in planning processes which resulted in a lot of laws and procedures. In general, permission-planning is about the government creating a strict framework in planning policy or land use plans that points out which developments are desired in a location (Van Rooy, 2011; Buitelaar et al., 2012). Developments of certain areas could only prosper if they complied with the rules of the set framework of the government. Therefore, permission-planning leads to minimal results (because of the set framework), has a lack of flexibility (lots of laws and procedures), has a negative impact on creativity within planning processes (Needham, 2003). However, permission-planning does also prosper in some aspects. Permission-planning is considered risk-averse because it prevents undesired developments from happening in certain locations to protect citizens. As mentioned before, permission-planning has led to lots of laws and procedures, nevertheless, these are clear procedures which result in legitimate plans (Needham, 2003; Dammers et al., 2004).

#### Development-planning

In the 90's the first shift within planning approaches occurred, the shift from permission-planning towards an approach that is more focused on development, also known as development-planning. However, this shift does not mean that permission-planning completely disappeared, on the contrary, it is still very apparent in planning (Buitelaar et al., 2012). Instead of setting a strict framework that shows developments that are not desired, development-planning tries to seize the opportunities in a particular area. Whereas a passive approach is used in permission-planning, an active approach is central in development-planning, guiding, designing and developing are key terms. Within this approach, the government sets terms in which they work together with other actors for realization and the finance of a plan, ultimately resulting into the involvement of other actors in the creation of the plan (Dammers et al., 2004).

The shift from permission-planning towards development-planning occurred because of critique on permission-planning. Spatial policies resulting from permission-planning were too passive and too defensive, as a result, the ambition to develop and realize more plans was hampered (WRR, 1998; Van Rooy, 2011). Within development-planning private and public actors also got a more prominent role, they were incorporated in planning processes which resulted in a new role for the government beside regulating and testing of plans. Whereas in the past mostly the private sector was responsible for the actual execution of plans, local governments also started to utilize the role as co-developer because of the new approach in planning. (Breman et al., 2013). Strong aspects of development-planning are the high likelihood of realization of plans, more room for creativity because of the involvement of other actors and finally the possibility to split financial risks. Negative aspects of development-planning are the possibility of excluding actors within planning processes and the ambiguous role of the government, meaning the government acting as a regulating party on the one hand and as a co-developer on the other hand (Needham, 2003).

### Invitation-planning

In the period of development planning, economic growth and optimism were present. Since the economic crisis in 2008, budget cuts were necessary and the demand for housing, businesses, industry and other developments decreased. These circumstances resulted in a need for a new planning approach: invitation-planning (van Rooy, 2011).

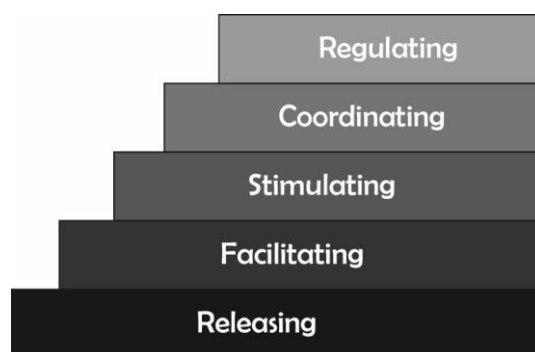
In general, invitation-planning is the next step after development-planning but it is considered an approach that is situated between permission-planning and development-planning. Similar to permission-planning, the government sets a framework but now also tries to invite and tempt public and private parties to invest in a particular area. The difference is that the framework used with invitation-planning is not as strict and has more room for negotiation and change. It is important to create “*societal value*” not only *for* the citizens but also *by* the citizens. This asks for a role change of the government, no longer just permitting plans or the role as a co-developer but acting as a mediator in a network role. Trying to bring actors together, working as a mediator and facilitating the planning process (Buitelaar et al., 2012). Van Rooy (2011) defines invitation-planning as the following: “*When making use of invitation-planning the government decides in general guidelines where spatial development is or is not desired, the government acts as a facilitator towards initiators, both private and public*” (Van Rooy, 2011, p.38). However, this does not mean that the regulating role of the government completely disappears, local governments can still decide to not incorporate in particular plans to prevent incompatible land use (Buitelaar et al., 2012).

Invitation planning should lead to more flexibility resulting in more spatial development. Also, private parties and civil society are expected to have a more prominent role in planning processes, which could result in more creativity and more equal planning processes. In the upcoming Environment & Planning act, the use of invitation-planning is stimulated, this planning approach can be effective in making bottom-up initiatives more successful.

### 2.3.3 Changing role of the government

In total five roles of the government are noticeable in the Netherlands, which describe the power level and the involvement of the government in planning processes (Bennington, 2011). To make those five roles clear, the Dutch government makes use of the “*Overheidsparticipatiestap*” (translated: stairs of governmental participation). The following five roles are part of the stairs of governmental participation: regulating, coordinating, stimulating, facilitating and releasing. There is not one best role for the government, the choice of the role is dependent on the local context and the project itself. The lower the stair, the higher the influence of society. Figure 3 illustrates the stairs of governmental participation (Rob, 2012). The different roles are touched upon below:

Figure 3: Stairs of governmental participation



Source: Rob (2012) & Bennington (2011) edited version

- **Regulating:** regulation is the strongest role of the government, by making using rigid frameworks based on laws and procedures. In this case, the interplay towards non-governmental stakeholders is vertical, regulation is very effective for safety issues or protection of the public interest;
- **Coordinating:** In the case of coordinating the government is the leading actor and has a steering role, but other stakeholders also have a role in plans;
- **Stimulating:** when stimulating the government wants to carry out a policy, but the realization of that policy is not executed by the government itself. The government relies on other stakeholders to execute the policy but puts those other stakeholders in motion;
- **Facilitating:** when the government receives an initiative from a stakeholder and the government sees the importance of the project, they will step into the facilitating role to make the initiative work;
- **Releasing:** in the case of releasing, the government completely lets go of their involvement, both content-wise and process-wise (Rob, 2012).

#### **2.3.4 Generations of citizen participation**

The last shift that contributes to the government to governance context within the scope of this research are the three generations of participation in the Netherlands. Starting with the first generation which is also known as “input participation”. Citizen participation within government decisions was introduced in the 1960s. In this time planning slowly moved away from “blueprint-planning”, empowerment of citizens and stimulation of citizens to participate in governance was necessary. Blueprint-planning changed into procedural and flexible planning with new facilities for participation in which citizens had the possibility to criticize and react to spatial plans made by the government (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Within this generation of participation, the government was still the leading and most dominant actor in planning processes. As mentioned before, citizens did have the opportunity to criticize or react, but most of the time this was at the end of a planning process, meaning that the given input was of low value and not incorporated in the planning process (Dezeure et al., 2010).

The second generation of participation started in the 1990s. The first round of participation was heavily criticized in the 90s by for instance Patsy Healey. The main concerns were about the ineffectiveness of participation and the focus was too much on the process instead of the content of planning (Healey, 2007). This generation is characterized by co-production and a collaborative approach, The government and private actors work together without any “go-betweens”, this resulted in public-private partnerships and a new entrepreneurial style of planning (Boonsta & Boelens, 2011). This generation of collaboration and co-production is also known as “interactive participation”. At a later stage also civil society got involved more which resulted in the collaborative approach. However, the collaborative approach tends to give more strength to powerful actors and tends to exclude socially weaker groups. The collaborative approach could, therefore, can be compared to a utilitarian approach of planning, benefitting the majority of the people but neglecting weaker groups of society (Fainstein, 2014).

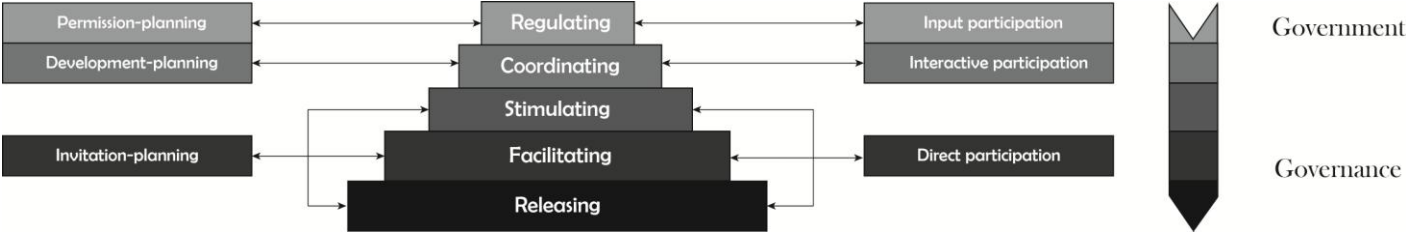
Ultimately, this led to the third generation of participation termed “direct participation”. This generation is about the increase of collaboration between the government and society in which the government steps into a facilitating role and civil society takes the initiative. In this case, the roles are reversed, the government participates and civil society takes a more prominent role (Dezeure et al., 2010). The third generation provides initiatives that result in collective value for civil society facilitated by the government, however it should fit within the overall goals and framework of the government. Therefore this new generation cannot be seen as a completely new generation but complements the previous generations. In short, the government moves to the background but is ready to step in when

the collective management of citizens fails (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Direct participation is already happening in the Netherlands with the shift towards invitation planning and the changing role of the government. Despite those changes, the new Environment & Planning act further stimulates and facilitates citizen participation and bottom-up initiatives.

**2.3.5 Syntheses on the Dutch context**

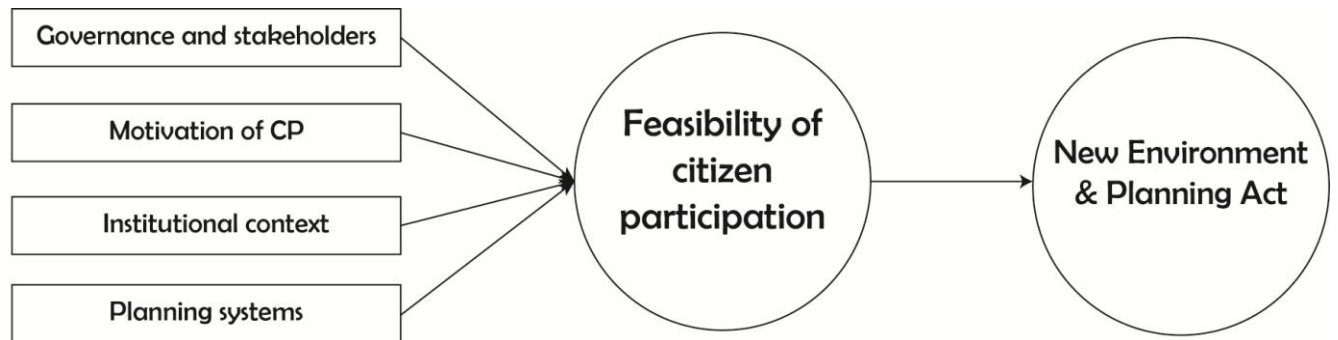
The shift within planning paradigms, the changing role of the government and the three generations of participation are all transitions that contribute to the shift from government to governance in the Netherlands. To link the different changes together a model is created, figure 4 illustrates the transitions contributing to the shift from government to governance. Regulation is the strongest tool of the government which shows similarities with permission-planning and input participation. The government as a dominant and leading actor who permits plans within their rigid framework and uses citizen participation in a very tokenistic way (Monno & Khakee, 2012). Development-planning is connected to the coordinating role of the government and interactive participation, in which the government serves as a co-developer and cooperates with civil society and primarily private actors. However, there is a tendency that the strong prevail in this approach excluding weaker groups of society. Last but not least, invitation planning is connected to stimulating, facilitating and releasing role of the government which show similarities with the third generation of participation, direct participation. The government steps in a less dominating role and tries to actively invite actors and facilitate initiatives from society, leading to a more prominent role for society. However, the government will still be an important actor within this shift and can choose to take a more regulating role when necessary. So to conclude there is a shift from government to governance noticeable in the Netherlands, but the role of the central and decentralized state still remains important and should not be too easily dismissed (Swyngedouw, 2005).

**Figure 4: Transitions contributing to the Dutch shift from government to governance**



## 2.4 Conceptual framework

Figure 5: Conceptual framework



To round off the literature review a conceptual framework is assembled to make this research more comprehensible, also a synthesis of the literature review is given. Figure 5 represents the conceptual framework of this research. Arnstein (1969, pp.216) defines citizen participation in terms of empowerment of the citizens: *“It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out”*. To describe the empowerment of citizen participation, Arnstein (1969) developed a ladder of describing eight levels of citizen power. Edelenbos & Monnikhof (2001) created a reduced version of Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of citizen participation focused on the Dutch context, which is also used in the EPA.

The feasibility of citizen participation is influenced by the four components illustrated on the left of the framework (figure 5): governance and stakeholders, the motivation of citizen participation, the institutional context and planning systems. The shift from government to governance has an increasingly positive effect on the feasibility of citizen participation and a change in stakeholder relations. The relation between the three main stakeholders (state, civil society and the market) is initially still vertical (Driessen et al. 2012) but it is slowly changing from a vertical towards a horizontal relationship with the upcoming EPA. However, governance should be seen as a concept that supplements the government but does not replace the government, therefore, the role of the government should not too easily be dismissed (Swyngedouw, 2005). Governance focuses on the collaboration between the three main stakeholders to solve collective action problems. The role of civil society will become more prominent in planning processes and policy-making because of this shift. Literature also shows the motivation of citizen participation both from a governmental and citizen perspective. Citizen participation enhances decision-making, increases the legitimacy of planning processes and creates support & understanding from a governmental perspective. From a citizens perspective it creates better citizens, utilizes local knowledge and gives citizens control over policy outcomes (Rydin & Pennington, 2000; Enserink & Monnikhof, 2003; Turnhout et al. 2010; Aleshire, 1970; Arnstein, 1969; Ohmer, 2008). The Dutch institutional context and planning culture is oriented around a democratic system (Michiels, 2006) and delegation towards lower levels of government, also known as *“decentralized governance”* (Driessen et al. 2012). The delegation towards lower levels of government is also evident in the EPA known as the subsidiary principle, this principle *“involves ‘higher’ authorities not having to carry out tasks that could be taken care of by ‘lower’ authorities”* (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, 2017, p.104). Citizen participation is seen as a tool to strengthen, support and improve the functioning of the democratic system in the Netherlands (Michiels, 2006). The Dutch planning culture is characterized by organic urban development (Buitelaar & Bregman,



2016), the planning culture shows affinity with invitation planning, a facilitating government and direct participation. The shift towards invitation planning, the new facilitating government role and the rise of "*direct participation*" as a new generation of participation are all factors contributing to the governance context in the Netherlands. As mentioned before the use of governance is also one of the main principles of the EPA, ultimately reducing the current gap between the government and society. Therefore, the government might no longer be the only dominant stakeholder, Dutch planning is altering towards a facilitative government with citizens as more prominent stakeholders. All these mentioned factors influence the feasibility of citizen participation. Nonetheless, with the upcoming Environment & Planning act more aspects are at stake that might influence the feasibility of citizen participation which is discussed in the fourth contextual chapter. The literature review serves as the theoretical backbone of this research.

## Chapter 3. Methodology

After examining the literature on citizen participation, governance process and the Dutch planning and institutional context, this third methodological chapter will discuss the used methods for the empirical part of this research. Three cases are selected: the environmental plan in Venlo, the environmental plan in neighbourhood Boschpoort (Maastricht) and the environmental vision in region Parkstad Limburg. To understand the stakeholder relations, the motivation of citizen participation, the institutional context and the planning systems within the local context, semi-structured interviews and document analysis have been used as a data source. Within each case, several stakeholders have been interviewed and relevant documents have been analysed. The chapter is structured as the following: first of all, the type of research will be elaborated upon, following up by explaining the case study and the argumentation behind the choice of the case study. Afterwards, the used methods for data collection and the quality of the research will be discussed, with a special focus on reliability, replication & validity.

### 3.1 Qualitative research

The research started off by providing a literature review for the research. This information is based on literature connected to citizen participation and the governance process, the gathered information serves as the backbone of this research. The empirical part builds further upon the literature and is used to find deeper underlying roots about the feasibility of citizen participation in the EPA. In this research, the choice is made to make use of qualitative research. Since the EPA is not yet implemented and is still in an experimental phase, it makes sense to make use of qualitative research to find out about the root causes for the feasibility of citizen participation in the EPA. Bryman (2016) gives a few key characteristics for qualitative research: the use of words (soft & subjective), concerned with deep meanings and the use of case studies. In general qualitative research succeeds at explaining or interpreting certain behaviour and experiences and having the ability to find deep knowledge which may lead to new insights (Boeije et al., 2009). Especially the ability to find deep knowledge that may lead to new insights can be of added value to the research topic. Also, by interviewing a broad range of stakeholders a mix of perspectives is gathered. The public sector and civil society are interviewed throughout the three cases. A comparative research method is used to compare and analyse between the different cases. However, it is common to make use of an inductive approach in qualitative research, this is not the case for this research. A deductive approach is used in which the theoretical framework serves as the backbone of empirical research and guides the research, which ultimately leads to the recommendations. Qualitative research encompasses different forms of research methods (Bryman, 2016). A mix of Document analysis and semi-structured interviews is used to collect empirical data.

#### 3.1.1 Selection of case studies

To get a grasp on potential opportunities and risks associated with citizen participation in the EPA and several stakeholder relations from a Dutch perspective, a multiple case study will be used in this research. Evidence from a multiple case study is often considered more compelling, and ,therefore, more robust. However, a multiple case study can be time-consuming (Yin, 2009). According to Yin (2009), a case study takes place in contemporary events and makes use of direct observation or systematic interviewing. A question about “how” or “why” is proposed on a contemporary set of events the investigator has little or no control over. Flyvbjerg (2006) gives five misunderstandings about case studies, one of the five misunderstandings is about the underestimated value of practical knowledge which case studies provide. He emphasizes that social science is about context-dependent knowledge and case studies are a solid means to attain this knowledge. The use of both theoretical and practical knowledge can turn researchers from beginners into experts on a certain topic. Because the main question of this research is a “what” question, and citizen participation in the EPA is not extensively researched yet, an exploratory case study is used for this research. However, it also

important to know “why” certain factors are opportunities and risks for citizen participation in the EPA, or in other words trying to find deeper and more detailed knowledge about the feasibility. Yin (2009) mentions that the “how” and “why” questions are most valuable for case study research. By this knowledge, a combination of an exploratory and descriptive case study is used. The main reason for this combination is the fact that citizen participation in the EPA is still in an experimenting phase and the three pilots are assessed in depth by interviews and document analyses (Yin, 2009).

In total three cases are researched in which the opinions and thoughts on citizen participation in the upcoming EPA from the public sector and citizens are heard. The cases analysed in this research are three pilots in the municipality of Venlo, Maastricht and the Parkstad region (a partnership of seven municipalities). The selected cases are chosen because of their progressive approach towards citizen participation, the combination of citizen participation with an environmental vision or plan and all three cases differ in scale. First, The municipality of Venlo has approximately 100.000 inhabitants and the pilot is about developing an environmental plan on the municipal level. Second, the municipality of Maastricht has approximately 120.000 inhabitants and the pilot is about developing an environmental plan for the neighbourhood Boschpoort (neighbourhood level). Third, the Parkstad region has roughly 255.000 inhabitants and focuses on the development of a regional environmental vision (regional level) (CBS Statline, 2019). The difference in scale of every pilot leads to a different scope and a different local context of the pilot.

The cases for this research were selected by making use of the website [www.aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl](http://www.aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl). The website displays all the pilots in the Netherlands which are experimenting with the new law. The website provides an option to filter the pilots on participation for the environmental plan or the environmental vision. The website also provided a basic description of the pilot and contact persons who are in charge of the pilot.

## **3.2 Data collection & analysis**

Two ways of data collection are used to investigate the feasibility of citizen participation in the upcoming EPA for the selected cases. Document analysis is the first method used, several municipal documents for each case have been analysed. The documents roughly focus on three topics, which are participation, instruments of the EPA and progress documents on the cases itself. However, the main source of information is attained by making use of interviews with a variety of respondents. Several stakeholders have been interviewed for each case and also an informational gathering for the EPA has been attended with multiple keynote speakers on the new law. To finish off this paragraph, the method to reach respondents is elaborated upon. By making combined use of both qualitative methods: document analysis and interviews of the same phenomenon, triangulation is reached. This way the study is guarded against accusations that the study is too one-sided or has only used one method or source (Bowen, 2009).

### **3.2.1 Document analysis**

In order to gain a better understanding of the stakeholder relations, the approach to citizen participation combined with the used instruments, the local context, the progress on the pilot itself and the planning systems, document analysis is used. The analysed documents are either policy documents or progress reports. The document analysis is also partly used to get a grasp of the backgrounds, principles and participation methods of the EPA (chapter 4).

Bowen (2009) describes document analysis as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents.. Document analysis is considered a time-efficient method because the researcher only has to select the data and not collect the data, also documents are widely available depending on the transparency of an organization. However, documents may contain insufficient detail, but with the use of interviews missing information can be included. In the process of document analysis, the

researcher should strive for objectivity and sensitivity. Document analysis is about skimming, reading and interpreting the data, the process consists of two forms of analysis which are content analysis and thematic analysis, content analysis is mainly used in this research. Content analysis is about the organisation of information into several categories, based on the main research question. By combining content analysis of the documents with data from interviews bias is minimized as much as possible and credibility is established (Bowen, 2009).

The analysed documents from in this research mostly contain policy documents on the EPA, documents which describe a new approach to citizen participation and the changing role of the government and progress documents on the investigated pilots. The selected documents per pilot are represented in table 1. Most of the documents are widely available and can be found on the municipal or regional websites of the investigated pilots, with the exception of the municipal document “Nieuwe impulsen aan participatie” from the municipality of Venlo and the “Matrix integrale aanpak omgevingsvisie”. These documents are not available for the public yet, because those are working documents. The respondents shared the documents with the researcher in the case that they were not widely available.

**Table 1: List of analysed documents**

<b>Pilot Venlo</b>
<i>Selected documents</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Burgers aan zet (2012)</li> <li>2. Nieuwe impulsen aan participatie (2019)</li> <li>3. Aan de slag met de omgevingswet in Venlo, cultuur en verandermanagement (2017)</li> <li>4. Ruimtelijke structuurvisie Venlo, ruimte binnen grenzen (2014)</li> </ol>
<b>Pilot Maastricht</b>
<i>Selected documents</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ambitiedocument Omgevingswet gemeente Maastricht (2017)</li> <li>2. Voortgangsnotitie, Pilot omgevingsplan Boschpoort (2018)</li> <li>3. Discussienotie, Omgevingsvisie Maastricht 2040 (2018)</li> <li>4. Experiment Omgevingsplan Boschpoort (2019)</li> </ol>
<b>Pilot Parkstad</b>
<i>Selected documents</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eindrapport pilots omgevingsvisie 2017-2018 (2018)</li> <li>2. Intergemeentelijke structuurvisie Parkstad Limburg 2030 (2009)</li> <li>3. Matrix integrale aanpak omgevingsvisie (2019)</li> </ol>

### 3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are the biggest source of data of this research, formal interviews were used in this research. The strength of semi-structured interviews is that the interviews have strong guidance and a possible back-up by making use of a topic list, however, the respondent still has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. The use of open-ended questions in this research provided the opportunity to identify new ways or a more advanced way of understanding the topic (Bryman, 2016). Most of the questions from the topic list are covered during the conversation, but there was room to deviate from the prepared questions. In some cases it was necessary to go deeper into certain topics, to change some questions or to add extra questions, the respondent was given the ability to add additional topics or issues. Nonetheless, in the majority of the interviews, a set of standard questions were proposed, which also gives the researcher structure and the possibility to compare the results (Bryman, 2016).

Two different topic lists have been used (Appendix 1 & 2), a topic list for the public sector and one for the citizens or neighbourhood council. The topic lists are based on the literature review and the selected EPA experiments. A different topic list was created for citizens to prevent the use of jargon. The topic lists were separated in several themes such as the importance of citizen participation, the relation between stakeholders and the participation process in the pilot (all related to the EPA). All interviews have been recorded with the permission of the respondent, and have been transcribed as soon as possible after the interview was conducted. This way the data can be thoroughly processed while the interview was still fresh in the researchers memory. Before the interviews were conducted, an event on stakeholder relations in the EPA at Pakhuis de Zwijger was organised, unfortunately, the event was full. However, the organization recorded the event which gave the researcher the option to use it as an information source. The event put a focus on the changing relationship between citizens, the private sector and the public sector in the new law. The event provided the researcher with a great basis and food for thought on the topic. Several questions were posed during this event like: Which stakeholder might get more power in the future? What does this possible power shift mean for the physical environment and society? Several public speakers provided presentations on the topic resulting in interesting questions and discussion from the participants. For the event at Pakhuis de Zwijger there is no transcript but notes were written down. The coding scheme was derived from theory, the topic list and additional codes that came forward in the interviews. The coding scheme of this research can be found in Appendix 3. This process is also known as directed content analysis, in which the codes are defined before and during data analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

A number of semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of:

1. The relations between various stakeholders in each case, such as local officials, planners, citizens and neighbourhood councils;
2. The motivation of citizen participation, and how the participation process was organised;
3. The local institutional context of each case;
4. Their approach to current and future planning systems;
5. How the EPA influences these mentioned components and other factors related to citizen participation

For each pilot, the goal was to interview a variety of stakeholders. The duration of the interviews was approximately 45 minutes to 75 minutes. All the interviews were conducted face to face. The event at Pakhuis the Zwijger served as a basis and provided expert knowledge on the topic as a variety of public speakers gave their expertise. For the pilot in Maastricht, three different stakeholders have been interviewed. A process manager from the municipality, a citizen of the neighbourhood Boschpoort and a member from the neighbourhood council who was also a citizen of Boschpoort. For the pilot in Venlo a policy advisor on Spatial Planning has been interviewed and an expert on communication and participation in the municipality. For the last pilot in the region of Parkstad three stakeholders have

been interviewed. A spatial policymaker and a spatial planner at the municipal level and also the project leader on the environmental vision on the regional level.

Through the contact persons provided by [www.aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl](http://www.aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl), a small group of people relevant to the research questions have been sampled. The contact persons were approached via e-mail, phone or LinkedIn. This way the data collection always started with a semi-structured interview at the municipality of the researched pilots. Afterwards, the respondents connected the researcher with other respondents who contain characteristics or experience relevant to the research. This sampling method is also known as “*snowball sampling*” (Bryman, 2016, pp. 415). The contact persons contacted me with citizens, neighbourhood councils and other professionals in the field of Spatial Planning. This was especially helpful to get in touch with citizens because this group is hard to reach. Table 2 represents the interviewed respondents and their role.

**Table 2: List of public speakers & interviewed respondents**

Topic	Respondent	Role	Date
Gathering EPA, Pakhuis de Zwijger	Public speaker 1 Public speaker 2 Public speaker 3	Water authority chairman, Rijn & IJssel Spatial strategy advisor, Antea Group Communication advisor EPA, municipality of Zaanstad	28 <sup>th</sup> of March 2019
Pilot Maastricht	Respondent 1	Process manager EPA, municipality of Maastricht	24 <sup>th</sup> of April 2019
Pilot Maastricht	Respondent 2	Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort	24 <sup>th</sup> of May 2019
Pilot Maastricht	Respondent 3	Citizen of Boschpoort	28 <sup>th</sup> of May 2019
Pilot Venlo	Respondent 4	Policy advisor Spatial Planning, Municipality of Venlo	13 <sup>th</sup> of May 2019
Pilot Venlo	Respondent 5	Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo	27 <sup>th</sup> of May 2019
Pilot Parkstad	Respondent 6	Senior policymaker Spatial Planning, Municipality of Landgraaf	2 <sup>nd</sup> of May 2019
Pilot Parkstad	Respondent 7	Spatial Planner, municipality of Kerkrade	10 <sup>th</sup> of May 2019
Pilot Parkstad	Respondent 8	Project leader environmental vision, Parkstad region	16 <sup>th</sup> of May 2019

### 3.2.3 Ethics

Informed consent is a crucial factor of ethics in social research, as much information about the study should be given to the respondents beforehand so they can make a decision if they wish to participate in a study (Bryman, 2016, pp. 129). Respondents within this research were introduced to the study over e-mail or phone, the subject and the goal of the research were introduced before conducting the interview. Also, the added value and the reason why the participants were selected as a data source

were made clear beforehand. Before conducting the interviews, permission for recording the interviews was asked for research purposes. All respondents agreed to be recorded and for the EPA event at Pakhuis de Zwijger notes were taken. Since all respondents are part of the experiments connected to the EPA and the experiments are ongoing, information on sensitive subjects could be revealed. Therefore, to prevent an invasion of the privacy of the respondents, full names will not be used in this research, only the function of the respondent is mentioned (Bryman, 2016, pp. 132). The respondents were also given the option to receive and check the transcript of the interview for possible misinterpretation. The final version of the thesis is shared with all respondents for transparency.

### **3.3 Quality of the research**

Reliability, replication and validity are the three most prominent criteria for evaluating the quality of social research (Bryman, 2016). Those three criteria will be elaborated upon for this research.

#### **Reliability & replication**

Reliability is mainly a criterion in quantitative research and it is concerned with the question if the data collection and the results of a study are repeatable and trustworthy. Replication of the study is about the question to what extent it is possible for another researcher to replicate the results. (Bryman, 2016; Yin, 2009). Reliability and replication are obtained throughout several ways in this research. First, the cases have been carefully selected based on different criterion. Secondly, two topic lists have been used which are derived from theory and different questions have been raised depending on the type of stakeholder. Thirdly, it is hard to guarantee that another researcher will end up with the same results. However, for this research semi-structured interviews have been used. As mentioned before semi-structured interviews do have a certain structure but leave open room to deviate from the prepared question. This way the possibility of asking wrong questions has been diminished as much as possible. However, another researcher might have different intentions, use the topic lists in a different way and the respondents might not give the same answers to the proposed questions. Lastly, the methodological chapter of this research provides an explanation on how the research was carried out which makes the research replicable. Also, triangulation has been used in this research by combining interviews with document analysis, this way claims or statements from respondents could be checked in documents or the other way around.

#### **Validity**

Bryman (2016, pp. 41) defines validity as the following: *“Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research”*. Two types of validity are applicable for this research: internal- and external validity. Internal validity in qualitative research refers to what extent the researcher interprets the data in a correct manner (Bryman, 2016). To reach internal validity respondents were given the option to receive the transcripts, and check on misinterpretations or other misconceptions on the interview. External validity is concerned whether the results of a study are generalizable beyond the research context. Or in other words: to what extent are the conclusions of this research applicable to all the municipalities in the Netherlands. Since the law is not operating yet, the research is based on only three cases, the aim of this research is not to generalize the feasibility of citizen participation for all municipalities in the Netherlands. Citizen participation demands tailor-made solutions and every project or plan is dependent on the local context. However, it is a possibility that other municipalities struggle with the same issues that were found in this research.

## **Chapter 4. New Environment & Planning Act: backgrounds, principles and methods**

In this contextual chapter, background information on the upcoming Environment & Planning act is given. First explaining how the new act is constructed in general, afterwards how citizen participation is organized in the new act and finally what kind of methods can be used for citizen participation in the new act.

### **4.1 New Environment & Planning act**

Current spatial planning legislation is organised in the law named “Wet ruimtelijke ordening” (Wro). Within this law, citizen participation mainly occurs in the formal phase at the end of plan, citizens have the possibility to assess the first version of the plan. Citizens and other stakeholders can give their vision (*Zienswijze*) and can appeal against the plan. This leads to a very symbolic use of citizen participation, where the main goal is to make plans legitimate. Citizen participation within the current law is focussed on formal participation (appealing against a plan) at the end of the planning process. In the EPA, citizen participation is more focused on the informal process at the start of a planning process. In the informal process the government, citizens and business collaborate at the beginning of the planning process to get a grasp of the issues, opinions and ideas about the plan before detailed research is carried out. This way, more public support is created, legal resistance can be reduced, research costs can be decreased, the planning process is accelerated and expert and local knowledge can be utilized in an early stage (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2017). Current legislation in the Wro has a sectoral approach and a high level of fragmentation leading to lots of procedures and rules. The current sectoral approach is not suitable for future sustainable developments because of a lack of coherency. Projects need tailor-made solutions and within future projects, several societal problems unite within the same projects. The lack of coherency in current legislation results into issues for several fields which come together in projects such as organic urban development, urban restructuring, accessibility & mobility, environmental development, preserving cultural heritage, sustainability and water management (Ministry of infrastructure & environment, 2017).

Planning processes in the current law lack collaboration between several stakeholders and the collaboration mostly takes place at the end of a planning process. Resulting in plans that are created from a very one-sided perspective. Future sustainable development also leads to a higher level of complexity which planners can no longer solve on their own. The input, knowledge and opinion of citizens and other non-governmental stakeholders are vital in solving those complex problems and achieving sustainable development. More power to the authorities and stakeholders on the local level will be delegated. Current legislation is fragmented and lacks transparency. Especially handling the application of environmental permits has issues with the fragmented sphere. Initiators have to go through several laws and authorities which decelerates planning processes and an integrated judgement is missing. (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2017). To conclude, the Wro is focused on legal certainty. However, the law lacks flexibility which is the level in which laws and rules can be adjusted under certain conditions. The new Environment & Planning act aims to increase the level of flexibility and focuses on sustainable development instead of primarily legal certainty (Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), 2010, pp. 7).

In the year 2021, “*De Omgevingswet*” (translated: Environment & Planning act), a new national law concerning urban and spatial development will come into force. The Dutch government wants to simplify and speed up current legislation by combining 26 existing laws into one comprehensive law. The Environment & Planning act (EPA) is also known as an “All-in-one Law on the Physical Environment”. The main motivation for the creation of the EPA is the perception that there are too many laws, and each law has its specific procedures and requirements which makes it difficult to bring projects forward in an integrated way (Korthals Altes, 2016). The ministry of infrastructure and environment (2017, pp.1) describes the new EPA as the following: “*The act seeks to modernise, harmonise*



and simplify current rules on land use planning, environmental protection, nature conservation, construction of buildings, protection of cultural heritage, water management, urban and rural redevelopment, development of major public and private works and mining and earth removal and integrate these rules into one legal framework". The integration of laws and simplification of procedures should result in a system of environmental and planning law which is "simply better".

The EPA builds further upon the subsidiary principle, governmental tasks will primarily be delegated towards the decentralized level and will only be carried out on a centralized level when necessary. According to VNG, municipalities can make a difference in the physical environment because there will be more room for local consideration, which positively affects the quality of the environment and increases collaboration between the private sector, civil society and the local government. To reach a better quality of the physical environment and sustainable development for society, there are two social objectives of the EPA (Rijksoverheid, 2017):

- To achieve and maintain a safe and healthy physical environment and a good environmental quality and;
- To efficiently manage, use and develop the physical environment in fulfilling the wishes and needs of society.

In the current situation, with all the different laws and separate fields, it is difficult to create an integrated policy. This state of legislation is too focused on certainty and risk-aversion instead of sustainable development. Besides improving and maintaining the physical environment the government describes four other goals of the EPA which also contribute to the feasibility of citizen participation (VNG, 2019):

- More space for consideration on the local level for decision-making on the physical environment;
- More and better understanding for involved stakeholders on what is allowed on which location, in order to achieve objectives for the physical environment;
- Improving and speeding up decision-making for projects in the physical environment by providing better information;
- A more coherent/integrated approach towards the physical environment in policy, regulation and decision-making.

## Key instruments

To reach these set goals and create a comprehensive environmental policy, several instruments will be used. The instruments should help with implementing the policy and rules and help facilitate the participatory and permitting process towards initiators. The following six instruments are the heart of the EPA, which will be briefly discussed below (Rijksoverheid, 2017; Platform 31, 2019):

- The environmental vision (*Omgevingsvisie*): the environmental vision is a coherent long-term vision or a strategic plan that focuses on the essential and desired developments within a particular level of government. The state, the provinces and the municipalities all have to create an environmental strategy and it replaces the old Structural vision (*Structuurvisie*);
- The programme (*Programma's*): the programme helps to achieve the set goals in the environmental vision, for example reducing noise nuisance in an area. The programme consists of a package of draft plans and measures that help achieving environmental goals or targets in the physical environment;

- Decentralized regulations (*Decentrale regels*): The law does not only change on a national level but also on a decentralized level, the main focus here is on the municipalities. Within the scope of this research, the new environmental plan (*Omgevingsplan*) is the most important, the environmental plan will replace the old zoning plans and other local plans (*Bestemmingsplannen*). A total of approximately 50.000 zoning plans will be merged into 380 environmental plans. In the environmental plan the decentralised authority comprehensively lays down the general rules and obligation for obtaining permits;
- General government regulations (*Algemene rijksregels*): describes regulations for activities within the physical environment, those regulations also protect the physical environment;
- The environmental permit (*Omgevingsvergunning*): the environmental permit can be used by initiators to obtain permission for the activities they wish to carry out. The environmental permit again is organised in a comprehensive way, no longer different permits for different applications but organised in one single platform;
- The project decision (*Projectbesluit*): the project decision is used for complex and major projects that are in the interest of the public, e.g. the construction of a new road or a solar field. Those projects have overarching importance for regions or a province. The project decision is an instrument that can be used by the state, the provinces or the water boards. However, this can also lead to changes in the environmental plan of a municipality.

Within four of these instruments citizen participation will play a crucial role, and the EPA even obliges the government to incorporate participation in the environmental vision, the programme, the environmental plans and the project decision. The focus of this research is primarily on the environmental visions and plans. The government has to show how they organized the participation process and how they involved stakeholders throughout the process. For the environmental permit, the initiator (which can also be non-governmental) of the project has to declare if there has been interaction/collaboration with stakeholders. This is ensured by making use of a “duty to state reasons” (*Motiveringsplicht*) which describes how citizens are incorporated in the process and how their input is used. The duty to state reasons contributes to the governance process in the EPA because it ensures participation of non-governmental stakeholders. This also raises a question if every initiator is capable of guiding the participation process (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2017).

## 4.2 Citizen participation in the new act

For the first time, citizen participation in an early stage will be a legal requirement in Dutch spatial planning with the upcoming EPA. The ambition of the EPA is to give citizens a more prominent role in sustainable development within their physical environment (Ou, 2019). The EPA wants to stimulate participation from non-governmental stakeholders in an early stage, to get familiar with their interests, opinions and creative ideas which is described in the Explanatory Memorandum of the EPA (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, 2017). Ex-politician Hein Pieper (De Zwijger, 2019) provided a quote which emphasizes the main message behind participation in the new law: “*For the new law it is of utter importance that citizens are approached with a white blank page and not with a completed plan*”. To enter the dialogue with non-governmental stakeholders in an early stage more public support and better decision-making can be achieved and also planning processes can be accelerated. The acceleration of planning processes will mainly occur because of an expected decrease in (legal) resistance when stakeholders are involved in an early stage (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2017).

The EPA considers citizens, representatives of companies, professionals of social organisations and the government as main stakeholders, this can be compared to the three main stakeholders from Driessen et al. (2012). Initiatives from non-governmental stakeholders are stimulated, the government steps into an inviting and facilitating role. The centre of attraction of this research is on citizen participation on

the municipal and regional level. However, the EPA does stimulate participation in an early stage but does not provide guidelines on how a participation process should be organised. This provides a lot of freedom and flexibility for municipalities on how to fill in those participatory processes, the main reason for this flexibility is the fact that participation processes are different for every project. Participation processes are tailor-made, every project has a different local context, different decision-making and different stakeholders (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2017). Nonetheless, the high level of flexibility and the lack of guidelines might also provide some uncertainties for citizen participation within the new law. First, it can possibly have a negative effect on legal certainty of the planning process because the lack of guidelines on the participation process. Second, the initiator of the project is also responsible for the participation process, it is a possibility that the initiator has no experience with citizen participation and is incapable of leading the participation process. Third, there is a tendency that a certain type of citizens participates, mostly older people or people who are highly educated, this may lead to the exclusion of other groups (De Zwijger, 2019).

This lack of guidelines also means a new role for the government, they step into a facilitating, stimulating or even a releasing role. A new relationship arises between government and society. Bottom-up initiatives from non-governmental stakeholders are stimulated in which the interests and opinions of local stakeholders are crucial. The EPA tries to increase the quality of the *product* but also the *process*. One prime goal is to reach a better physical environment that does not involve undesired or harmful developments in an area and the other prime goal is to incorporate citizens in the decision-making process. In the end, it is still the responsibility of the government to achieve a better *product* and *process*, but the EPA tries to provide more responsibility for non-governmental stakeholders as well. To reach a better process, the government has to provide clear goals, increase availability and transparency of information, more room for citizens' input and make sure the citizens feel heard (Van den Broek et al., 2016). The EPA describes that especially trust is a crucial factor to reach a better product and process, and this trust has to come in three ways. First, the government has to trust civil society, the civil society has to trust the government and finally the different layers of governments also have to trust each other. To gain trust between different stakeholders "broad participation" at the start of a project is fundamental. Broad participation is about the collaboration between stakeholders and discovering potential opportunities and risks at the start of a project before detailed research about a chosen alternative is carried out. This way, more public support is created, research costs can be decreased, the planning process is accelerated and expert knowledge can be utilized in an early stage (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2017).

Also the shift from permission-planning towards invitation-planning is noticeable in the EPA. The environmental vision and the environmental plan help to achieve this shift, instead of creating a strict framework which was the case in the old zoning plans, the EPA tries to leave the content as open as possible. This way, non-governmental stakeholders have the possibility to fulfil their wishes and needs, without the government giving preconditions with a set framework. However, the government will eventually still create a framework, but with an open end and focused on transparency and flexibility.

The EPA makes use of the Dutch ladder of citizen participation (Edelenbos & Monnikhof, 2001) which is not as extensive as the model from Arnstein (1969). The ladder uses 5 ranks of participation instead of eight, because the EPA uses this model as a basis for participation it is important to shortly touch upon the 5 degrees of citizen power. Concept 1 is the lowest level of power and concept 5 is the highest level of power. To make it easier, an example of creating healthy neighbourhoods will be used:

- *Informing*, citizens will be informed about a new development of a public space that should stimulate people to exercise;
- *Consulting*, in this case, the citizens give their understanding of a healthy neighbourhood;

- *Advising*, citizens have the possibility to give advice or can present solutions on how to reach a better and healthier neighbourhood;
- *Coproducing*, to provide green energy in the neighbourhood, the citizens can work together with other stakeholders to provide a small solar field;
- *Shared decision-making*, the citizens have for example a say in where a solar field should be developed, how big the solar field should be and how they want to minimize the damage to nature (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2016).

### 4.3 Participation methods

As mentioned before, participation is a crucial element of the EPA. In this paragraph, several methods of participation will be elaborated upon. The EPA itself does not provide any guidelines on the form, method or content that should be used for participation, this lack of guidelines should increase the room for initiatives and finding tailor-made solutions for projects. The EPA gives five principles that contribute to the success of a good participation process (Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2016):

- Binding together: looking for mutual interest for all stakeholders;
- Participation in an early stage: before developing and presenting a plan, stakeholders should have a chance to provide ideas and be part of the decision-making;
- Transparency and trust: involved stakeholders should be on the same page and knowledge should be shared;
- Mutual responsibility: for the physical environment and the management of the environment, everyone should be involved;
- Tailor-made solutions: every project is unique and needs tailor-made solutions.

The EPA gives some advice on which methods can be used for participation, below the classic and new methods for participation are described. It is possible that several methods will be used within the same project. Also, the choice of the participation methods depends on a few factors such as: which level of participation is desired according to the ladder of citizen participation, what is the goal of the project/program, the scale of a project, time investment and costs and how many people are participating.

#### 4.3.1 Classic methods

In this section, the most common methods for participation in the upcoming EPA will be shortly touched upon. There are more methods for citizen participation, which is an exhaustive list and some methods are only applicable to specific situations. The following ‘classic’ methods will be discussed: interviews, focus groups, information gatherings, workshops/drawing-boards, site visits (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2016).

##### Interviews

Interviews with citizens can be a useful method to gain information, get a grasp of their creative ideas and the ability to point out issues on a certain topic. Interviews can be carried out by the government, research firms or citizens can interview each other. Interviews are strong in getting to know a certain area and getting an understanding of the issues at stake, however, interviews can be time-consuming when there are a lot of respondents (Bryman, 2016). Within the upcoming EPA, ‘Ambassadors’ are also mentioned, these are key figures within a program or a project. The ambassador tries to reach the set goals and is also responsible for carrying out the interviews or other methods of participation (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2016).

## Focus groups

A focus group consists of 6 to 12 persons, this group will meet each other up to three times in total. The big advantage of a focus group is that discussion about a particular project can be developed between the respondents. In general, a focus group has a comfortable atmosphere where the respondents can feel at ease. Respondents can give their opinions and ideas about the projects and can discuss those ideas together (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2016). Inclusiveness of all respondents is a risk in a focus group, some respondents might bring out more input than others. However, it is the responsibility of the mediator to guide the process and give every respondent as much floor time (Byrman, 2012).

## Information gatherings/evenings

Information gatherings are a common approach for citizen participation in the Netherlands. In the past, they were mostly used to inform citizens about the end result of a project or give a presentation about the end result. Citizens do have the possibility to ask questions about a project but this is not always in an early stage of the project. Information gatherings can be of added value when used in an early stage, it has the advantage to inform a lot of people at once and get a grasp of issues at stake.

## Workshops/drawing-boards

In general, workshops can contain two forms. A workshop can be used to discuss the scope of a particular project, the important aspects and the ambitions. This approach can be reinforced by making use of statements about the project to stimulate the discussion. The workshop can also be focussed on designing. Citizens, experts and other stakeholders can design a plan together, they can produce several scenarios or a rough sketch.

## Site visits

To inspire citizens and other stakeholders it can be of added value to visit the site of a project. This way stakeholders can create a higher affinity with the environment, this way stakeholders can experience the issues at stake. It also positively affects the creativity for solving problems and creating new ideas. Last but not least, it additionally improves the relationship between stakeholders because of the casual contact that can occur when visiting a site (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2016).

### **4.3.2 New method (E-participation)**

With the upcoming EPA, new methods enter the realm of citizen participation. The EPA stimulates the use of a digital platform for participation and the authorisation of permits. In the current state, there is a platform called "Omgevingsloket online", within this platform people can apply for an environmental permit or can check if their permit is legitimate. However, within the new law, the goal is to expand this online platform to a state where people can do more than just apply for an environmental permit. For example, the platform can be used for discussion between stakeholders, the platform can be used to educate local officials, the platform can give an option for people to report issues in the physical environment or the platform can be simply used to update citizens about the progress of a project. Making use of digital resources for participation is also known as E-participation. Social media, blogs, apps and digital debate can be used to involve and update stakeholders. Stakeholders can share information when they want to and where they want to. E-participation in its current state is not developed well enough, the EPA tries to create a better understanding and provide better information by making use of this platform (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, 2016).

## Chapter 5. Case studies of Venlo, Maastricht and Parkstad

For the case study research, a total of three cases are used in the province of Limburg. All three cases are experimenting with new instruments of the EPA, the development of environmental plans and visions. The cases give extra attention on how to pursue participation and stakeholder relations in the new law. All three cases differ in the level of scale, the pilot in Maastricht is on the lowest level of scale (neighbourhood level), the pilot in Venlo is on municipal level of scale and the pilot in Parkstad is on a higher level of scale (regional level). The following three cases are selected:

- Municipality of Venlo: “Pilot for the development of an environmental plan for the entire municipality”;
- Municipality of Maastricht: “Pilot for the development of an environmental plan for the neighbourhood Boschpoort”;
- Parkstad Limburg region: “Pilot for the development of an environmental vision for the region”.

Additionally, in the Parkstad case, the seven municipalities are also developing an environmental vision on the municipal scale. This chapter presents the results of every case based on data collection and analysis. For every case, relevant aspects on stakeholder relations, citizen participation and the EPA will be discussed. These aspects are derived from theory and expanded by knowledge from the contextual chapter. Therefore the structure of the paragraphs starts with stakeholder relations which consist of the modes of governance and trust & equality between stakeholders. Afterwards, citizen participation within the case will be discussed which includes the motivation of citizen participation, the degree of citizen power, the role of the government and how the participation process is organized. Finally, the planning systems and flexibility of the case are discussed.

### 5.1 Municipality of Venlo – Flexible environmental plan

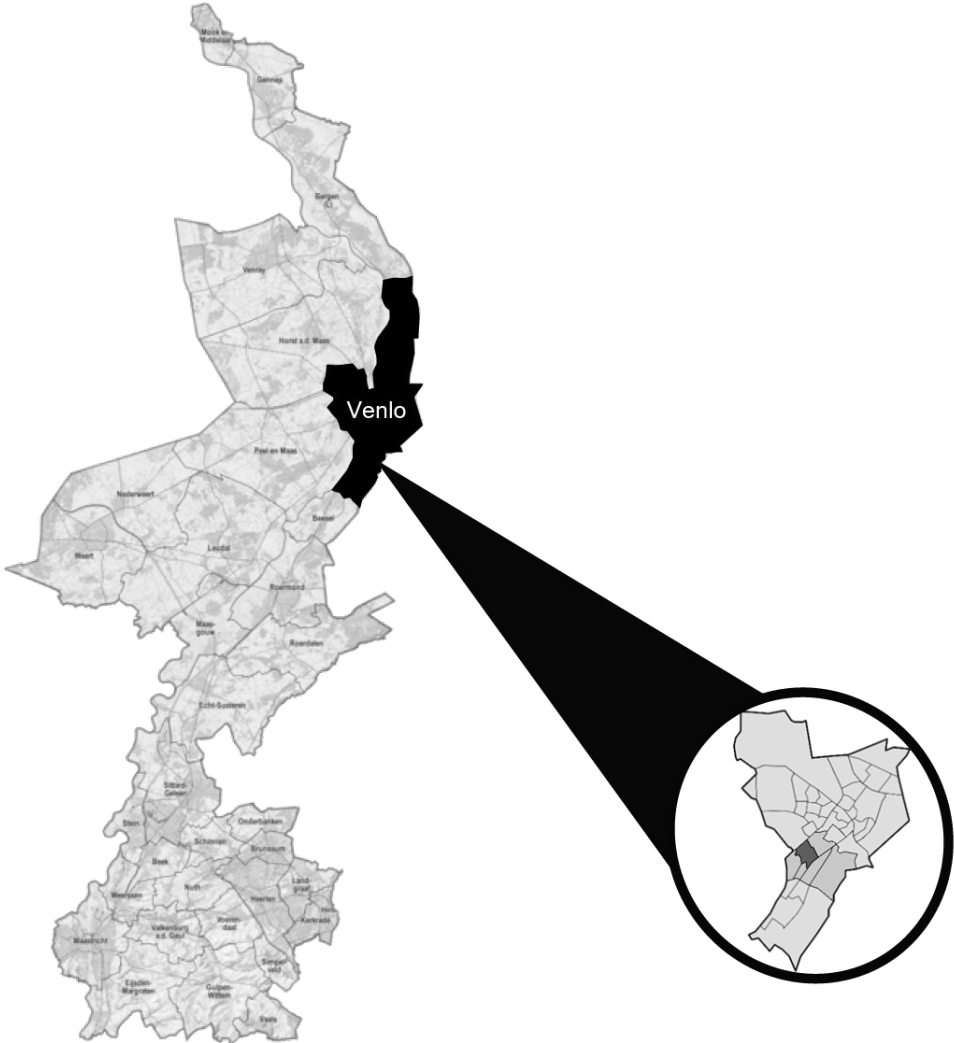
Within this paragraph, the results of the case “Flexible environmental plan Venlo” are discussed. The village Tegelen is the starting point of the environmental plan. The municipality is experimenting with invitation planning, the changing role of the government and new ways to give impulses to citizen participation.

#### 5.1.1 Context

A lack of flexibility and detailed information for every parcel are characteristics of the zoning plans in current legislation, which is very strict and risk-averse. In preparation for the upcoming EPA, the municipality of Venlo is experimenting with more flexible zoning plans in the context of the Dutch Crisis and Recovery Act. The plan should leave more room for initiatives by using invitation planning and the plan should be developed in collaboration with non-governmental stakeholders. Since the EPA is not operating yet and this pilot is still in an experimenting phase the new zoning plan is not yet labelled as an “Environmental plan”, but as a *Bestemmingsplan met verbrede reikwijdte* (translated: *zoning plan with a broader scope*). For the development of the environmental plan, the municipality uses an incremental approach in which they start with one small part of the municipality and try to expand from thereon. The scale of the plan is on a municipal level. The current focus is on urban and residential areas, rural areas will be developed in a later stage. The village Tegelen is the starting point, the municipality is also experimenting with how to involve non-governmental stakeholders. Therefore, they are currently creating a document “*Nieuwe impulsen voor participatie*” (translated: *New impulses for participation*) which describes how they want to approach stakeholder involvement and relations between the government, citizens and private parties in light of the EPA. Also, the old

Structural vision of the municipality (2014) was already created in collaboration with stakeholders, this provides a solid basis for future plans in the EPA. This was a unique approach back then and structural vision is partly EPA-proof, however is it missing several themes such as sustainability and healthy physical environment. (Ruimtelijke structuurvisie Venlo, 2014). Figure 6 shows the location of Venlo in the province of Limburg, the dark grey area in the zoomed in map represents the centre of Tegelen.

Figure 6: Location of Tegelen, municipality of Venlo



Source: GemeenteAtlas (2019) edited version

### 5.1.2 Stakeholder relations

Within the case of Venlo, a broad variety of stakeholders are involved in the development of the environmental plan. Several governmental stakeholders on various levels are involved: the province, the regional water authority and multiple actors from the municipality of Venlo such as the Mayor and Alderman, the city council, city district managers and policy-makers. From the market, housing corporations, local retailers, developers, agriculture and horticulture association Limburg (LLTB) and real estate firms. And lastly, from civil society of course citizens are part of the planning process but also district and neighbourhood councils (respondent 4 & 5, Venlo). As mentioned before in the literature review, the Netherlands is considered a decentralized unitary state, the national government is supreme, but political power is delegated to lower levels (Driessen et al., 2012). This form of decentralized governance is still very apparent in the Netherlands, but the upcoming EPA aims to change the relationship between the three crucial stakeholders. For this alteration to occur, stakeholders have to step into a new role and have to see each other as stakeholders and not as opposing parties (Municipality of Venlo, 2017). The municipality of Venlo created a slogan on how the physical environment can be improved together: *“Care about Venlo”* (Municipality of Venlo, 2019) Respondent 5 (Venlo) mentions the following about the partnership between the government and citizens and shared responsibility, which is also described in the document *“New impulses for participation, 2019”*:

*“The municipality has a task to make sure that citizens also take their own responsibility, they also have a responsibility for the physical environment. (...) Shared responsibility also means that the government has to involve citizens in adjustments and improvements, it should not mean that the government decides everything. At the end we should decide together, that is one of the principles, shared responsibility, we are partners in improving the physical environment.”*

Respondent 5 (Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo)

Respondent 4 (Venlo) adds to this statement, that there is a possibility that the EPA will change the relationship between the three crucial stakeholders. The new law may reduce the gap between the state, the market and civil society:

*“If the law will operate as it is intended, in that case, I do think it will change. The gap will reduce. The citizens, initiators and other stakeholders will be closer with each other. In this perspective, that is a good move”.*

Respondent 4 (Policy advisor Spatial Planning, municipality of Venlo)

However, trust and equality between stakeholders are crucial factors to make shared responsibility a success. A great way to gain trust from citizens is to enter the planning process with a white blank page instead of a well-defined plan. This way the input has more value and can be used at the start of a planning process (Public speaker 1, de Zwijger). Nonetheless, citizens are used to starting a planning process with a strict framework and guidelines from the government. The government providing a framework at the front provides trust and certainty for citizens, therefore, entering the planning process with a white blank page can also be a risk (respondent 1, Maastricht; respondent 4, Venlo). To reach equality between stakeholders being on the same information level is important. In the current state, local officials are familiar with all documents and information and it is easily accessible for them. The municipality has a monopoly of knowledge, the EPA tries to equalize the information position of the government, market and civil society. According to Respondent 5 (Venlo) an equal information position and transparency will contribute to a closer relationship between those three stakeholders. Gaining trust from civil society is a big challenge for the government, and maintaining trust even harder:

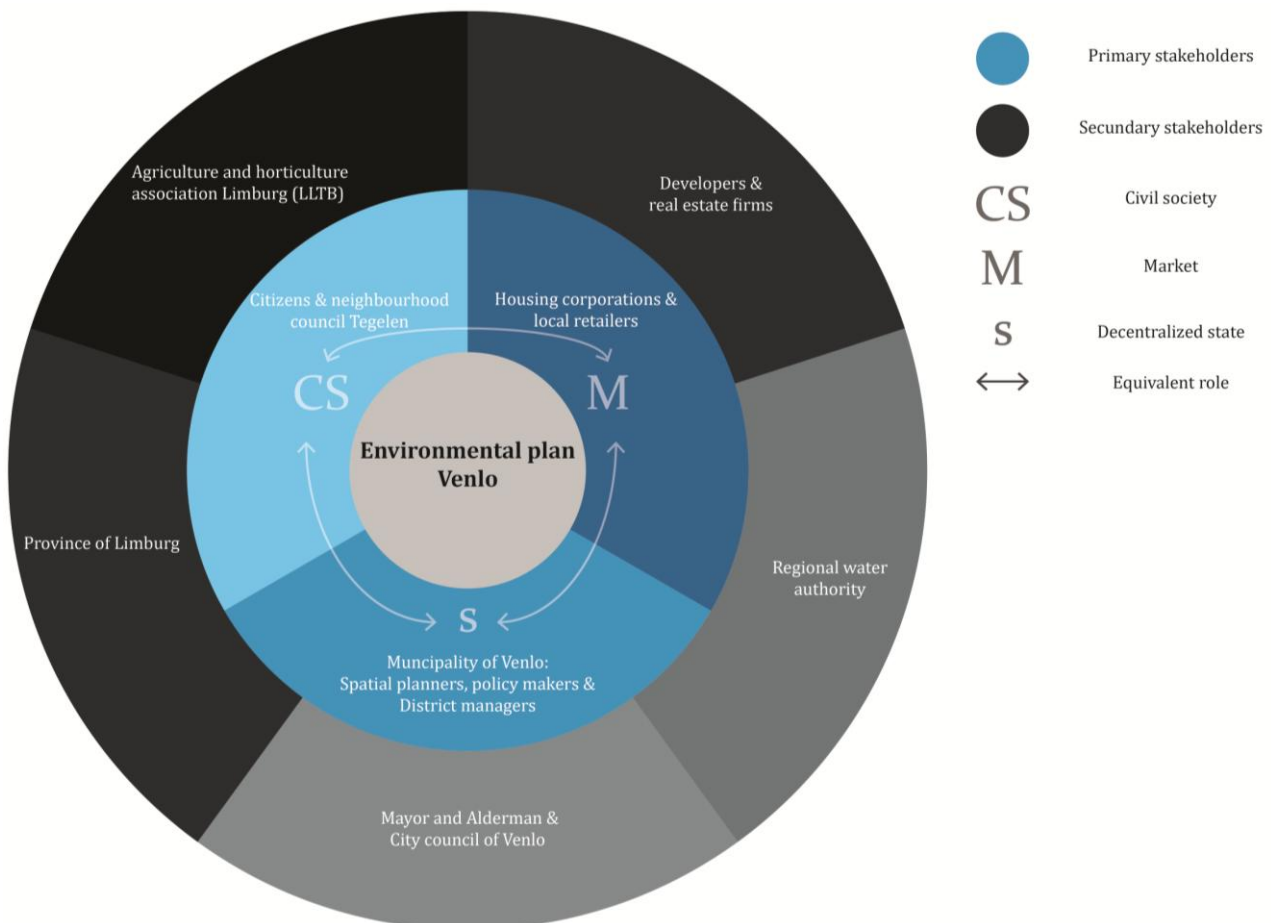


*“Because trust can take years to build, but only a second to shatter. Or in other words, you can ruin a lot in a short amount of time and it is hard to win that trust back. It is so important to organise the process with good intentions, good structures, good discussion. That is so important, otherwise, the trust will be gone in no time”.*

Respondent 5 (Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo)

The pilot of the environmental plan in Venlo has the ambition to develop are more equivalent role between the municipality (decentralized state), the citizens & neighbourhood council (civil society) and local retailers & housing corporations (the market). Those three stakeholders are considered the primary stakeholders. The secondary stakeholders such as the province of Limburg and the regional water authority mainly communicate with the municipality, they are less involved in the participation process with the local civil society and the market. The stakeholder relations for the environmental plan in Venlo is represented in figure 7. However, the relation between the stakeholders is also dependent on the scale and context of the plan. In some cases, the government has to take a more dominant role, for example, the conservation of unique city heritage. When compared to different modes of governance from Driessen et al. (2012), a combination of decentralized governance and network governance is evident for this case. The municipality has the ambition to reach equivalent roles as much as possible, but in some cases, they still have to take a dominant role in order to protect the values of society (e.g. cultural heritage).

**Figure 7: Stakeholder relations, environmental plan Venlo**



Source: based on Driessen et al. (2012) and Conceptdraw (2019)

### 5.1.3 Citizen participation

For citizen participation, several theoretical aspects will be discussed about the development of the environmental plan in Venlo. The aspects are the following: motivation of citizen participation, the degree of citizen power, the role of the government and the participation process itself. These aspects were used as the main topics in the interviews held with several professionals.

#### Motivation of citizen participation

Citizen participation can be beneficial for the government but also for citizens themselves. Citizen participation creates better decision-making, increases the legitimacy of a plan and creates support for a plan (Rydin & Pennington, 2000; Enserink & Monnikhof, 2003). According to Ohmer (2008) Citizen participation also gives the opportunity to create better citizens and gives the option to utilize local knowledge.

The respondents within the case of Venlo emphasize that citizen participation can increase the legitimacy of planning processes, especially the shift of focus towards the informal process at the front of a planning process to eliminate resistance as much as possible at the end of the planning process. When participation has been done thoroughly at the front of a planning process, it is easier for the municipality to fight possible appeal in court (respondent 4, Venlo). Another mentioned motivation for citizen participation was the importance of better decision-making:

*“Well, the importance of citizen participation is the enhancement of decision-making. It is that simple. You will have more support and that is always good for decision-making.”*

Respondent 5 (Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo)

Former research from the municipality of Venlo (De burger aan zet, 2012), citizens indicated that municipalities do not utilize the power and effort of citizens enough.

*“Within the municipality, they think too much about the impossibilities and too little about the power and the effort of citizens themselves”.*

Citizen of Venlo (De burger aan zet, 2012)

#### Degree of citizen power

The ladder of citizen participation from Arnstein (1969) describes different degrees of citizen power, within the EPA a ladder of citizen participation is used that is based on Arnstein's ladder. Five degrees of participation are used: informing, consulting, advising, co-producing and shared decision-making (Edelenbos & Monnikhof, 2001). In the current stage of the development of the environmental plan in Venlo, mostly informing as a degree of citizen participation has applied. The main reason is that they are in a starting phase of the plan and the municipality is currently creating a participation protocol. This participation protocol named *“New impulses for participation”* (municipality of Venlo, 2019), describes new principles, ideas, methods, the culture shift in governmental organisations and collaboration with society. So far the participation process for the village of Tegelen has been done the traditional way: mostly informing via information gatherings. The plan is to expand the participation process when the participation protocol is finished, a framework for participation was lacking for the spatial planning domain.

*“We will try to change the role of the citizen based on the participation protocol. For the environmental plan, we will go a step further. Based on the concept we have at this moment, we want to involve citizens more than it is the case at present. Think together, and give their reactions”.*

Respondent 4 (Policy advisor Spatial Planning, municipality of Venlo)

The degree of citizen power is also dependent on the scale and the context of the project. For some projects the involvement of citizens is valuable but for other topics like taxes or the protection of vulnerable groups, the citizens do not have a voice in this process, because the government has a protecting role. Most of the time citizen participation needs tailor-made solutions, which is one of the main reasons why there are no guidelines on how the process should be organized in the EPA. Respondent 5 (Venlo) would like to see as much coproduction as possible, however, this is not always a possibility:

*“It will be different in every transition I think, you cannot set it in stone. In some cases it will be co-creation, I prefer co-production. But it is also a possibility that the citizen has no voice at all.”*

Respondent 5 (Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo)

## Role of the government

A changing role of the government is one of the crucial aspects of the EPA. Moving away from a regulating government towards a more facilitating, stimulating and releasing role of the government (Municipality of Venlo, 2019). In past research from the municipality of Venlo, citizens indicate two problems. First off, the municipality uses too much unnecessary bureaucracy and the municipality is either involved too much in projects or too little, a balance should be found (Burgers aan zet, 2012).

A common statement about the EPA is about the law being 80% about culture change and just 20% about legislation. Throughout all of the interviews, all respondents agreed with the core of the statement but some had their doubt about the percentages, they felt like 80% was too much. Respondent 5 (Venlo) mentions that in the current law is it already possible to work EPA-proof. However, the new working processes are not yet settled in the minds and hearts of the organisation. The organisation is stuck in the old methods and working processes, time is needed for changes to happen. Nonetheless, the legislation transition should not be underestimated either. Cleaning up policy documents, new digital techniques and new planning instruments, this will not happen overnight (respondent 5, Venlo). The municipality of Venlo sees the culture change within the organisation and the shift from sectoral policy towards integrated policy as one of their biggest challenges.

*“No longer a government who strictly defines and controls everything at the front, but letting the society discuss, decide and think with us.”*

Respondent 4 (Policy advisor Spatial Planning, municipality of Venlo)

*“You are no emperor, I work at the municipality and I will tell how things will happen. Those times are over, it will take some time for this transition to happen.”*

Respondent 5 (Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo)

Officials have to learn to work with new working processes, digital techniques, planning instruments and work in an integrated way. The municipality of Venlo has created a digital platform named Frisbee, to help officials with working according to the new law (Municipality of Venlo, 2019). On this platform, the organisation can get new knowledge and learn new skills that are part of the EPA. Examples are training in networking or interview techniques. The officials can master the new knowledge and skills on the digital platform via videos, scientific articles or best practices. Frisbee is currently in a starting phase within the municipality, but in the future, it might also be suitable to discuss plans within the organisation and citizens (respondent 5, Venlo).

## Participation process

As mentioned before, the current role of citizens within the development of the environmental plan in Venlo is an informing role. Therefore, the participation process in the village of Tegelen has been organized in a traditional way. Neighbourhood councils, citizens and the retail sector have been informed about the plans. Citizen participation in Tegelen is seen as a growing model, so it will improve in the future. The municipality of Venlo is currently practising with “Dialogotafels” (translated: dialogue tables). This new form of participation is effective in judging the feasibility of a plan at the front of a planning process. All stakeholders involved in a certain plan join each other at the “dialogue table”, they discuss, improve and try to make the plan fit to every stakeholder’s needs. The “dialogue table” takes place in the informal process to make the formal process go more smoothly. This means that the planning processes are more time-consuming at the start, but it can improve the speed of the formal process because concerns from all stakeholders have been balanced at start and the possibility of appeal is diminished. Other methods for citizen participation will be used as well, but just as the degree of citizen power and the role of the government, it is dependent on the scale and context of the plan, citizen participation requires tailor-made solutions.

Respondent 4 (Venlo) mentions that it is easy to involve organised parties such as housing corporations and neighbourhood councils. It is hard to reach the citizens that are not part of an organization. As a result, there is a tendency that the same people participate in several projects:

*“A housing corporation or a neighbourhood council or other interest groups that are organised in a certain club, they have no trouble joining. The challenge is to reach the citizen that is not organized, or not part of a neighbourhood council. This way we can prevent the fact that the same people participate. The challenge is to form that process.”*

Respondent 4 (Policy advisor Spatial Planning, municipality of Venlo)

Gaining a wide variety of participants is hard, in general, higher educated people and senior citizens have a tendency to participate in planning processes. The municipality of Venlo sees the value of gaining a variety of participants, especially involving the youth. The municipality plans to use a multichannel approach, in which they want to reach a lot of participants via digital platforms and social media. However, they also have to incorporate vulnerable groups such as visually impaired people, people with literacy problems but also teenagers and elderly. They need to come up with an approach on how to reach those groups. For some groups like the youth, it is also their own responsibility, unfortunately, some lack interest to join the participation process. The municipality also tries to avoid the use of jargon to make it easier understandable for participants. The intention of the municipality is to involve the youth, but it is their own responsibility in the end.

*“The intention is there but the youth also has a certain attitude “I do not care”. Even if you have the intention to involve them, if they do not want to, then it stops. The responsibility lies at their end, just as much. You can invite them, there are several methods for that such as neighbourhood teams to get them involved but it is their own responsibility”.*

Respondent 5 (Communication advisor implementation EPA, municipality of Venlo)

Creating support from citizens is an important component to the success of a policy or plan. Two sets of support can be distinguished: content-oriented support which focuses on the result of a policy or plan and process-oriented support focuses on the interactive process between stakeholders during the creation of a policy or plan (de Graaf, 2007). The question raised in the interviews was if either of the sets of support weigh heavier than the other in a plan. Both respondents agreed that neither of them is more important than the other, and most of the time a good process results in good content and a bad process results in a bad result. Also when the process is well organized, citizens develop an understanding of choices and even when they do not agree they might accept the result as it is.

The successfulness of a participation process does not have clear factors on which it can be defined. Both respondents give several aspects that define or do not define the successfulness of a participation process (Respondent 4&5, Venlo; Nieuwe impulsen aan participatie, 2019):

- Successfulness of participation is not judged by the number of participants, participation with 10 citizens can be more successful than participation with 100 citizens;
- All the participants should have equal input, the loudest voices should not be decisive;
- Consensus building is important but is almost never possible to reach 100% satisfaction from all participants;
- The municipality should be transparent on choices they make, what aspects weigh heavier than others?;
- Having a clearly defined goal at the beginning of the participation helps throughout the entire process;
- Expectation management, determine the role and expectation in advance of the process;
- Information transparency, the municipality and the participants should be on the same level of information;
- Continuity, participation for the development of the environmental plan should not be a single session but an ongoing process;
- Representativeness of certain groups, involving a wide variety of groups, but also when 10 participants from a neighbourhood agree on something it does not mean that the entire neighbourhood agrees.

#### **5.1.4 Planning systems & flexibility**

Besides the aspects of stakeholder relations and citizen participation, there are also some remaining aspects that influence the feasibility of citizen participation in the shifting context from government to governance. The shifting planning systems and increase in flexibility contribute to the feasibility of citizen participation.

One of the key principles of the environmental plan in Venlo is making more use of invitation planning, the plan should be more global, more flexible and should leave open more room for initiatives. The flexibility is reached by not allocating land to a certain function but to leave it open, the municipality only allocated the function they do not desire in that area. In the case of Tegelen retail is not allowed because there is already an abundance of retail in the village. Another difference compared to current zoning plans is that the environmental plan is not fixed in detail at front. No longer allocating functions at front, but giving certain areas or neighbourhoods an ambition (translated: gebiedsdoelen). This way the municipality knows the development position for the area but it is not fixed. A final example of the environmental plan being more flexible is the use of “open standards” (translated: open normen). In the current zoning plans a house within a certain street is allowed a maximum height that is very strict, or the size of parking spots are very strict. In the environmental plan, this is organized more flexible. The height of a house has to fit in with the design of the street, this is also known as “open standards”(Respondent 4, Venlo). However, there is also a bit of scepticism on the use of invitation planning coming from citizens. The shift towards invitation-planning is not only a change for the planners but also for developers and citizens. Non-governmental stakeholders are used to getting a framework from the government:

*“The reaction for the neighbourhood council was: “Come to us with a plan first, so we can give our opinion on it”. That reaction surprises us a bit, the municipality gets the accusation that they fix everything in detail and afterwards citizens can give their opinion. (...) Now that the tables are turned, we get the accusation from citizens: “We have to talk about something that is not even there yet”. That was weird for us.”*

Respondent 4 (Policy advisor Spatial Planning, municipality of Venlo)

## 5.2 Maastricht – Environmental plan for Boschpoort

Within this paragraph, the results of the case “Environmental plan Boschpoort” are discussed. The municipality of Maastricht uses the neighbourhood of Boschpoort as their starting point for the overarching environmental plan. Simultaneously, the municipality is developing an environmental vision. The government, citizens, local retailers and the neighbourhood council operate on a close collaboration. The participation process has already started, citizens encounter several issues in the development of the environmental plan but also see the value and importance of the process.

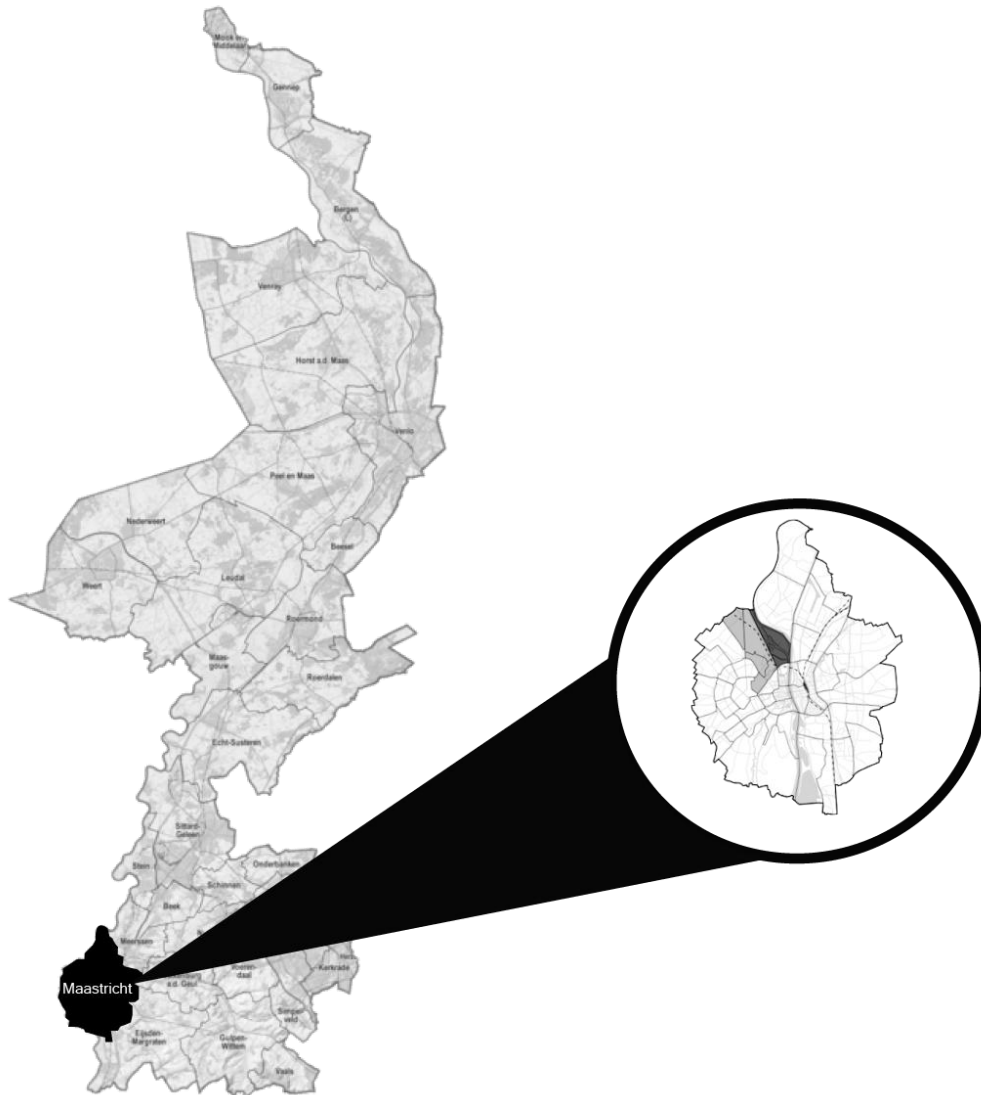
### 5.2.1 Context

The EPA determined that municipalities have to create an overarching environmental plan for the entire municipality before the year 2029. However, the municipality of Maastricht is already experimenting with the development of an environmental plan for one neighbourhood within the municipality: “Boschpoort”. Creating the environmental plan in collaboration with the neighbourhood is one of the crucial principles of this pilot. The main goal of the pilot is to create a future image of the neighbourhood in collaboration with citizens and other stakeholders (Expeditieruimte, 2018). Also, the lessons learned from this pilot will be used to create the overarching environmental plan for the municipality of Maastricht, especially more room for initiative, flexibility and tailor-made solutions are important topics. The municipality of Maastricht works closely together with the neighbourhood council named “Buurtkader Stichting Leefbaarheid Bosscherveld Boschpoort”. The neighbourhood Boschpoort is located in the north of the city and is surrounded by high-quality waters. The neighbourhood is characterized as a small village within a big city. There is a high level of satisfaction in the neighbourhood and citizens are proud to live in the neighbourhood. However, the neighbourhood is not perfect and struggles with declining amenities, mobility issues and social safety. The participation process within this pilot has started off with several broad information evenings for stakeholders. Afterwards, working groups are created for stakeholders who want to participate during the entire pilot, the working groups focus on three themes: housing combined with healthcare and work, recreational routes and unsafe spots in the neighbourhood. The pilot roughly contains 4 phases:

- Phase 1: An inventory of the opportunities and challenges in Boschpoort;
- Phase 2: Translating the opportunities and challenges in Boschpoort towards a framework for the environmental plan;
- Phase 3: Establishing the environmental plan;
- Phase 4: The option to use the environmental plan as a zoning plan with a broader scope before 2021.

Figure 8 displays the location of Maastricht in the province of Limburg, the dark grey area in the zoomed in map represents the neighbourhood of Boschpoort.

Figure 8: Location of Boschpoort, municipality of Maastricht



Source: GemeenteAtlas (2019) edited version

### 5.2.2 Stakeholder relations

The development of the environmental plan in the neighbourhood Boschpoort is based on a close collaboration between the municipality, the citizens and the neighbourhood council Boschpoort (SLBB). The neighbourhood council also works as a process partner in which they try to invite and mobilize residents of the neighbourhood to participate in the project. Local entrepreneurs such as a supermarket, a fitness centre and the housing corporation are also involved in the pilot. However, this stakeholder group is not as engaged as the rest of the stakeholders (respondent 1, Maastricht). Just as most of the environmental plans or visions, the municipality is the initiator of the plan. One of the main goals of the EPA is improving the physical environment by creating a city that focuses on social interactions, experiences and a safe and healthy city. To reach this goal, the municipality of Maastricht tries to reduce the gap between the government and society, uses an approach that is based around dialogue and trust and finally use an integrated approach with the physical environment as a catalyst (Municipality of Maastricht, 2018). For this to happen, the municipality tries to no longer solely take the dominating role.

*“Well, we hope that the participants from the working groups will take some responsibility eventually, instead of the municipality always telling the story”.*

Respondent 1 (Process manager EPA, municipality of Maastricht)

The pilot also shows the strong role of the citizens and the neighbourhood council. The municipality of Maastricht is already experimenting with the environmental plan without having a completed environmental vision. Officially, without a completed environmental vision it is not possible to create an environmental plan, but because this is a pilot and the municipality is experimenting it is a possibility. Citizens had a feeling that the link between the environmental vision and the environmental plan in Boschpoort was lacking. The citizens wanted to discuss the vision of the neighbourhood before going into the plan rules and put a hold on the plan.

*“Yes but that is where it went wrong, the development of the environmental vision was still going but a relation with the environmental plan was lacking. Therefore we showed some resistance because this does not add up”.*

Respondent 2 (Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort)

As mentioned before, trust and equality are crucial components of stakeholder relations. In the neighbourhood of Boschpoort, the citizens are proud and satisfied with their neighbourhood. There is a mix of trust and distrust towards the municipality. On the one hand, the citizens want the government to come with a framework first and participate from that moment onwards, which shows a certain amount of trust in the government. But the government started to planning process in a very open way, which is also a principle of the EPA (municipality of Maastricht, 2017).

*“The advice should be using broad participation methods first and working towards a more focussed form of participation. Not because we want this as the municipality but because it is a demand from the neighbourhood... “Give us the framework” and approach us again when you got an idea and we will join in. Not everyone wants to be involved early on.”*

Respondent 1 (Process manager EPA, municipality of Maastricht)

Distrust between several stakeholders is also evident. Mainly distrust from citizens towards the municipality but also towards the neighbourhood council. Distrust towards the municipality primarily comes from personal issues from the past, separate from the pilot itself. But also because the municipality stepped into the pilot with a lack of framework according to citizens. Citizens felt like the vision, wishes and demands of the municipality on the neighbourhood were missing. As a result, the municipality was cherry picking between the wishes and comments from citizens, without making clear where those choices were based upon. The citizens do not feel like this was a malicious intent, but it gave them a feeling of mistrust (respondent 2, Maastricht). There is also a feeling of inequality coming from the citizens, they feel like at the end the municipality can still overrule their opinions:

*“At the end, the municipality holds the pen”*

Respondent 2 (Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort)

Some citizens also do not want to be represented by the neighbourhood council because they feel like the neighbourhood council has too big of a role. However, this is not the case because the neighbourhood council is responsible for the process. Nonetheless, respondent 3 (Maastricht) also



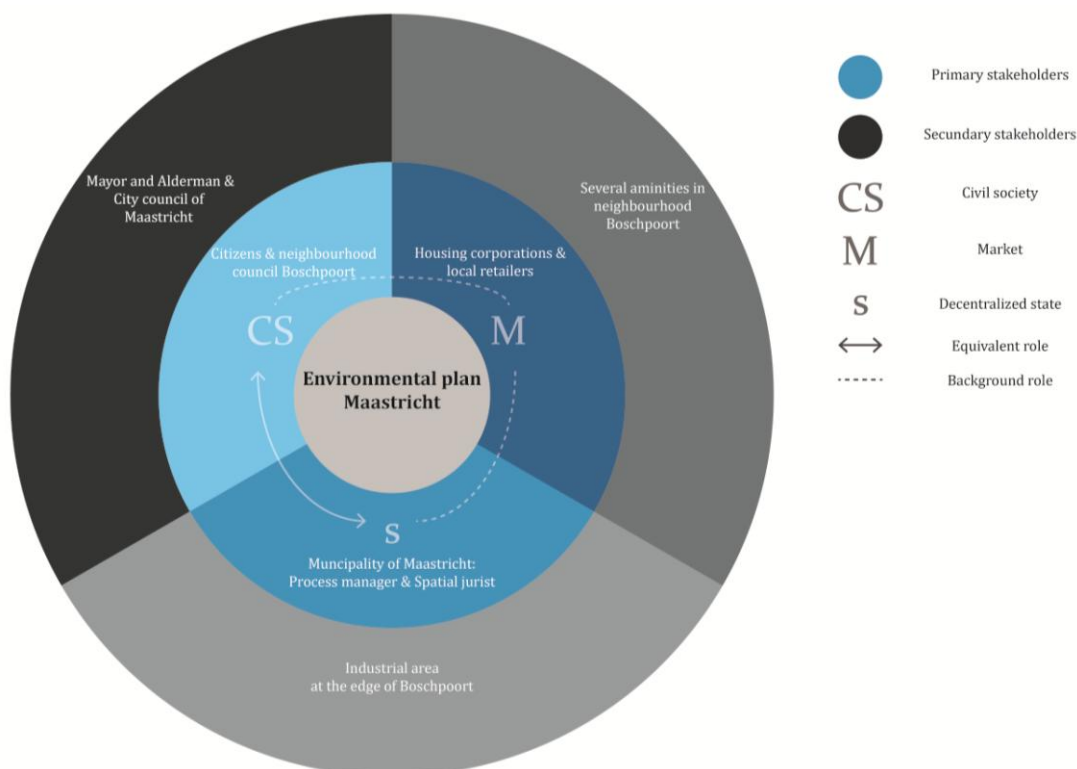
mentioned that the pilot for the environmental plan is an opportunity for the municipality to win trust, but if their hopes and wishes do not get fulfilled it might be even harder to get input in the future:

*“I think this is an opportunity for the municipality to show that the voice of the citizens is worth something.(...) It is of course something new and people have hope and expectations. If the hope and those expectations are not fulfilled, that is very unfortunate for the future. It will be harder to get input from citizens for future projects.”*

Respondent 3 (Citizen of Boschpoort, Maastricht)

In the spirit of the EPA and similar to the pilot in Venlo, the pilot of the environmental plan in Boschpoort has to the ambition to reach a more equivalent role between the primary stakeholders: the municipality (decentralized state) the citizens & neighbourhood council (civil society) and the local retailers and housing corporations (the market). The secondary stakeholders consist of the Mayor and Alderman & the City council of Maastricht, amenities in the neighbourhood Boschpoort (Fitness centre, supermarket) and an industrial area at the edge of Boschpoort. The stakeholder relations for the environmental plan in Boschpoort are displayed in figure 9. In the current state of the pilot, there is a great deal of communication between the municipality, the citizens and the neighbourhood council. The role of the market is not as prominent yet, however, this their own conscious decision. The market will get more involved when the development of the environmental plan is in a further stage. Therefore, the market has a background role at this stage of the pilot. A plan jurist and a process manager are the involved local officials. The neighbourhood council of Boschpoort mentioned that a crucial stakeholder from the municipality was missing, a spatial planner. A spatial planner has the ability to make the connection between the current plan rules, the environmental plan and the vision of Boschpoort (respondent 2, Maastricht). In the end, the municipality of Maastricht has the goal to reduce the gap between the primary stakeholders. Therefore, the plan is shifting towards interactive governance, in which the three primary stakeholders are equivalent to each other. Within this pilot, the ambition to reach equivalent roles is not fully accomplished yet, but they are definitely on their way.

Figure 9: Stakeholder relations, environmental plan Boschpoort



### 5.2.3 Citizen participation

For citizen participation, several theoretical aspects will be discussed about the development of the environmental plan in Boschpoort. The aspects are the following: motivation of citizen participation, the degree of citizen power, the role of the government and the participation process itself. These aspects were used as the main topics in the interviews held with several professionals.

#### Motivation of citizen participation

Respondents within the case of Boschpoort give several aspects to why citizen participation is of added value to planning processes but also beneficial for citizens themselves. Creating support, the involvement of citizens in planning processes, the different perspective of citizens and the fact that the municipality acts in the public interest.

*“The importance of citizen participation has two sides. Creating support and the involvement of citizen in planning processes. But something that I find even more important, (...) we do it for society, the public interest is important. A big part of the environment is used by the citizens.”*

Respondent 1 (Process manager EPA, municipality of Maastricht)

Citizens of Boschpoort (respondent 2 & 3) mention that the local knowledge of citizens can be valuable and a great addition to the knowledge of the municipality. Also the interplay between the physical environment and the way a city and human beings can develop themselves, the creation of an ideal city. The state of an ideal city can only be achieved when society and the government work together in good harmony.

*“The fact that the municipality does not only have the knowledge, citizens also have a lot of knowledge. That knowledge should be used”*

*“The physical environment, I see a lot of interplay between the physical environment and the way people blossom and develop. An ideal city, in every aspect (...) that is what you should want to create, that is the vision. And in my experience, that is participation, in which the government and citizens cooperate in good harmony and try to reach that state”.*

Respondent 2 (Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort)

Finally, just as respondent 1 (Maastricht) mentioned, citizens are the users of the physical environment. Citizens should be part of the design and development of their neighbourhood because they are the residents of the physical environment. Citizens have the knowledge and experience of their own area.

*“It is nice that the municipality comes up with plans for their citizens. But it is certainly cooler if you can help to form those plans. You know what is important for your area, your street, your neighbourhood. (...) It is just like your own home, it is more fun to decorate your house yourself instead of someone else doing it for you.”*

Respondent 3 (Citizen of Boschpoort, Maastricht)

#### Degree of citizen power

The degree of citizen power in the development of the environmental plan Boschpoort consists of several levels. When compared to the ladder of citizen participation from Arnstein (1969) the level of citizen power is between placation and partnership. And compared to the Dutch version of the ladder (Edelenbos & Monnikhof, 2001), the level varies between advising and shared-decision making. The advising role of citizens is primarily about giving input and thinking together, citizens indicate positive and negative aspects of the neighbourhood but also specify certain issues or opportunities. This also had a positive effect on the citizens, they had the feeling of being heard.

*“No it is really thinking with them and consulting, the input is really coming from the citizens. What are the positive aspects, what are the complaints, the problems? And setting the next step on how to approach it, solve it and improve it. (...) But it is super cool that all the participants had the option to speak their minds. This gives a feeling for the neighbourhood that we are being heard. That is important.”*

Respondent 3 (Citizen of Boschpoort, Maastricht)

Besides advising and thinking together, citizens also have a voice in decision-making, citizens and the municipality work as partners. As mentioned before, citizens put a hold on the development of the environmental plan because they felt like the municipality was moving too fast without providing a proper framework. Citizens first wanted to create a vision of the neighbourhood, what is the future of their neighbourhood? This shows that citizens have power in the planning process and even have the ability to put a hold on the plan and to change the scope of the plan. The shift towards the informal process at the beginning of a plan gives citizens a voice from the beginning. Indirectly, citizens are already part of decision-making at the beginning of the plan and no longer just at the end.

*“It is really about getting the information and decision-making ultimately lands in the formal process anyways. So actually citizens already have a role in decision-making, since participation in this formal process is now shifted towards the informal process at the start as much as possible.”*

Respondent 1 (Process manager EPA, municipality of Maastricht)

## Role of the government

Initially, the pilot was meant to experiment and practice on a substantive level with the new instrument: the environmental plan. It was a search for what aspects could land in the environmental plan. Three categories about what should land in the environmental plan were distinguished: “must”, “may” and “may but doesn’t have to”. Which factors belong in which categories is still a grey area. However, during the pilot, the core of the pilot slowly shifted from the focus on the instrument towards the focus on citizen participation. The input gained from citizen participation was translated into the framework of the environmental vision. Experimenting with the new instrument itself happens on an internal level within the municipality (municipality of Maastricht, 2018). Besides citizen participation, the municipality of Maastricht also experiments with the new role of the government. The municipality is the initiator of this pilot, with some alignment from the neighbourhood council before the start of the pilot (respondent 1, Maastricht). The EPA asks for a new role of the government, but also from citizens, they should take more responsibility. Working in an integrated way is another change for the municipality, spatial planning is no longer the sole focus. The shift from a sectoral way of thinking towards an integrated way of thinking also justifies the need to consult citizens, the users of the environment. Working in an integrated approach brings more complexity to projects, the knowledge of citizens is needed (respondent 1, Maastricht).

*“And that is also the philosophy of the EPA, the environment is no longer just about spatial planning. The environment is a stage for various activities that should take place.”*

Respondent 1 (Process manager EPA, municipality of Maastricht)

Clear communication and expectation management between the municipality and citizens are important factors of good participation. By using expectation management, the municipality tries to keep the expectations of citizen realistic. For example, there should be no illusion that 100% of the participants will agree in the end. Keeping the expectations towards citizens realistic is hard, at the planning process itself citizens are positive and agree with certain plans, but in times of realisation things might turn out slightly different than expected (respondent 1, Maastricht). As mentioned by Swyngedouw (2005), in the shift from government to governance the role of the government should not too easily be dismissed. This was also the case for the pilot in Maastricht, the gap between citizens

and the municipality is closing, but just in a starting phase. According to respondent 2 (Maastricht), the municipality has the final say in the planning process because they are rooted in the way they work.

*“Yes, the final say. I even had the feeling that this was no deliberate step, but more like “We always operate like this”.*

Respondent 2 (Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort)

A common statement about the EPA is about the law being 80% about culture change and just 20% about legislation. Respondent 1 agreed with this statement because within current legislation it is already possible to work EPA-proof. However, the targets for improvement from the EPA are lacking in current legislation such as an integrated approach, area-specific planning, more room for consideration, tailor-made solutions on the local level and transparent legislation. These targets for improvement are not anchored in legislation but are stimulated in the new law. How these targets for improvement will be applied in practice is the question, that is why the 80% culture change is so important (respondent 1, Maastricht).

### Participation process

The participation process for the environmental plan in Boschpoort can be seen as a funnel model, starting off with broad participation and funnelling down with more specific methods of participation. The broad participation method was an information gathering about the pilot, citizens had the ability to indicate issues and opportunities of the neighbourhood. Following, there was a second information gathering where the municipality gave feedback about the first session and how their input was used for the environmental vision and plan. After the information sessions, the next step is to work in more specific forms of participation: working groups. In total three working groups are created based on the themes the citizens indicated in the neighbourhood. The themes are the following: housing combined with healthcare and work, recreational routes and unsafe spots in the neighbourhood (respondent 1, Maastricht). The working groups are intensive and participants will work within those groups between April 2019 and December 2019. Citizens appreciate the ability to participate, especially the method of working groups because they can give more concrete input. Respondent 2 (Maastricht) felt like obtaining information from citizens through information gatherings is too traditional and stiff.

*“Such an inventory about what is happening in the neighbourhood, in my view there are other ways to do this. You can walk through the neighbourhood. Talk to people. A fisherman, a playground with fathers and mothers. That way you can also get information. (...) making use of an open house, interviewing people just like we are doing right now. Using Facebook, using a survey, I think they should move towards new methods as soon as possible”.*

Respondent 2 (Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort)

Gaining a wide variety of participants and keeping the participants involved throughout the entire process is difficult. Gaining a wide variety of participants partly succeeded in the pilot of Boschpoort, however, the majority of the participants were over 50 or are the “usual suspects”. The main reason for this majority is the composition of the neighbourhood, in general, more elderly people live in Boschpoort (respondent 1, Maastricht). But there were also some students from a rowing club and some people between 30-40 years old. The gained variety of respondents was the power of the neighbourhood council, who mobilized the citizen. As mentioned before, keeping citizens involved throughout the entire process can be hard. Therefore, citizens who only attend the first information gathering and have no further involvement, their voice should also be incorporated in plans and should not be forgotten. Respondent 3 (Maastricht) worries if the voice of this group will be taken into account:

*“Citizens that attended the first evenings, who expressed their wishes and issues, but will not attend those workshops that will take place. This might be a responsibility of the municipality to incorporate those voices aswell. “*

Respondent 3 (Citizen of Boschpoort, Maastricht)

Respondent 3 (Maastricht) also points out the importance of representativeness of the neighbourhood in the participation process. Not everyone in the neighbourhood is involved in the planning process, this is their own choice. Therefore, the opinions of participants may not provide the right picture of the neighbourhood, or some aspects were not be mentioned at all because some citizens were not involved.

*“The question is if the participants give a representative view of the neighbourhood. I have trouble listing negative aspects of the neighbourhood for other people this may be different. (...) You should not rule out the fact that also other problems can be at stake in the neighbourhood but those things are not mentioned because those people are not involved.”*

Respondent 3 (Citizen of Boschpoort, Maastricht)

Creating support from citizens is an important component to the success of a policy or plan. Two sets of support can be distinguished: content-oriented support which focuses of the result of a policy or plan and process-oriented support focuses on the interactive process between stakeholders during the creation of policy or a plan (de Graaf, 2007). Respondent 2 (Maastricht) emphasizes that the municipality can make use of the knowledge of citizens to attain a better result and citizen participation also hampers politics to make decisions of their own, citizen participation is a tool to strengthen democracy. Respondent 3 (Maastricht) points out that the participation process helps the get citizens interested and it also helps to create support for the plan. However, the end result is more important regardless of participation according to respondent 3 (Maastricht).

Communicating knowledge about the EPA and instruments like the environmental plan should be done carefully and in an understandable way. Respondent 1 (Maastricht) mentions that the majority of participants has very minor knowledge about planning instruments. Even instruments of current legislation like zoning plans or the structural vision, the participants are not familiar with. Therefore, communication about the environmental plan was kept simple and jargon was avoided as much as possible. Participation in the environmental plan is also considered more difficult than in the environmental vision. Especially because the environmental plan discusses tough material like plan rules which is less understandable for citizens, the environmental vision discusses the future of a city or a neighbourhood which is more comprehensible for citizens. This was also the main reason why the environmental plan and vision where developed parallel to each other. According to respondent 3 (Maastricht) the communication from the municipality towards citizens was clear and understandable.

*“The project leader clearly explained what everything means, I think it was clear enough. (...) I cannot speak for everyone, but I think it was good”*

Respondent 3 (Citizen of Boschpoort, Maastricht)

#### **5.2.4 Planning systems & flexibility**

Within the municipality of Maastricht, a shift from blueprint planning towards invitation planning is noticeable. Blueprint planning or permission-planning is about the government creating a strict framework for policy and plans, developments of certain areas could only prosper if they complied with the rules of the set framework (Van Rooy, 2011; Buitelaar et al., 2012). When using invitation-planning the government still uses a framework, but a more flexible framework that is not locked in. However, similar to the pilot in Venlo, the citizens in Boschpoort are still used to participate within the rigid boundaries of the municipality. Another aspect of invitation-planning is creating social value, developments should not only be *for* the citizens but also created *by* the citizens. Focussing on the planning process instead of the end result is also a factor of invitation planning, or in other words, planning processes with an open end. However, the content of a plan should not lower in quality because of the shifting focus on the planning process. According to respondent 2 (Maastricht) the municipality should be careful about providing too little framework for a plan:

*“My most important tip is: do not create an end result but a planning process. Society develops at a high pace. Make sure the planning process is good. But not forget about the quality of the content otherwise nothing makes sense anymore”.*

Respondent 2 (Citizen of Boschpoort & member of neighbourhood council Boschpoort)

In the neighbourhood of Boschpoort citizens are experimenting with invitation planning. There are several vacant football pitches from a former football club, citizens took the initiative to redevelop this area into a neighbourhood park. The municipality had a flexible framework for this area, development of housing was not allowed because of *hindercirkels* (translated: nuisance circles). Citizens will design a neighbourhood park and will make use of sustainable products, this shows the commitment of the neighbourhood.

## 5.3 Parkstad Limburg – Environmental vision for the Parkstad region

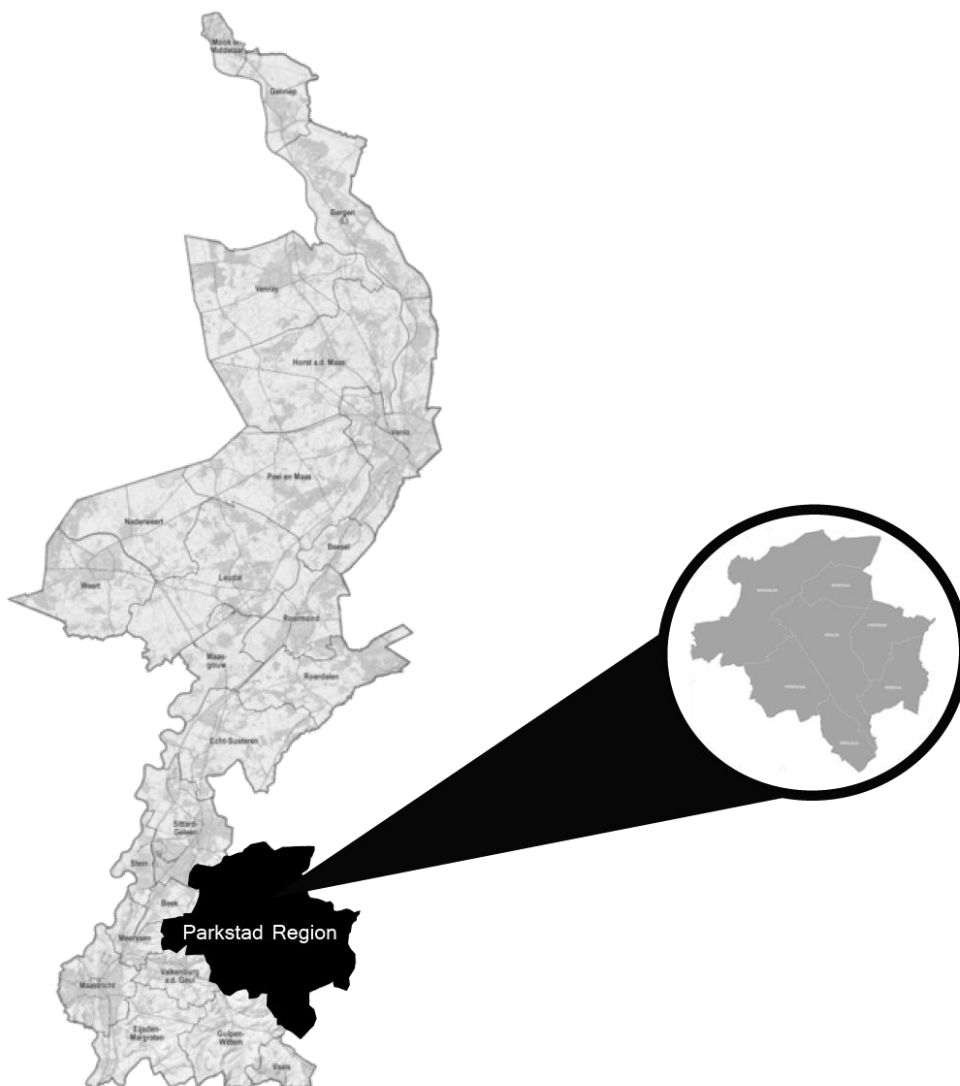
This paragraph describes the results of the “Environmental vision for the Parkstad region”. Parkstad is experimenting with the development of an overarching environmental vision for the seven municipalities. Simultaneously, the municipalities are also developing the municipal environmental vision. Collaboration between the regional government, the municipalities, the province and other chain partners is apparent. Also, the transition from a sectoral vision towards an integrated vision is as a challenge in this case.

### 5.3.1 Context

Parkstad is an urban region in the south of the province Limburg, the urban region consists of a municipal collaboration between seven municipalities: Beekdaelen, Brunssum, Heerlen, Kerkrade, Landgraaf, Simpelveld and Voerendaal. Before, the region was named “*Oostelijke Mijnstreek*” (translated: Eastern Mining area) in southern Limburg. Parkstad has a great history with the mining industry, the mines were used for gaining coal. In the 60s, the closure of the mines was announced, Parkstad was a strong economic region with a high level of employment. The closure of the mines led to high unemployment rates and risks of social unrest. Up until this day, some neighbourhoods in the urban areas such as Brunssum, Heerlen, Landgraaf and Kerkrade still feel the consequences of the mine closure. Low educational level, poor health and high unemployment rates are still apparent in those neighbourhoods. On the contrary, the rural areas such as Voerendaal, Nuth, Simpelveld and Beekdaelen prosper. The name change from Oostelijke Mijnstreek to Parkstad was based on the following credo: “*From black to green*” (Kamps, 2015). Because of this background, the people are central in the environmental vision of Parkstad, the development of a better future for the people is one of the main ambitions of the environmental plan.

The urban region has created an overarching *Structural vision* in the past (Parkstad, 2009), for the upcoming EPA the urban region is experimenting to create an environmental vision for the region. Also, every municipality has to create an environmental vision on their own, the regional environmental vision will be part of every municipal vision. For example, the first three chapters will be about the region which sets the basis. However, the EPA only allows one environmental vision for every governmental organisation. Therefore, the label “regional environmental vision” can officially not be used, it will serve as a overarching framework/basis for the region (respondent 6, Landgraaf). Some themes will be tackled on a regional level because those themes are border crossing, sustainability for example. The pilot for the (regional) environmental vision focuses on three main themes: an integrated approach, regional scale and transformation challenges. The transformation challenges are broad issues like climate change, sustainability, decline in population and providing housing and facilities. The people are central in the environmental vision, the pilot also notes the importance of participation in this regional approach. How can stakeholders be involved in the process? To involve all kinds of stakeholders in the process a “regional inspiration session” will be held in the future, stakeholders like housing associations, small and medium-sized enterprises, social and commercial organisations. However, how citizens are involved in the regional scale is unclear at the moment, citizens do have a stronger voice in the development of the municipal environmental vision. The underlining idea of participation is to start small with the regional inspiration session and eventually expand participation further (Aan de slag met de omgevingswet, 2019). Figure 10 displays the location of Parkstad in Limburg, the dark grey area in the zoomed in map represents the region of Parkstad Limburg.

Figure 10: Location of the seven municipalities , Parkstad Limbug region



Source: GemeenteAtlas (2019) edited version

### 5.3.2 Stakeholder relations

The regional authority and the seven municipalities are working on the regional and local environmental vision parallel to each other, two sets of stakeholder relations are distinguished. On the regional level, they started of internal, primarily discussion between local officials from the region and the seven municipalities. However, the environmental vision has to be developed in an integrated approach, therefore, organisations on agriculture, soil, nature etc. but also stakeholders such as the province, societal organisations, housing corporations, water authorities and small and medium-sized enterprises (SME Parkstad) are involved. On the regional level, it is yet uncertain how citizens will be involved. A survey about the neighbourhood experiences might be used, the results can be translated towards the regional level. Respondent 7 (Kerkrade) mentions that citizens should also have a voice in the regional environmental plan, but it is also difficult for citizens to think about the future and on a regional scale:

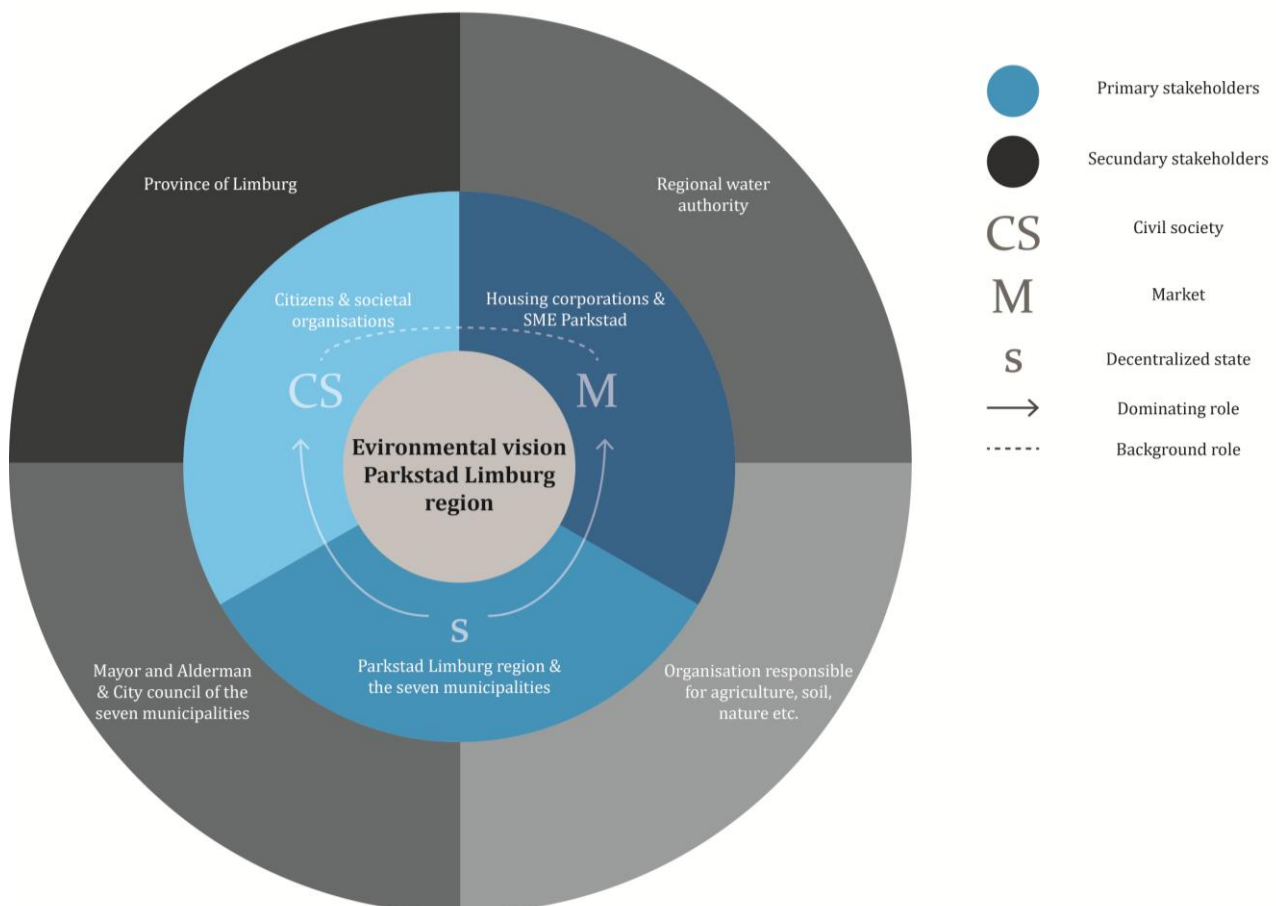


*“Thinking about the future is pretty difficult, but I do think we should try to involve citizens. Maybe it will be just a small group, but if there are people who want to contribute, then we should keep that possibility open”.*

Respondent 7 (Spatial Planner, municipality of Kerkrade)

However, citizens and also local retailers will be involved in the development of the municipal (local) environmental vision, results from the local level can also contribute to the regional level. When local issues occur for several municipalities, it also has regional importance. For the development of the regional environmental vision, the state has a dominating role towards the market and civil society. When compared to the modes of governance from Driessen et al. (2012), the pilot in Parkstad shows similarities to the mode of decentralized governance. The primary stakeholders are the following: the decentralized state (Parkstad region & seven municipalities), the market (housing corporations & SME Parkstad) and civil society (citizens & societal organisations). Secondary stakeholders consist of the Mayor and Alderman & city councils of the seven municipalities, the province, water authorities and several organisations responsible for agriculture, soil, nature etc. The stakeholder relations for the regional environmental vision are represented in figure 11.

**Figure 11: Stakeholder relations, environmental vision Parkstad**



Source: based on Driessen et al. (2012) and Conceptdraw (2019)

The officials from the regional authority are not as close to citizens as the municipalities. Municipalities in the Parkstad region have mixed feelings about trust from citizens towards the government. Respondent 6 (Landgraaf) and 8 (Parkstad region) describe that the EPA can contribute to the trust of citizens towards the government. First off, the change from the Dutch “*Nee, tenzij*” (translated: “*No, unless*”) principle towards the “*Ja, mits*” (translated: “*Yes, provided that*”) principle. This switch contributes to the relationship between the government and citizens, seeing each other as partners in the process and not as opposing parties. The new principle also forces local officials to look further than only what the law describes, it is also about the meaning, this should also add to more understanding from citizens (Respondent 6, Landgraaf). Second, the EPA makes initiators of plans responsible for the participation process. The initiator can also be a non-governmental stakeholder who has no experience with a participation process. Citizens have less trust in a random initiator than the government. Therefore, citizens see the municipality as their last resort of people who they trust because the municipality acts in the public interest:

*“The role of the municipality is crucial. Suppose 100 citizens come to an information gathering, they will definitely not trust the initiator. The municipality is needed to gain trust. (...) The government is the last resort of people the citizen’s trust”.*

Respondent 8 (Project leader environmental vision, Parkstad region)

Besides trust, there is also distrust towards the government. One of the main reasons is the possibility of the constant change of the politics on a municipal level, provincial level, national level and even European level. Every four years, elections on a municipal level can change the policy and goals of a municipality. For example, the biggest political party is not in favour of sustainability, a shift of emphasis can occur. These shifts of emphasis do not contribute to the trust of citizens towards the municipality. Respondent 7 (Kerkrade) points out the importance of long term policy, 180-degree shifts should be diminished as much as possible. Only then, citizens and businesses know where they stand.

### **5.3.3 Citizen participation**

For citizen participation, several theoretical aspects will be discussed about the development of the environmental vision on a municipal and regional level. The aspects are the following: motivation of citizen participation, the degree of citizen power, the role of the government and the participation process itself. These aspects were used as the main topics in the interviews held with several professionals.

#### **Motivation of citizen participation**

The respondents within the Parkstad region mention three factors of why citizen participation is important for the development of the environmental vision. The first factor is about the local knowledge of citizens. Citizens are the specialists of their own neighbourhood, they know exactly where the opportunities in the neighbourhood lie and what the issues are. Respondent 7 (Kerkrade) also mentions that it is sometimes better for a spatial planner to put yourself in the shoes of a citizen, in the end, we are all citizens. Spatial planners should appreciate the fact that citizens make the step towards the municipality and take the effort to participate. Especially because more and more tasks are delegated towards the municipal level:

*“We also see that the legislator delegates more tasks towards the municipality, and we only have a certain amount of hands to do those tasks”.*

Respondent 6 (Policymaker spatial planning, Municipality of Landgraaf)

The second factor is about creating support for plans. The EPA stimulates collaboration between the government, the market and civil society for the development of plans. To create support for a plan, the municipality should follow the path the EPA describes, no longer as opposing parties but as partners in process. Plans which are not created together with society but in a technocratic way, are less feasible and lack support (Respondent 6, Landgraaf). The third factor is about the importance of citizen participation for the regional scale. Certain issues that are apparent in every municipality or in a lot of neighbourhoods should be tackled on the regional level.

*“Yes, it is very important to know what is going on in neighbourhoods, for the municipalities. But if every municipality has the same issues, than we have to do something on a higher scale”.*

Respondent 8 (Project leader environmental vision, Parkstad region)

All three respondents in the Parkstad region agree on the importance and added value of citizen participation. However, the respondents do fear the overuse of citizen participation a bit in the EPA. When participation is used in overload, citizens get the feeling that their input is no longer valuable, *“participatiearmoede”* (translated: participation fatigue) may occur. At the start, the goal and expectation of the participation should be clear to all involved parties (Respondent 7, Kerkrade). Citizen participation can be a time-consuming process, which is not an issue as long as it produces added value for the municipality and the citizens. However, municipalities should not participate to participate, a clear goal and producing added value are fundamental (respondent 6, Landgraaf).

### Degree of citizen power

In general, the degree of citizen power in spatial plans is dependent on the scale of the plan. If it is a very concrete plan on a lower scale, for example, the layout of the greenery in a neighbourhood, the degree of citizen power will be high and their input can be directly used in a plan. But if a plan is more abstract, for example, the environmental vision, the input of citizens in the plan itself will be lower (respondent 6, Landgraaf). Concrete plans are also more tangible for citizens themselves because it is about their direct environment. Because the regional authority primarily tackles issues on a higher scale and higher level of abstractness, it is harder to involve the citizen. Most of the citizens want to participate when something changes in their direct environment and less about the greater good (respondent 8, Parkstad).

There is also a difference between the degree of citizen power in the development of the municipal environmental vision and the regional environmental vision. The gap between the region and the citizens is bigger than the gap between the municipalities and the citizens. However, input from the municipal environmental vision can also be useful for the regional environmental vision. The degree of citizen power for the regional environmental vision is a consulting role. The regional authority has ideas to create a survey, this way citizens can indicate what the strong and weak aspects are of their neighbourhood or municipality (respondent 8, Parkstad).

### Role of the government

Within the Parkstad region, two factors contribute to the changing role of the government: from a sectoral towards an integrated approach and the culture change within governments.

From a sectoral approach towards an integrated approach is one of the biggest differences between the old structural vision and the future environmental vision. Themes like water, spatial planning, nature, mobility, housing etc. are all part of the physical environment, and should be integrated together in the physical environment. All those themes bring plenty of stakeholder with them and asks for collaboration between those stakeholders.

*“The big difference with the current structural vision is the integrated approach. The integrated approach means that every aspect that is connected to the physical environment should get a place in the environmental vision. And every aspect has stakeholders”.*

Respondent 6 (Policymaker spatial planning, Municipality of Landgraaf)

To create an integrated regional environmental vision, the regional authority is using a matrix that has the possibility to link all the themes together. Linking all the themes together gives the region and the municipalities the possibility to work in an integrated approach by combing the themes (Parkstad Limburg region, 2019). The theme sustainability is seen as one of the most crucial themes, sustainability is linkable with almost every other theme. The matrix ensures that the environmental vision is developed in a more integrated approach than the old structural vision but is not the magic formula to reach the level of integral coherence. Further experimentation is needed to further develop the integrated approach (respondent 8, Parkstad). The matrix is illustrated in figure 12. One of the examples was the combination of housing and retail in secondary retail streets. Retail in the Parkstad region is under strain, a solution could be to transform the vacant shops to housing. However, because the Parkstad region also has a declining population and have an oversupply of housing this would not be the solution. In this fashion, the regional authority and the municipality try to combine several themes and evaluate possible challenges in the region.

Figure 12: Integrated approach matrix Parkstad

		Overkoppelende thema's																				
		Sectorale thema's																				
		Wonen	Maatschappelijk vastgoed	Demografische ontwikkeling	Retail	Kantoren	Bedrijventerreinen	Toerisme	Mobiliteit / Infra	Natuur en Landschap	Water	Ondergrond	Erfgoed	Cultuur	Circulaire economie	Energietransitie (+ ondergrond)	Klimaat	Voedselproductie	Positieve Gezondheid	Leefbaarheid	Welzijn	
Wonen & Voorzieningen	Wonen Maatschappelijk vastgoed Demografische ontwikkeling																					
Economie & Welvaart (incl. digitalisering)	Retail Kantoren Bedrijventerreinen Toerisme																					
Bereikbaarheid & Infrastructuur	Mobiliteit / Infra																					
Natuur & Landschap, Erfgoed & (Cultuur)-historie	Natuur en Landschap Water Ondergrond Erfgoed Cultuur																					
Aarde, Klimaat & Energie	Circulaire economie Energietransitie (+ ondergrond) Klimaat Voedselproductie																					
Leefbaarheid, Gezondheid & Samenleving	Positieve Gezondheid Leefbaarheid Welzijn																					

The role of the government is dependent on the scale of the plan, the theme and the area. Respondent 7 (Kerkrade) describes the importance of municipalities to choose their role as an aspect of the culture change. The municipalities should also be transparent about their role choice towards citizens and should not just take the role which suits them best:

*"You have to be very clear about the several roles of the municipality. Which role do we use for this project? In some cases it will be a facilitating role, the other time the municipality will be the initiator, and another time you will have a releasing role. (...) The choice of the role cannot be used smartly to what suits us best, that will not provide trust for the citizens, we should avoid that".*

Respondent 7 (Spatial Planner, municipality of Kerkrade)

*"Simply, better"* is a slogan of the EPA, and legislation should especially get simpler and better for citizens. Respondent 8 (Parkstad) describes that the culture change within governmental organisations contributes to making the legislation simpler and better. Before the citizens had to go through this maze of several laws and permits to get what they wanted. The tables are turned now, it gets harder for the local officials because they have to work in an integrated way:

*"There is just one service point for initiators now, which is way more clear for initiators and citizens. Before citizens had the question, where do I have to go? (...) For the citizens and the outside world it gets easier, but behind the scenes it gets harder. The culture change has to happen there primarily, and not for the citizens, that already took place."*

Respondent 8 (Project leader environmental vision, Parkstad region)

## Participation process

The participation process with citizens for the regional environmental vision has not started yet. Mostly internal discussion within the regional authority and municipalities has taken place. A "regional inspiration" session is planned in which they want to present their first ideas on the regional vision. However, this session will be mainly for the chain partners (housing corporations, businesses etc.). How citizens will be involved in the regional environmental vision is uncertain yet. Respondent 8 (Parkstad) describes that citizens have a lot of knowledge about their local surroundings, the municipal level, but way less on a regional level. The regional authority was thinking about using a survey. Citizens do have a stronger voice in the municipal environmental vision, that input might be used indirectly in the regional environmental vision. Since the participation process on a regional level has not really started yet it is not too extensive, therefore respondents also shared their thoughts about the participation process on a municipal level for the environmental vision.

On a municipal level, the choice of participation methods is dependent on the culture of the municipality, some municipalities are progressive and others are conservative (respondent 6, Landgraaf). However, respondents prefer smaller methods of participation. Starting off with a broad session is always helpful, but to get real input working towards smaller methods of participation is more effective. The main reason why it is more effective is that in smaller groups people are more likely to speak their mind and it is easier to filter out opinions and issues. Also, the use of methods in smaller groups can diminish participants who are very forward to dominate the participation process. The municipality of Kerkrade used "*Denktanks*" (translated: think tanks) as a participation method in the development of the old structural vision, which was very successful. This method consists of roughly 10 participants, taken into account that the 10 participants represent a wide variety of participants, such as man and woman and differences in age and background. In total five sessions were held, on different locations and preferably not at the municipal hall. Participants were able to

indicate what was wrong in their neighbourhood, shed their light on ideas from the municipality and could come up with own ideas for every phase of the plan. However, respondent 7 (Kerkrade) hopes that participation within the EPA will become more continuous and structural, creating a policy cycle and not an end result. Also, moving away from traditional participation methods towards newer methods, making use of videos to explain the EPA and using social media to keep citizens updated about the changes (respondent 7, Kerkrade). Moving away from traditional methods may also help to attain a wider variety of respondents, especially the youth.

Within the case of Parkstad Limburg, the representativeness of citizens is also seen as a challenge. In the current legislation, the same groups of people tend to participate in planning processes. However, those participants do not represent the voice of all citizens. Respondent 7 (Kerkrade) describes that it hard for spatial planners to get a grasp of all the opinions of citizens compared to for example businesses. The main reason is that for businesses, a few people can represent a company, for citizens this is not the case:

*“But they do not represent all citizens, in for example a neighbourhood or a city-district. You have to be very careful, it is just an opinion from one citizen, but that citizen does not represent the entire neighbourhood, that is a dilemma”.*

Respondent 7 (Spatial Planner, municipality of Kerkrade)

As mentioned by several respondents, one of the most promising changes that comes with the EPA is the shifting focus on participation from the formal process at the end of a planning process towards the focus on participation in the informal process at the start of a planning process. However, respondent 7 (Kerkrade) describes that the shift of focus has the potential to speed up planning processes but it is never ensured. Participation in the informal process has the potential to diminish objections and appeal, but it cannot be excluded. Participation in the informal process can be time-consuming, which is not a reason to not do it, but there is always the risk of objection and appeal which can slow down the planning process eventually.

Creating support from citizens is a deciding factor for the success of a plan. As mentioned before, content-oriented and process-oriented support can be distinguished. According to respondent 7 (Kerkrade), both content-oriented and process-oriented support cannot be seen separately. A good process results in good content. A good process also contributes to better decision-making of politicians, when civil society and the market are involved it should result in a more well-considered decision by politicians. Judging if citizen participation has been successful does not solely depend on the number of participants that agree but on the quality of the input of citizens. Also, it is almost impossible to reach full consensus, but if the majority of the participants agree and the results contribute to the greater good, that makes participation successful (respondent 6, Landgraaf).

### **5.3.4 Planning systems & flexibility**

The use of invitation-planning is stimulated and used more on the municipal level than the regional level. Municipalities have more interplay with local stakeholders compared to the region of Parkstad. The change towards invitation-planning asks for a different attitude from both local officials and citizens. According to respondent 6 (Landgraaf), citizens do not have the awareness yet because they are used to wait for the government to make a move:

*“It is not as easy, the citizens still have to realize that things are changing. Citizens are used to look up to the government and wait for them to make a move”.*

Respondent 6 (Policymaker spatial planning, Municipality of Landgraaf)

Additionally, respondent 8 (Parkstad) mentions the fact that citizens are so accustomed to the old ways, it is important that municipalities provide some framework. Working within that framework stimulates citizens and gives them trust that it will be successful. The government offers security for citizens to fall back on.

## **5.4 Comparative analysis**

All three cases differ in context and scale, therefore, this comparative analysis is not used as a generalization of the case study results, but to point out similarities and differences between the three cases which serves as a synthesis. The results demonstrate varying degrees of citizen power within each case. The ambition to reduce the gap between civil society, the government and the market is apparent in each case. For each theoretical aspect a comparison between the three cases will be demonstrated in this paragraph.

### **5.4.1 Contexts**

As mentioned before, the three cases differ in context, scale and the used instrument. The environmental plan in Maastricht is on the lowest level of scale (neighbourhood level), the environmental plan in Venlo is on municipal scale and the environmental vision in Parkstad is on the highest level of scale in this research (regional level). Throughout all three cases, the main focus was on experimenting with the new instruments, participation and the changing relationship between the government, civil society and the market. All three pilots are situated in the province of Limburg, yet the local contexts are different in every pilot. The neighbourhood Boschpoort (Maastricht) characterizes as a high quality neighbourhood with a village vibe in a big city. In general, residents of the neighbourhood are proud to live in Boschpoort and are satisfied about the neighbourhood. In Venlo, citizens and the municipality already made use of citizen participation with the development of the old structural vision. However, specific policy for on participation in spatial planning was lacking. The Parkstad region struggles with a discrepancy between the rural and urban areas. Whereas the rural areas prosper, some urban areas struggle with social problems, which is partly still a consequence of the mine closure in the 60s.

### **5.4.2 Stakeholder relations**

It is clear that for all three cases, the ambition is to reduce the gap between the state, civil society and the market. This transition will not happen overnight, time and a culture change within the government is needed, but also the citizen should step into a new role where they take more responsibility. A wide variety of stakeholders are involved in the development of the environmental plans and visions, throughout the three cases the primary stakeholders are fairly similar. Civil society which consists of citizens and neighbourhood councils, the market consisting of housing corporations, businesses and local retailers and the state consisting of the municipality and their local officials such as spatial planners and policymakers. The same goes for the secondary stakeholders. Only in the case of Boschpoort (Maastricht), local amenities and an industrial area at the edge are involved as well, this is explained by the difference in scale.

Already stated, the EPA tries to move away from the state as the dominating actor. The goal is to reach more equivalent roles between the state, civil society and the market. The ambition to reach more equivalent roles is evident in all three cases, however, in the current state of the pilots, some are further in that process. For the environmental plan in Venlo, a combination of decentralized governance and network governance is apparent. The municipality as initiator still has a leading role but tries to act on an equivalent level with civil society and the market. However, in the current state citizens are still involved in a traditional way, the plan is to improve the involvement when the document "*New impulses for participation*" (municipality of Venlo, 2019) is finished. In the case of Boschpoort, a high level of interplay between the municipality, citizens and the neighbourhood is apparent. The market has a background role at the current state, by own choice. When the

environmental plan for Boschpoort gets more concrete, the market will step into a more prominent role, in that situation interactive governance shows the most similarities as a mode of governance. Lastly, for the regional environmental vision in Parkstad, decentralized governance is the current mode of governance. The regional authority has a dominating role towards citizens and the market. For the regional environmental vision, it is yet unclear if and how citizens will exactly be involved. However, the seven municipalities will also create a municipal environmental vision separately, where citizens have a more prominent role. It was noticeable throughout all three cases that the region keeps a grip on which stakeholders can or cannot access the participation process. This is contradictory to the principles of the EPA, in which they want to keep the process as open possible. This was more evident on the regional level compared to the municipal level.

Trust is one of the crucial aspects of stakeholder relations, the EPA contributes to a higher level of trust between citizens and the municipalities, whereas in the current state distrust towards municipalities seems to be higher than trust. Especially seeing each other as partners in improving the physical environment, sharing responsibility and involving citizens at the front of the planning process can improve the level of trust towards the municipality. Distrust also comes from the possible change of the political sphere in municipalities, 180-degree political shifts do not help to gain trust from citizens. Nonetheless, gaining trust from citizens can take a long time, but when mistakes (even outside of the pilot) are made it can be gone in no time. The municipalities have a societal goal and act in the public interest, citizens tend to see the government as the last resort of stakeholders who they do trust.

### **5.4.3 Citizen participation**

According to the literature citizen participation creates better decision-making, increases the legitimacy and creates support for a plan which is beneficial for the municipality (Rydin & Pennington, 2000; Enserink & Monnikhof, 2003). But citizen participation also gives the opportunity to create better citizens, strengthen the democracy and utilize local knowledge (Ohmer, 2008; Michels & de Graaf, 2010). Respondents within all three cases describe the motivation of citizen participation in line with the literature. Local officials emphasize the importance of increasing the legitimacy of a planning process, creating support and the local knowledge of citizens provides them with a different perspective. The interviewed citizens note the importance of local knowledge and they should also be involved in the development of the physical environment because they are the users of the physical environment.

The degree of citizen participation varies between the three selected cases. In Venlo, they have the ambition to use more co-production, but in the current state of the environmental plan, citizens have been involved in a traditional way. Therefore, the degree of citizen participation is between informing and consulting. The degree of citizen participation was the highest in the development of the environmental plan in Boschpoort (Maastricht). Citizens and the neighbourhood council operate on a close level with the municipality. The citizens had the option to point out positive and negative aspects of the neighbourhood which is the advising role. Also, citizens even showed levels of shared-decision making. Citizens disagreed with the approach and speed of the municipality and put a hold on the planning process. For the environmental vision in Parkstad, two degrees of citizen participation are separated. On the regional level, citizens are less involved because of the higher level of abstractness and a higher scale. The degree of citizen power on the regional level is informing and possibly consulting. Citizens have a stronger voice in the municipal environmental vision, the role varies between an advising and co-production role. The degree of citizen participation is dependent on the local context and the scale of a plan, this was noticeable throughout all three cases.

A changing role of the government is a common aspect of the EPA. To move away from the regulating role towards a more facilitating and stimulating role of the government, a culture change is necessary for the organisations. Local officials have to learn how to work in an integrated approach, new



working processes, new instruments and with digital techniques, this will take time. But also a change from citizens is necessary, citizens have to take more responsibility for the physical environment and have to move away from the “wait-and-see attitude”.

Throughout all three cases, it was apparent that traditional methods for citizen participation will no longer be as effective in the EPA. An information evening can be effective to start a planning process but for example, using social media or creating a video about the environmental plan or vision can also reach a wider variety of respondents. Especially involving the youth in planning processes is hard, and they are the least represented groups in the selected cases. There were diverging views on the importance of process-oriented and content-oriented support. The majority did agree that a good process most of the time leads to a good end result. However, some respondents weighted process-oriented support higher because it strengthens democracy and gives the ability for politicians to make a more well-considered decision.

Finally, four crucial aspects of successful citizen participation are noticeable throughout all three cases:

1. *The shift of focus from the formal to the informal process.* In current legislation, citizen participation is mostly used in the formal process at the end of the planning process. The EPA stimulates to participate in an early stage of the planning process. In the informal process the government, citizens and business collaborate at the beginning of the planning process to get a grasp of the issues, opinions and ideas about the plan before detailed research is carried out. This way, collaboration is apparent from the start, more public support is created, legal resistance can be reduced, research costs can be decreased, the planning process can be accelerated and expert and local knowledge can be utilized in an early stage;
2. *Transparency about choices and information.* When the municipality makes choices in the planning process they should be transparent on what ground the choices are based. Also, local officials have an advantage in available information, other stakeholders do not have the knowledge or access to policy documents;
3. *Continuity of citizen participation and the policy cycle.* In current legislation, plans tend to lead to an end result and lack continuity. The development of the environmental visions and plans should not be a single process but a continuous and open process in which citizens and other stakeholder are constantly involved;
4. *Representativeness.* The Representativeness of a neighbourhood can mean gaining a wide variety of participants based on age, ethnic origin and social background. But also the opinion of one citizen does not represent the opinion of a whole street, district or neighbourhood, using the information from participants should be done carefully.

#### **5.4.4 Planning systems & flexibility**

The change from permission-planning towards invitation-planning was obvious throughout all three cases. However, citizens are used to getting a strict framework from the government and work within the given boundaries, this is again the “wait-and-see attitude” from society. The awareness is not yet there, plans will no longer just be developed *for* the citizens but also *by* the citizens. Nonetheless, both the municipalities and citizens note that a general framework gives citizens a certain amount of certainty and is needed to provide some guidelines where spatial development is or is not desired. For example in the case of Tegelen, retail was not allowed in the area because there already is an abundance, other developments like housing or small and medium-sized enterprises were allowed.

## Chapter 6. Conclusion

A Dutch perspective of citizen participation in the shifting context from government to governance is given in this thesis. The upcoming EPA strengthens and facilitates citizen participation. Citizen participation is about the redistribution of power that enables citizens to be deliberately included in planning, political, or economic processes. In planning, citizens have the ability to utilize their local knowledge but also to determine how information is shared, goals and policies are set and how programs are operated (Arnstein, 1969). Governance is about solving common affairs, in which the state, civil society and the market take collective action, the role and relations between those three stakeholders are crucial (Capano et al., 2015). In light of the EPA, governance (especially collaboration with citizens) is needed to solve problems in the physical environment. The three selected cases shared their experiences on citizen participation and stakeholder relations in the development of environmental visions and plans. In this chapter first the sub-questions will be answered, afterwards, the opportunities and risks associated with the feasibility of citizen participation are given by answering the main question.

First, the relation between citizen participation and urban planning is described. Second, the roles and relations within different modes of governance are explained. Third, the motivation of citizen participation is elaborated upon. Fourth, the organization of citizen participation in Dutch planning is explained. Finally, the influence of the EPA on citizen participation is discussed.

### ***How is citizen participation related to planning?***

Over the last six decades, several paradigms connected to citizen participation have arisen. Within the paradigms, different motifs, techniques, degrees of empowerment, roles of the planner and a changing society were evident (Parker & Street, 2018). The first paradigm of citizen participation in the 1960s was *advocacy planning*. Planners acted as representatives of marginalized and excluded groups of society, planner organized, supported and represented these groups to enter the planning process (Parker & Street, 2018). In the 1970s, *participatory planning* was evident, this paradigm tries to move away from the planners' dominant professional knowledge by including local knowledge. Involving society is a key feature in this approach. *Collaborative planning or communicative planning* in the 1980s, the collaboration between involved stakeholders and the dialogue/relation between those stakeholders was they keystone of this form of citizen participation (Healey, 1997). However, collaborative planning was not prone to powerful actors dominating the planning processes, therefore, in the 1990s, *radical/activist planning* arose. The empowerment of citizens is central in this paradigm, citizens showing resistance against injustice, tokenism and a lack of voice in planning (Parker & Street, 2018).

Arnstein (1969) provided an overview of the empowerment and disempowerment of citizens in planning processes. The ladder of citizen participation contains eight levels and three degrees of citizen power. Within the EPA, a Dutch version of the ladder of citizen participation is used based on Arnstein's ladder (1969). Edelenbos & Monnikhof (2001) use a total of five levels of participation: *informing, consulting, advising, coproducing and shared decision-making*. The EPA stimulates and facilitates citizen participation in the new law, which is described in the Explanatory Memorandum of the EPA (Ministry of infrastructure and environment, 2017). In the selected cases the degrees of citizen power were mostly on the level of consulting, except the case of Boschpoort (Maastricht). In Boschpoort the level varied between advising and shared-decision making. The ambition to involve and increase the degree of citizen participation is there in Venlo and Parkstad, however, both pilots are still in the starting phase of the participation process. In general, the degree of citizen power is dependent on the scale of the plan, the local context and the role of the government.

Moving away from vertical relations between the three main stakeholders towards more horizontal relations is one of the key factors of the shift from government to governance. The transition towards shared responsibility and not one dominating stakeholder. Rhodes (1996, pp.655) describes that the transformation requires “less government” (or less rowing) and “more governance” (or more steering). This transformation is also evident in the EPA, in which the government tries to collaborate more with civil society and the market no longer solely functions as a regulating government but steps into a new facilitating and stimulating role. This also means a new role of civil society is required, no more “wait-and-see-attitude” and sharing responsibility. Therefore, citizen participation and the use of governance in planning processes will become even more important. It is necessary to produce sustainable developments and solve problems with a higher complexity which planners no longer can do on their own. The input from non-governmental stakeholders can be vital in solving those complex problems and achieving sustainable development.

### ***How are stakeholder relations organised within the different modes of governance?***

Decentralized governance is the most common mode of governance in the Netherlands, power is delegated towards the provinces and municipalities. In this mode of governance, the state has a dominating role towards the decentralized states and the decentralized states have a dominating role towards civil society and the market (Driessen et al., 2012). With the changing role of the government in the upcoming EPA and citizen participation getting a stronger role, the gap between the three main stakeholders may be reduced. For the three selected pilots, stakeholder relations have been linked to the modes of governance from Driessen et al. (2012). The ambition is there to reduce the gap and operate on more equivalent roles in all three pilots. Trust and equality are crucial aspects of stakeholder relations in the governance process. Stakeholders seeing each other as partners in the process instead of opposing parties contributes to the trust between stakeholders. Judging from the three selected cases, there seems to be a higher level of distrust instead of trust towards the government. It is challenging and time-consuming for a municipality to build trust and when things go wrong, the trust can be gone in no time (respondent 5, Venlo). Respondents feel like the EPA will contribute to a better and closer relationship between the state, civil society and the market. But time is needed to change the culture in governmental organisations and change the attitude of society. Lastly, the role of the market is more prominent on the regional scale than the municipal scale based on the three cases. On the municipal level, the relationship between the government and society was closer compared to the regional scale.

### ***What is the motivation of citizen participation?***

The literature describes the motivation of citizen participation from two perspectives, the governmental perspective and the citizens perspective. From the governmental perspective, two main aspects are distinguished: better decision-making and legitimacy. Involving citizens can lead to more expertise by making use of their local knowledge. But also the involvement of citizens can result in an acceleration of the planning process, avoid inappropriate developments, less resistance and creating support (Ryding & Pennington, 2000). The citizens perspective described three aspects for the motivation of citizen participation. First *creating better citizens*, according to Ohmer (2008) participating in policy-making or planning processes as a positive effect on for example personal empowerment, community empowerment, feeling of mastery over surroundings, commitment and responsibility of civic action. Second, *utilizing local knowledge*, participation in planning process opens a door to different kinds of knowledge, governments can benefit from the local knowledge and citizens can get educated by for example plans by the government. Third, *gaining some control over policy outcomes*, citizens are the users of neighbourhoods, therefore, they have the power to balance out the idealistic plans and the ability to take the heat off hot issues and make cold issues hot (Alshire, 1970).

Respondents within all three cases confirm the aspects mentioned by literature. Increasing the legitimacy of planning processes, creating support and the utilization of local knowledge were

mentioned as important aspects of citizen participation. Citizens mention the importance of being heard by the government and the use of local knowledge, that in some cases goes further than the knowledge of the municipality. Also, gaining control over policy outcomes in their neighbourhood and the ability to co-design their neighbourhood is something citizens value. Creating better citizen by citizen participation was not mentioned by the respondents.

### ***How is citizen participation organized in Dutch planning and the institutional context?***

Citizen participation is seen as an instrument to strengthen, support and improve the functioning of the representative democracy (Michels, 2006). By making use of citizen participation, politicians can make less technocratic and more well-considered decisions. Citizen participation as a tool to strengthen the democratic system and hampering politicians to make decisions on their own was both mentioned by local officials and citizens (respondent 2, Maastricht; respondent 7; Kerkrade). Citizen participation also makes people feel more responsible for public matters, encourages actors to listen to each other to reach mutual understanding and increases the legitimacy of decision-making (Michels & De Graaf, 2010). Three transitions connected to citizen participation in the Netherlands contribute to the Dutch government to governance context which is illustrated in figure 4. Especially the shift towards invitation planning and the new role of the government are a big part of the EPA. Invitation-planning is connected to the stimulating, facilitating and even releasing role of the government which fits in the third generation of participation. The government tries to actively invite actors and facilitates initiatives. However, the government still has a regulating role to protect certain values or society, for example, the protection of cultural heritage. Just as the degree of citizen participation, the role of the government is dependent on the scale and local context of the plan.

Invitation-planning was used in both the cases of Venlo and Maastricht. Venlo provided a broad framework only stating that retail was not allowed as development in the area, initiator are more or less free to work within those broad boundaries in the environmental plan. Maastricht did not directly use invitation-planning particularly in the pilot but did use a broader framework. They used invitation planning for a different project in the neighbourhood Boschpoort. Citizens came up with the idea to create a park for the neighbourhood to replace vacant football pitches. The authority of Parkstad does not use invitation-planning because they operate on the regional level, however, the municipalities within the Parkstad region are experimenting with it. Citizens are not used to this new planning approach yet, they are used to waiting for the government to make a move and work within a strict framework (Respondent 1, Maastricht; Respondent 6; Landgraaf). Just as a culture change has to happen for governmental organisations, this is also the case for citizens themselves, no more “wait-and-see attitude” and taking more responsibility.

### ***What could be the influence of the new Environment & Planning Act on the feasibility of citizen participation?***

Since the EPA is not operating yet and the selected cases are all experiments it is hard to define the influence of the law on citizen participation. However, the defined objectives of the EPA and the mentioned aspects by the respondents show that the EPA has the potential to contribute to citizen participation. An aspect that was emphasized by all respondents was the need for a culture change in governmental organisations. This culture change goes two ways, first the internal changes in governmental organisations. Local officials have to move away from the current bureaucracy and get used to new working processes such as working with digital platforms but also using new methods of participation and communication. Second, the government is no longer a sole stakeholder in the development of plans. Seeing citizens as partners in the planning process can be beneficial to the success of citizen participation but can also create more trust between stakeholders and the enhancement of the governance process (respondent 5, Venlo; respondent, 6; Landgraaf). The culture change is one of the vital aspects that reduces the gap between the government and society. However, seeing each other as partners in the process also asks for a different attitude of society, a society that

takes responsibility and does not wait and see what the government does. But even when the government and civil society are partners in the process, reaching full consensus in the participation process is seen as a utopia (respondent 1, Maastricht; respondent 4; Venlo; respondent 6, Landgraaf). But this should not be the goal of citizen participation. Citizens note the importance of being heard in the planning process (respondent 3, Maastricht). Participants can be satisfied with the result even if the result is not what they hoped for, as long as it is clear to citizens why the outcomes are different than expected and the municipality has been transparent about their decisions (Respondent 5, Venlo; Respondent 2, Maastricht).

Respondent 8 (Parkstad) mentioned that citizen participation is the strongest on municipal and neighbourhood level. At this level, the level of abstractness is lower, projects are about citizens' direct surrounding which makes it more concrete for them. This is also one of the goals of the EPA, governmental tasks will be delegated towards the municipal level as much as possible because they have to best option to make a difference in the physical environment. There will be more room for local consideration and tailor-made solutions, the government on a municipal level is closer to citizens and other stakeholders. One of the other objectives of the EPA is to approach the physical environment in a more coherent way in policy, regulation and decision-making. This more coherent approach towards the physical environment is achieved by using an integrated approach among themes, the integrated approach in Parkstad is illustrated in figure 12.

In the current legislation, it is very common that citizen participation takes place in the formal process at the end of a planning process. Citizens have the ability to view the developed plan and if they disagree they have the ability to appeal against the plan. In the EPA, the focus shifts from the formal process towards the informal process. At the start of a planning process, citizen participation takes place and all involved stakeholders discuss the plan and consider what suits everyone best, a suitable participation method is the "*dialogue table*" (respondent 5, Venlo). The shift of focus towards the informal process is used to eliminate as much resistance as possible, gives the option to use the input from other stakeholders at the start, it can accelerate the planning process and has the ability to reduce legal actions at the end of the planning process. Most respondents see the potential of this shift but cannot confirm these advantages at the current state of the environmental visions and plans. Respondent 7 (Kerkrade) mentions that the informal process at the front will be more time consuming and complete elimination of legal action is a utopia. Therefore, it is uncertain if planning processes will actually be accelerated compared to the current state.

The lack of guidelines the EPA gives for the participation process is seen as a good thing because every plan is unique. The choice of method and extensiveness of the process depends on the local context, role of the government and scale of the plan, every project needs tailor-made solutions. There is also a concern that citizen participation might be overused in the EPA. Respondents emphasize the importance of having a clear goal and outlining realistic expectations for citizen participation. Participation should be used as tool that contributes to the planning process, participation should not be used just for the sake of participating. Too much participation also brings the danger of citizens getting fatigued of participating over and over again, which does not contribute to their input.

After answering the sub-questions, the main question of this research can be answered. The main question of this research is the following:

***Main-question: “What is the feasibility of citizen participation in the upcoming Environment & Planning Act, in the context of shifting from government to governance?”***

Several opportunities and risks associated with the feasibility of citizen participation in the EPA became clear based on the literature review, the contextual chapter on the EPA and the case study research. A total of 10 opportunities and 9 risks have been identified in this research, which are represented in table 3.

**Table 3: Opportunities and risks associated with the feasibility of CP**

Opportunities	Risks
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u><i>The funnel model of participation</i></u> A common approach in the participation process is to start off with a broad participation method and afterwards funnel towards a more specific participation method. This method filters out participants who want to participate and be involved throughout the entire process. The dialogue tables used in Venlo is an example of a more specific method. This method judges the feasibility of a plan and gets a grasp on all the wishes, issues and ideas of all involved stakeholders. The choice of participation method is also dependent on the progressiveness or conservativeness of a municipality.</li> <li>2. <u><i>The culture change of governmental organisations</i></u> Respondent 5 (Venlo) mentions that in the current law is it already possible to work EPA-proof. Local officials are not used to the new working processes such as working with an integrated approach, the new principle towards “<i>Ja, mits</i>” (translated: “<i>Yes, provided that</i>”), new ways of communication, participation at the start of a process etc. Governmental organisations are accustomed to the old methods and working processes, time is needed for these changes to get settled in the minds and hearts of organisations.</li> <li>3. <u><i>Reducing the gap between the government and society</i></u> The EPA stimulates the government to see civil society as partners in the process and the other way around, to create more trust and equal roles. This contributes to the relation between both, and may even reduce the gap between the government and society over time. However, just as several local officials mentioned it is very hard to gain trust from citizens but it is very easy to lose it.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u><i>The jargon of the EPA</i></u> Citizens lack knowledge about current planning instruments like structural visions and zoning plans, the knowledge on the new instruments of the EPA is even lower because it is completely new. The use of jargon should be reduced as much as possible in participation processes to make it more understandable for citizens.</li> <li>2. <u><i>The Wait-and-see attitude from society</i></u> The EPA facilitates and stimulates citizen participation. In the current legislation, citizens are used to look up towards the government and wait for them to make a move, the “<i>wait-and-see attitude</i>”. The success of the new law not only depends on the changing role of the government but also of society. Society should take more responsibility and a more prominent role in projects for the physical environment.</li> <li>3. <u><i>The Abstractness of environmental visions and the toughness of the environmental plans</i></u> There is a struggle for participation in both the instruments of the EPA. The environmental vision focuses on the essential and desired developments for the future within a particular level of government. This can be formulated as abstract goals about the future, it is hard for citizens to think about the future of their environment, especially on a higher level of abstractness. The environmental plan primarily contains plan rules and allocates functions in the physical environment. This is considered tough material that is difficult to make understandable for and communicate towards citizens.</li> </ol>

4. The shift of focus of participation towards the informal process

In the current legislation, citizen participation is primarily organized in the formal process at the end of a project or a plan. Resulting in tokenistic citizen participation. With participation in the informal process, the government, citizens and business collaborate at the beginning of the planning process to get a grasp of the issues, opinions and ideas about the plan. This way, more public support is created, legal resistance can be reduced, research costs can be decreased, the planning process can be accelerated and local knowledge can be utilized in an early stage. However, the informal process at the front is a time-consuming process. In the case that the informal process did not result in the reduction of resistance or legal action, the planning process could even be more time-consuming compared to the current approach.

5. The integrated approach

The quality of the physical environment is the main focus of the EPA. All stakeholders contribute to the physical environment such as citizens, businesses and authorities. The quality is increasingly determined by initiatives within society. A more integrated approach in policy-making is necessary to solve complex problems in the physical environment. A sum of sectoral themes is no longer enough. The integrated approach also asks for more stakeholder relations, themes like soil are no longer viewed separately but can be combined with for example sustainability and housing.

6. The digital platform

Within the three selected cases, the use of the digital platform is in a starting phase and therefore mostly used internally. The digital platform is used for permitting incoming plans and as an education platform for local officials. The platform can be expanded and also be used as a medium where stakeholders can share information and discuss a plan.

7. Information equality and transparency

The majority of citizens are not familiar with municipal policy or cannot access certain documents. The EPA strives for a more equal role for citizens, therefore they should have the same access to information as local officials. This also increases the trust between both stakeholders. A higher level of transparency from municipalities is needed, being open about the choices they made choices and on being clear on what grounds these choices are based. Last but not least, expectation management can help in providing a clear goal of

4. Involving the youth

Involving a wide variety of participants in the participation process is important to present a representative view of a neighbourhood. Throughout all cases, it became clear that involving the youth was seen as the biggest challenge out of all groups. New methods of participation such as social media can attract this group more, but in the end, it is their own responsibility and they cannot be forced to participate.

5. The initiator of a plan is responsible for participation

In the EPA the government is no longer solely responsible for the participation process. Initiators of plans or projects are now responsible for the participation process as well, there is a risk that the initiator has no experience with organizing a participation process. Also, the EPA gives no guidelines on the process which in this case is a risk to the feasibility of citizen participation.

6. The Representativeness

Attaining a representative image of the opinions, needs and wishes of citizens is a challenge in citizen participation. The opinion of the citizens who are the most forward, do not represent the opinion of an entire neighbourhood. Getting a representative image of a neighbourhood is also hard because not all residents of a neighbourhood do participate.

7. Participation as a solution for everything

The new role of the government and the possible increase of citizen participation contributes to the trust and relationship between the government and society. However, respondents fear that participation might be overused in the EPA. Participation should be used as tool that contributes to the planning process, participation is not the solution to every issue and should not be used just for the sake of participating.

8. Participating too early

The EPA does stimulate participation in the early stage of the planning process to get a grasp of the issues at stake from all stakeholders and to judge the feasibility of the plan. However, municipalities should be careful with participating too early. The importance of a framework from the municipality and a clear goal before participating contribute to the effectiveness and success of participation.

9. The degree of citizen power is dependent on several factors

The degree of citizen power is dependent on the scale of a plan, the local context, the available funds and the role of the government. Therefore, in some

<p>participation and keeping the expectation from other stakeholders realistic.</p> <p>8. <u>Creating continuity in policy and participation</u>          Planning processes in current legislation are mostly focused on an end result and lack both a policy cycle and structural citizen participation. The EPA focuses on creating an open process instead of an end result, this should also help to make citizen participation more structural in environmental visions and plans. Participation can help to continuously improve and evaluate these instruments.</p> <p>9. <u>The lack of guidelines on participation processes &amp; need for tailor-made solutions</u>          Every project or plan is unique and is dependent on the local context, the scale of the plan and involved participants. Therefore, every participation process needs tailor-made solutions and methods. The EPA intentionally gives no guidelines on the participation process because every project should be tackled as an individual case. This provides more room for initiatives.</p> <p>10. <u>The use of invitation-planning</u>          The use of invitation-planning stimulates bottom-up plans. It was noticeable throughout all cases that the government is moving away from blueprint-planning. Invitation planning provides a general framework where initiators can operate in. However, citizens are used to getting a strict framework and have to adapt to the new planning system. Respondents emphasize the importance of keeping a general framework, it creates trust and certainty for all involved stakeholders.</p>	<p>cases, the degree of citizen power will be lower than in other cases. For example the protection of cultural heritage, the government may take a regulating role to protect these values for society.</p>
---	--

To conclude, the EPA provides principles in which citizen participation can flourish. However, a lot of principles come with side effects and it takes time for these principles to develop. Since the EPA is not operating yet and this research is based on cases that are still in an experimenting phase it is hard to judge how feasible citizen participation precisely is in the new law. Based on the three cases, the governmental authorities have the ambition to collaborate more with civil society and the market by stepping into a more facilitating and stimulating role and seeing each other as partners in the process. In the literature review of this research the conceptual model described four factors that influence the feasibility of citizen participation, these four factors are briefly elaborated upon below.

The EPA sets a good basis that contributes to the governance process in the Netherlands and can possibly reduce the gap between the government and society. In all cases, the motivation of citizen participation was described and is in line with literature describes. Governmental stakeholders value the legitimacy of planning processes, the creation of support and the importance of local knowledge. Citizens appreciate being heard in the planning process and note the importance of utilizing their local knowledge. Also, gaining some control over the policy outcomes, for example co-designing their



own neighbourhood. As described in theory, citizen participation is a tool to strengthen democracy (Michels, 2006). In the cases, respondents emphasize the importance of the participation process because it has the ability to hamper politicians to make decisions on their own, the process gives politicians the option to make more well-considered decisions that benefit society. Last, the shift in planning systems, it was noticeable governments start working with a less rigid framework and give initiators more room to work within that framework. However, citizens seem to struggle with this change in planning systems and are used to the old ways in which they wait for the government to make a move and work within the strictly set boundaries.

## Chapter 7. Reflection

This final reflection chapter reflects upon the used methodology and theory in this research. Epically encountered problems and areas of improvement for both aspects are mentioned. Afterwards, recommendations for further research and recommendations for practice on the regional and municipal level are given.

### 7.1 Theoretical reflection

A lot of academic articles in this research are used concerning citizen participation and the governance process. The research represents a unique perspective on citizen participation and stakeholder relations in two instruments of the EPA. The environmental plan and vision, both on a municipal and regional level. The relationship between stakeholders is connected to several modes of governance in the Dutch context for each case. In this research, governance is seen as a comprehensive analytical concept. This concept focuses on the process and the understanding of the role and relationship between the state, market and civil society (Nuissl & Heinrichs, 2011). Trust and equality between stakeholders are crucial factors to change the dominating role of the decentralized state in planning processes. The decentralized mode of governance is predominantly applied in the Netherlands but a less dominating role was noticeable within two of the cases. A combination of both decentralized and interactive governance was visible. For example, the case in Venlo showed similarities to the interactive mode of governance of Driessen et al. (2012). The municipality aims to work on an equal level with both the market and civil society. The degree of citizen power also varies within the three cases and the ladder of citizen participation from both Arnstein (1969) and Edelenbos & Monnikhof (2001) was used to describe the empowerment of civil society. Citizen participation is stimulated but the results indicate that the power of citizens is very conditional because it is dependent on the local context, the scale and the role of the government. Citizen participation is seen as a tool to strengthen, support and improve democracy (Michels, 2006), or even hampering politicians to make decisions on their own on the local level (respondent 2, Maastricht). Engaging citizens in policy-making allows governments to utilize the local knowledge, create support and increases legitimacy in the planning process (Rydin & Pennington, 2000; Enserink & Monnikhof, 2003). However, citizen participation is not only beneficial for the government, but it also creates better citizens, and gives citizen some control over policy outcomes (Ohmer, 2008; Aleshire, 1970). The motivation of citizen participation that was mentioned in the literature review is similar to the motivation of citizen participation from respondents in this research. The *“Overheidsparticipatietrap”* (translated: stairs of governmental participation) was used to describe the role of the government in the planning process. There is not one best role, the choice of the role is dependent on the local context and the project itself (Rob, 2012; Bennington, 2011). In the cases, governmental organisations try to utilize a more facilitating and stimulating role which directly links to the transition in planning systems from permission-planning towards invitation planning (Van Rooy, 2011; Buitelaar et al., 2012). A more prominent role of civil society, the facilitating and stimulating role of the government and the use of invitation-planning all contribute to the change from government to governance. However, a more prominent role of society can only happen when society moves away from the *“wait-and-see attitude”* and tries to take more responsibility.

In short, the EPA changes the roles of stakeholders and the relationship between stakeholders, ultimately, the EPA enhances the governance process in the Netherlands. Results show that citizen participation and the governance process are the most successful on the municipal scale. Primarily because of the subsidiary principle and because citizens are used to operate on this level. Therefore the governance process on this scale is vital and a crucial factor to the successfulness of the EPA. Hereby, several theories on citizen participation have been linked to the governance process. By linking theories on citizen participation to different modes of governance, a further understanding of citizen participation in the governance process is given. The Dutch case studies can contribute to the international debate on citizen participation and the governance process.

## 7.2 Methodological reflection

The conducted case study gives a comprehensive perspective on citizen participation processes in the upcoming EPA. The cases in Venlo, Maastricht and Parkstad provide a varying view of how citizen participation is organized in three different scales and two different instruments. This variation in cases also makes it harder to compare the cases. In general, the researcher is satisfied with the collected empirical data however, there are some areas of improvement. First, the selection of cases. The website of [www.aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl](http://www.aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl) was used to filter out pilots which were either using the environmental plan or environmental vision as an instrument and which especially focused on the involvement of stakeholders in the planning process. This filter provided the researcher with the selected cases, however, some of the cases were in a further stage of the participation process. For example, the case in Maastricht had already involved citizens several times but the case in Parkstad was still in a starting phase of the participation process. In general, this was no major problem because all three cases already had plans or ideas on how to organize the participation process regardless of in which stage they were. Second, since the EPA is not operating yet, it is difficult for the researcher to form recommendations because it is all based on experiments. This was also a difficulty for the respondents to answer some stated questions. For example, the question if the EPA has the potential to reduce the gap between the government and society or if this was noticeable in the experiment so far. Since the experiments are still ongoing and the law is not operating yet, it is complicated to judge the influence of the new law on several aspects. Before going the third aspect, the event on the EPA at Pakhuis de Zwijger provided the researcher with a great basis and food for thought on the researched topic. The event focused on the influence of the EPA on the relationship between citizens, the private sector and the public sector. Third, two citizens from civil society have been interviewed and provided vital data. It was hard to get in touch with this group and therefore a lack of respondents from civil society are interviewed, more respondents from this group would have made the research less one-sided. Within the case of Boschpoort (Maastricht) two citizens, of which one was also a member of the neighbourhood council, have been interviewed. For the case of Venlo, no citizens were interviewed after several attempts to get in touch with the neighbourhood council of Tegelen. However, a document from the municipality of Venlo (Burgers aan zet, 2012) provided the researcher with some useable information and quotes on citizen participation. In the case of Parkstad, it was not yet a possibility to interview citizens because the participation process for the environmental vision on the regional scale was in a starting phase. Nonetheless, the interviewed respondents still provided a comprehensive story on citizen participation in the new law.

## 7.3 Recommendations for further research and practice

This research serves as an acquaintance with citizen participation combined with governance in the EPA. Especially citizen participation and stakeholder relations in the environmental vision and plans on a municipal and regional scale. Several opportunities and risks are represented associated with the feasibility of citizen participation in this research. The research can be extended by researching more pilots that are in a further stage of the participation process. Also, within this research, a limited amount of citizens were interviewed. The perspective from civil society on citizen participation and stakeholder relations in the EPA could be expanded by making use of quantitative research. A survey could be used to get data from citizens who participated in a pilot on the environmental vision or plan.

Based on the main question of this research, in this paragraph, several recommendations for practice are offered. The recommendations can help to improve the participation process and improve stakeholder relations within policy-making in the EPA.

1. *The use of the integrated approach in the physical environment.* Within the three researched cases the use of an integrated approach was evident. Especially combining and connecting different themes in the instruments of the EPA. The integrated approach also needs local officials

working in the spatial planning domain to go beyond their own expertise and cooperate more with other domains, as well as with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. To increase the collaboration between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders trust is needed. Seeing each other as partners in the process is a crucial principle of the EPA that helps to increase the trust between stakeholders. An environmental vision is already on a high level of abstractness. The integrated approach could increase the abstractness of the instrument even more which can make it more difficult for citizens to participate, this should be prevented;

2. On the regional scale, citizens seem to have less access to the planning process because the gap between the regional authority and civil society is bigger. The main reasons are the higher scale and abstractness, projects on the regional scale are not concrete enough for citizens because citizens do not operate on that level. Even though, this could mean that citizens are not involved at all in the process on a regional scale. It was noticeable throughout the cases that the region keeps a grip on which stakeholders can or cannot access the participation process. This is contradictory to the principle of the EPA, the planning process should be kept as open as possible so all stakeholders can be involved during the planning process. It is recommended that the *regional authority keeps the process more open to make the planning process more accessible for civil society and the market;*
3. *Having a clear goal, framework and expectation management at the start of the participation process.* By providing a clear goal both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders know the added value of the participation process to the plan. The municipality should have a broad framework before entering the participation process, this way participants know where they stand. Participants noted the importance of a framework at the start because it gives a certain amount of certainty and provides them with the governmental perspective on the plan. Expectation management should be used to keep the expectations from stakeholders on the plan realistic but should also be used to make clear what the role of every stakeholder is;
4. *Using new methods of participation to gain a wider variety of respondents.* Involving the youth in the participation process was seen as an important and difficult group to involve. But it was also seen as the most important group because an environmental vision is focused on the future and the youth is the generation of the future. Using new methods such a social media, making a video and creating a digital platform can help to incorporate this group in the participation process. Making participation more personal can also help, for example walking through the neighbourhood and simply talking to people;
5. Governmental authorities have an information monopoly in participation processes. They have more knowledge and access to policy documents. *Therefore, it is recommended to be more transparent about sharing information, both process and content-wise.* Process-wise this means being transparent about on what basis certain decisions or choices were made in the planning process. Content-wise this means being transparent about sharing specific information from policy documents that non-governmental stakeholders are not familiar with. This also increases the levels of equality and trust between stakeholders and could ultimately lead to more equal knowledge levels;
6. In the researched cases it became clear that the culture change of governmental organisations in the new law is even more important than the legislation itself to make the intended goals of the EPA successful. A change in working processes, attitude, transparency, decision-making and the use of their roles is necessary for governmental organisations. *It is recommended to increasingly experiment and practise with the culture change to make the transition towards the EPA more smoothly.* These changes will not occur over the duration of one year, time is needed before these changes are settled in the minds and hearts of the organisations.

## References

- Aan de slag met de omgevingswet. (2017). *Participatie in de Omgevingswet*. Retrieved from: <https://aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl/thema/inspiratiegids/participatie-wet/>
- Aan de slag met de omgevingswet. (2018). *Eindrapport pilots omgevingsvisie 2017-2018*. Retrieved from: [https://depilotstarter.vng.nl/sites/default/files/project\\_bestand/eindrapport\\_pilots\\_omgevingsvisie\\_2017-2018\\_002.pdf](https://depilotstarter.vng.nl/sites/default/files/project_bestand/eindrapport_pilots_omgevingsvisie_2017-2018_002.pdf)
- Aan de slag met de omgevingswet. (2019). *Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg, deelnemer aan pilots Omgevingsvisie*. Retrieved from: <https://aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl/praktijk/pilots-experimenten/aandeslagkaart/@170691/stadsregio-parkstad/>
- Alshire, R. (1970). *PLANNING AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, Costs, Benefits and Approaches*. Urban Affairs Quarterly, pp. 369-393.
- Arnstein, S. (1969). *A ladder of citizen participation*. Journal of American Institute of Planners, 35(4), pp. 216-224.
- Balz, V. & Zonneveld, W. (2018). *Transformations of Planning Rationales: Changing Spaces for Governance in Recent Dutch National Planning*. Planning Theory & Practice. 19:3, pp. 363-384.
- Benington, J. (2011). *From Private Choice to Public Value?* In: John Benington and Mark H. Moore, Public Value. Theory and practice, London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Boeije, H., 't Hart, H. & Hox, J. (2009). *Onderzoeksmethoden*. Den Haag: Boom Lemma uitgevers.
- Boonsta, B. & Boelens, L. (2011). *Self-organization in urban development: towards a new perspective on spatial planning*. Urban Research & Practice, 4:2, pp. 99-122.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). *Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method*. Qualitative Research Journal. 9:2, pp. 27-40.
- Breman, B., Jan Fontein, R., Kuindersma, W. & Westerink J. (2013). *Gemeenten en krimp, uitnodigingsplanologie als perspectief*. Alterra, Wageningen UR.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods*. (5th edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Buitelaar, E., Feenstra, S., Galle, M., Lekkerkerker, J., Sorel, N. & Tennekes, J. (2012). *Vormgeven aan de spontane stad: belemmeringen en kansen voor organische stedelijke herontwikkeling*. Den Haag: Uitgeverij PBL.
- Buitelaar, E., Galle, M., & Sorel, N. (2011). *Plan-led planning systems in development-led practices: An empirical analysis into the (lack of) institutionalisation of planning law*. Environment and Planning A. 43, pp. 928-941.
- Capono, G., Howlett, M. & Ramesh, M. (2015). *Bringing governments back in: Governance and governing in comparative policy analysis*. Journal of comparative policy analysis: Research and Practice, 17:4, pp. 311-321.

CBS Statline. (2019). *Population dynamics*. Retrieved from: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/en/dataset/37259eng/table?dl=C09F>

Commission on Global Governance. (1995). *Our global neighborhood: The report of the Commission on Global Governance*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dammers, E., Staffhorst, B., Verschoor, W. & Verwest, F. (2004). *Ontwikkelingsplanologie: Lessen uit en voor de praktijk*. Ruimtelijk Planbureau. Rotterdam: NAI Uitgever.

De Graaf, L.J. (2007). *Gedragen beleid. Een bestuurskundig onderzoek naar interactief beleid en draagvlak in de stad Utrecht*. Doctoral thesis, Utrecht University.

De Zwijger. (2019). *Gebiedsontwikkeling 36, De Omgevingswet [Online video/Podcast]*. De Stad, Amsterdam. Retrieved from: <https://dezwijger.nl/programma/de-omgevingswet>

Dezeure, K., De Rynck, F., Reynaert, H., Ackaert, J., Steyvers, K. & E, Wayenberg. (2010). *Burgerparticipatie in de stad(sorganisatie), een stand van zaken*. Bestuurlijke organisatie Vlaanderen.

Driessen, P. J., Dieperink, C., Van Laerhoven, F., Hens, A., Runhaar, C. & Vermeulen, W. (2012). *Towards a conceptual framework for the study of shifts in modes of environmental Governance – Experiences from the Netherlands*. *Env. Pol. Gov.* 22, pp. 143-160.

Edelenbos, J. & Monnikhof, R. (2001). *Interactieve beleidsvorming als sturingsopgave*. Den Haag: Innovatienetwerk Groene Ruimte en Agrocluster.

Enserink, B. & Monnikhof, A.H. (2003). *Information management for public participation in Co-design processes: Evaluation of a Dutch example*. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 46:3, pp. 315-344.

ExpeditieRuimte. (2018). *Inventarisatie implementatie omgevingswet Limburgse gemeenten*. Retrieved from: <https://expeditieruimte.nl/storage/1101/2019-overzicht-antwoorden-gemeenten-Ja-Ja.pdf>

ExpeditieRuimte. (2018). *Participatie vanaf het begin, Maastrichtse Pilot met opstellen Omgevingsplan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.expeditieruimte.nl/experimenteren/participatie-vanaf-het-begin>

Fainstein, S. (2014). *The Just City*. *International Journal of Urban Sciences* 18 (1), pp. 1-18.

Fenster, T. & Misgav, C. (2014). *Memory and place in participatory planning*. *Planning Theory & Practice*. 15:3, pp. 349-369.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). *Five misunderstandings about case-study research*. *Qualitative inquiry*, 12 (2), pp. 219-245.

GemeenteAtlas. (2019). *Kaarten Nederlandse gemeenten*. Retrieved from: <https://www.gemeentenatlas.nl/>

Government. (2019). *Citizen participation*. Ministry of the Interior and kingdom relations. Retrieved from: <https://www.government.nl/topics/active-citizens/citizen-participation>

Healey, P. (1997) *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. London: Macmillan.

- Healey, P. (2007). *Urban complexity and spatial strategies: towards a relational planning for our times*. London: Routledge.
- Hendriks, F. (2014), *Understanding Good Urban Governance: Essentials, Shifts, and Values*. *Urban Affairs Review* 50(4), pp. 553-576.
- Hodgson, G. (2006). *What Are Institutions?* *Journal of Economic Issues*, 40:1, pp. 1-25.
- Hsieh, H. & Shannon, S. (2005). *Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis*. *Qualitative Health Research* 15(9), pp. 1277-1288.
- Jessop, B. (1998). *The rise of governance and the risk of failure: the case of economic development*. *International Social Science Journal* 50 (155), pp. 29-45.
- Kamps, P. (2015). *Zwarte gaten van Parkstad*. *Dagblad de Limburger*. Retrieved from: [https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20151216\\_00003081/zwarte-gaten-van-parkstad](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20151216_00003081/zwarte-gaten-van-parkstad)
- Korthals Altes, W. (2016). *Planning reform beyond planning: the debate on an integrated Environment and Planning Act in the Netherlands*. *Planning Practice & Research*, 31:4, pp. 420-434.
- Michels, A. (2006). *Citizen participation and democracy in the Netherlands*. *Democratization*, 13:02, pp. 323-339.
- Michels, A. & De Graaf, L. (2010). *Examining Citizen Participation: Local Participatory Policy Making and Democracy*. *Local Government Studies*, 36:4, pp. 477-491.
- Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. (2016). *Handreiking bewonersparticipatie bij de inrichting van een gezonde leefomgeving*. Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu, Bilthoven.
- Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment (VROM). (2010). *Met globale bestemmingsplannen meer mogelijkheden*. Den Haag: Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and Environment.
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. (2017). *Translation of the Environment and Planning Act*. Explanatory Memorandum. Retrieved from: <https://www.omgevingsweb.nl/cms/files/2017-01/english-translation-environment-act.pdf>
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. (2016). *Pioneren met de omgevingswet*. Den Haag: Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment.
- Municipality of Maastricht. (2018). *Discussienotitie omgevingsvisie Maastricht 2040*. Retrieved from: [https://maastricht.notubiz.nl/document/6812672/1/01\\_-\\_Discussienotitie\\_Omgevingsvisie\\_Maastricht](https://maastricht.notubiz.nl/document/6812672/1/01_-_Discussienotitie_Omgevingsvisie_Maastricht)
- Municipality of Maastricht. (2018). *Voortgangsnotitie Pilot Omgevingsplan Boschpoort*. Aan de slag met de omgevingswet. Retrieved from: [https://www.gemeentemaastricht.nl/fileadmin/files/GeMa/Content\\_website/VoortgangsnotitieOmgevingsplanBoschpoort.pdf](https://www.gemeentemaastricht.nl/fileadmin/files/GeMa/Content_website/VoortgangsnotitieOmgevingsplanBoschpoort.pdf)

- Municipality of Venlo. (2019). *Nieuwe impulsen aan participatie*. (Not published document).
- Municipality of Venlo. (2017). *Aan de slag met de omgevingswet in Venlo, cultuur en verandermanagement*. Retrieved from: [https://vng.nl/files/vng/nieuws\\_attachments/2018/presentatie\\_vng\\_realisatiecongres\\_venlo.pdf](https://vng.nl/files/vng/nieuws_attachments/2018/presentatie_vng_realisatiecongres_venlo.pdf)
- Municipality of Venlo. (2014) *Ruimtelijke structuurvisie Venlo, ruimte binnen grenzen*.
- Municipality of Venlo. (2012). *Burgers aan zet*. Participatie en zelfsturing in de gemeente Venlo.
- Needham, B. (2003). *Onmisbare toelatingsplanologie*. *Stedenbouw & Ruimtelijke Ordening*. 84, 2, pp. 39 - 43.
- North, D. (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nuissl, H. & D. Heinrichs. (2011). *Fresh Wind or Hot Air – Does the Governance Discourse Have Something to Offer to Spatial Planning?* *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 31 (1), pp. 47-59.
- Monno, V. & A. Khakee. (2012). *Tokenism or Political Activism? Some Reflections on Participatory Planning*. *International Planning Studies* 17 (1), pp. 85-101.
- Obeng-Odoom, F. (2012). *On the origin, meaning and evaluation of urban governance*. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift, Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 66:4, pp. 204-212.
- Ohmer, M. (2008). *The relationship between citizen participation and organizational processes and outcomes and the benefits of citizen participation in neighbourhood organizations*. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 34:4, pp. 41-60.
- Open Universiteit. (2019). *Krijgen bewoners meer te vertellen in hun leefomgeving?* Retrieved from: <https://www.ou.nl/-/participatie-omgevingswet>
- Parker, G. & Street, E. (2018). *Enabling participatory planning*. Policy press: University of Bristol.
- Parkstad Limburg. (2009). *Intergemeentelijke structuurvisie Parkstad Limburg 2030, Ruimte voor park en stad*. Heerlen: Parkstad Limburg.
- Provero. (2017). *Omgevingsplan Venlo*. Retrieved from: <https://www.provero.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Tijdvak-2-gemeente-venlo.pdf>
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (1996). *The New Governance: Governing without Government*. Political studies: University of Newcastle, pp. 652-667.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (2003). *Interpreting British Governance*. London: Routledge.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (2007). *Understanding Governance: Ten Years On*. *Organization Studies* 28 (8), pp. 1243-1264.
- Rijksoverheid. (2017). *Environment and Planning Act*. Retrieved from: <https://www.government.nl/documents/reports/2017/02/28/environment-and-planning-act>



- Rijksoverheid. (2019). *Participatie in de omgevingswet*. Retrieved from: <https://aandeslagmetdeomgevingswet.nl/thema/inspiratiegids/participatie-wet/>
- Rob. (2012). *Loslaten in vertrouwen. Naar een nieuwe verhouding tussen overheid, markt en samenleving*. Den Haag: Raad van het openbaar bestuur.
- Rydin, Y. & Pennington, M. (2000). *Public participation and local environmental planning: the collective action problem and the potential of social capital*. *Local environment*, 5:2, pp. 153-169.
- Smith, R.W. (1973). *A Theoretical Basis for Participatory Planning*. Springer, Policy sciences, Vol. 4, pp. 275-295.
- Swyngedouw, E. (2005). *Governance Innovation and the Citizen: The Janus Face of Governance-beyond-the-State*. *Urban Studies* 42 (11), pp. 1991-2006.
- Tonnaer, F. (2017). *Veranderende maatschappij en veranderend omgevingsrecht: een kleine filosofie rond kernwaarden*. Retrieved from: <https://www.omgevingsweb.nl/nieuws/veranderende-maatschappij-en-veranderend-omgevingsrecht-een-kleine-filosofie-rond-kernwaarden>
- Torring, J., Peters, B., Pierre, J. & Sørensen, E. (2012). *Interactive governance, Advancing the Paradigm*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Turnhout, E., Van Bommel, S. & Aarts, N. (2010). *How participation creates citizens: participatory governance as performative practice*. *Ecology and Society*, 15:26.
- Van den Broek, A., Steenbekkers, A., van Houwelingen, P. & Putters, K. (2016). *Niet buiten de burger rekenen!* Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Van Rooy, P. (2011). *Uitnodigingsplanologie als sociaal-cultureel perspectief*. Building business. Amsterdam: Building Business Uitgeverij BV.
- VNG. (2018). *Local government in the Netherlands*. Association of Netherlands Municipalities. Retrieved from: <https://www.publieksdiensten.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/DENMARK-4-Local-Government-in-the-Netherlands.pdf>
- VNG. (2019). *Omgevingswet*. Retrieved from: <https://vng.nl/info-collegeonderhandelingen/omgevingswet>
- Weick, K. E. (1976). *Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems*. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21, pp. 1-21.
- Yin, R. (2009). *Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Topic list public sector

Thema	Subthema	Vragen
Inleiding	<i>Toestemming</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zelf voorstellen en toestemming vragen voor opname interview.</li> </ul>
Algemeen	<i>Afdeling en betrokkenheid bij de pilot</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Op welke afdeling bent u werkzaam en wat is uw functie?</li> <li>Kunt u misschien wat achtergrond informatie geven over de pilot?</li> <li>Hoe bent u betrokken geraakt bij de ontwikkeling van deze pilot?</li> <li>Wat was de voornaamste reden dat gemeente xxx wilt experimenteren met burgerparticipatie binnen de omgevingswet?</li> </ul>
Belang van participatie	<i>Introductie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burgerparticipatie wordt gezien als een containerbegrip, wat verstaat u eronder?</li> <li>Wat is volgens u het belang van burgerparticipatie bij de ontwikkeling van projecten?</li> </ul>
Actoren relaties en rollen	<i>Betrokkenheid en positie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wie is de initiatiefnemer/leider/bemiddelaar?</li> <li>Welke actoren zijn betrokken bij de pilot?</li> <li>Welke actoren binnen de gemeente doen mee? Is er sprake van een integrale aanpak?</li> <li>Is er sprake van vertrouwen tussen de verschillende actoren?</li> <li>Zijn alle betrokken actoren gelijk aan elkaar? (Machtsverdeling? Gelijk/ongelijk?)</li> <li>Willen burgers vooral zelf participeren of komt participatie door uitnodiging van de gemeente?</li> </ul>
Burgerparticipatie binnen de pilot/gemeente	<i>De pilot</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waarom heeft de gemeente xxx om dit project als pilot te gebruiken? Wat maakt het uniek?</li> <li>Hoe hebben jullie het participatietraject aangepakt binnen deze pilot?</li> <li>Wat ging er goed wat ging er minder goed?</li> <li>Zijn er verschillen in participatie bij de opstelling van een omgevingsvisie en een omgevingsplan?</li> </ul>
	<i>Verschil oude aanpak</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>De omgevingswet stimuleert participatie in een zo vroeg mogelijk stadium, nu met de ontwikkeling van deze omgevingsvisie/plan. Hoe vroeg beginnen jullie met participatie en wat is het verschil met de 'oude' aanpak?</li> <li>Ging het sneller?</li> </ul>
	<i>Betrokkenheid</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hoe hebben jullie bewoners en private partijen benaderd bij de pilot of wat is het plan?</li> <li>Is het lastig om bewoners te betrekken bij een omgevingsvisie/plan?</li> <li>Was er een breed scala aan participanten? Waren er ook jongeren aanwezig? En hoe probeert de gemeente een breed scala aan participanten te krijgen?</li> <li>Ik kan met voorstellen dat het lastig is om de betrokkenheid van stakeholders gedurende het hele traject vast te houden, hoe zijn jullie hiermee omgegaan?</li> <li>Hoe beoordeelt de gemeente wanneer er voldoende geparticipeerd is?</li> <li>Wanneer is participatie succesvol?</li> <li>Wat was de rol van de burger? In hoeverre hebben de burgers invloed op uitkomsten van planprocessen? (Informerende/raadgevend/adviseerend/coproducerend/</li> </ul>

		meebeslissen?
	<i>Gebrek aan richtlijnen voor participatie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De omgevingswet levert geen richtlijnen aan participatie trajecten omdat elk project uniek is en een andere aanpak vereist, bent u het hiermee eens?</li> <li>• Wilt de gemeente uiteindelijk een standaard participatietraject maken voor bepaalde projecten of ieder project afzonderlijk aanpakken?</li> </ul>
<b>Participatie methoden</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welke methoden van participatie hebben jullie gebruikt? Informatieavonden? Workshops? Locatiebezoek? Digitaal platform? Social media?</li> <li>• Heeft dit geleid tot nuttige input van bewoners, wat hebben jullie uiteindelijk met deze input gedaan?</li> </ul>
<b>Relatie tussen Overheid, burger en bedrijven (Government → governance)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De omgevingswet spreekt van een 80% cultuuromslag en 20% verandering in wetgeving. Hoe verandert de aanpak voor gemeenten?</li> <li>• Denkt u dat de omgevingswet invloed heeft op de relatie tussen overheid, de burger en bedrijven?</li> <li>• Wat kan er veranderen of wat heeft u nu al gemerkt vanuit de pilot?</li> <li>• Maakt men ook gebruik van uitnodigingsplanologie? En Hoe?</li> </ul>
<b>Faal- en succesfactoren</b>	<i>Draagvlak</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bent u bang dat participatie binnen de omgevingswet oplossing moet bieden voor alle problemen? Dat er teveel geparticipeerd gaat worden?</li> <li>• Wat is voor de gemeente belangrijker, inhoudelijk- of procesmatig draagvlak? Hoe denkt u dat dit bij de burger ligt? Wat wordt gezien als de doorslaggevende factor?</li> </ul>
	<i>Voor- en nadelen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wat zijn voordelen en vooral kansen die de omgevingswet biedt voor burgerparticipatie?</li> <li>• En wat zijn risico's of problemen die de omgevingswet brengt voor burgerparticipatie?</li> </ul>
<b>Afsluiten</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nog andere relevante zaken?</li> <li>• Snowballing respondents</li> <li>• Vermelden dat namen niet gebruikt worden</li> <li>• Het delen van het eindrapport</li> <li>• Bedanken</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Topic list civil society

Thema	Subthema	Vragen
<b>Inleiding</b>	<i>Toestemming</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zelf voorstellen en toestemming vragen voor opname interview.</li> </ul>
<b>Algemeen</b>	<i>Introductie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hoe bent u betrokken bij de pilot?</li> <li>Wat is de rol van de burger/ het buurtkader binnen deze pilot?</li> <li>Wat speelt er in deze wijk? Zijn er veel problemen of heerst er tevredenheid?</li> </ul>
<b>Belang van participatie</b>	<i>Belang</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vindt u het belangrijk dat burgers betrokken worden bij de pilot en waarom?</li> <li>Participeert u vaker bij projecten? Hoe ervaart u dat?</li> </ul>
<b>Actoren relaties en rollen</b>	<i>Betrokkenheid en positie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wie is de initiatiefnemer?</li> <li>Wat is de rol van u als burger? (Informeren/raadplegen/adviseren/coproduceren/meebeslissen?)</li> <li>Welke actoren zijn betrokken bij de pilot?</li> <li>Hoe ervaart u de relatie tussen burgers en de gemeente?</li> <li>Is er sprake van vertrouwen tussen de verschillende actoren?</li> <li>Zijn alle betrokken actoren gelijk aan elkaar?</li> <li>Willen burgers vooral zelf participeren of komt participatie vooral door uitnodiging van de gemeente?</li> </ul>
<b>Participatietraject</b>	<i>Verschillen, inhoud &amp; proces</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hoe is het participatietraject verlopen binnen de pilot? Kunt u dat beschrijven?</li> <li>Merkt u dat het traject verschilt met andere projecten waaraan u heeft deelgenomen?</li> <li>Vindt u dat de gemeente teveel jargon gebruikt?</li> <li>Vindt u dat de gemeente vroeg genoeg het contact met de buurt heeft opgezocht? En voldoende terugkoppelt richting bewoners?</li> <li>Heeft u het idee dat er daadwerkelijk iets met de input van burgers gedaan wordt?</li> <li>Wat vindt u belangrijker? Dat het participatieproces goed verloopt? Of dat er een eindresultaat ligt waar u tevreden over bent?</li> </ul>
<b>Methoden</b>	<i>Bereiken &amp; variatie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hoe heeft de gemeente de burger bereikt om deel te nemen aan de pilot?</li> <li>Welke methoden van participatie zijn toegepast? Informatieavonden? Workshops? Locatiebezoek? Digitaal platform? Social media?</li> <li>Hoe heeft u die methoden ervaren? Was het effectief?</li> <li>Merkt u dat veel mensen vanuit de buurt betrokken zijn bij de pilot of is dat een bepaalde groep? Is er een breed scala aan participanten?</li> </ul>
<b>Concluderende vragen &amp; Afsluiten</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wanneer is participatie voor u succesvol?</li> <li>Wat zou u als bewoner/buurtkader graag verbeterd zien worden op het gebied van participatie? Of wat ging juist heel goed?</li> <li>Heeft u het gevoel dat jullie als burgers/buurtkader dichter bij de overheid staan bij deze pilot?</li> <li>Heeft u nog tips om participatie te verbeteren?</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Coding scheme interviews

Category	Code	Description
The pilot (PIL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involvement</li> <li>- Reason for the pilot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The involvement of the respondent in the pilot</li> <li>- Reasons why this area has been chosen</li> </ul>
Citizen participation (CP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Process &amp; Content</li> <li>- Importance of CP</li> <li>- Willingness to participate</li> <li>- Successfulness of CP</li> <li>- Bottom-up</li> <li>- Representativeness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valuing process-oriented and content-oriented support in participation</li> <li>- Valuing the importance of CP in planning processes</li> <li>- The willingness of citizens to participate in the planning process</li> <li>- Factors that determine the success of CP</li> <li>- Initiates coming from bottom-up in the planning process</li> <li>- Representativeness of citizens in the planning process</li> </ul>
Stakeholder roles & relations (SRR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relation between stakeholders</li> <li>- Role of stakeholder</li> <li>- Position/power of stakeholder</li> <li>- type of stakeholder</li> <li>- Trust</li> <li>- Equality between stakeholders</li> <li>- Responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationship between stakeholders in the planning process</li> <li>- Role of the stakeholder in the planning process (e.g. facilitating role)</li> <li>- The position and power of stakeholders in the planning process</li> <li>- Type of involved stakeholders (e.g. municipalities, citizens etc.)</li> <li>- Level of trust or distrust between stakeholders</li> <li>- Distribution of equal roles in the planning process</li> <li>- Distribution of responsibility in the planning process</li> </ul>
Design of participation process (DPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approach to CP</li> <li>- Differences with old approach</li> <li>- Speed (Informal/formal)</li> <li>- Used &amp; new methods</li> <li>- Citizen input</li> <li>- Fail &amp; success factors</li> <li>- Intern → Extern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the approach towards CP in the environmental plan/vision</li> <li>- How does this approach to CP differ from the old approach</li> <li>- Extent to which there is an increase or decrease to the speed</li> <li>- Use of classic or new methods of CP</li> <li>- Valuing and using the input of citizens</li> <li>- Fail &amp; success factors to the participation process</li> <li>- Extent to which the initiator starts internally before going externally</li> </ul>
Involvement of citizens (IC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Variety of participants</li> <li>- Involvement throughout process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extent to which a variety of participants was apparent in the process</li> <li>- Extent to which citizens were involved throughout the entire process</li> </ul>
EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of guidelines</li> <li>- Flexibility</li> <li>- Creating standard participation process</li> <li>- 80/20 (Culture change &amp; legislation)</li> <li>- Open end</li> <li>- Framework</li> <li>- Transparency</li> <li>- Tailor-made solutions</li> <li>- Opportunities for CP</li> <li>- Risks for CP</li> <li>- Integral approach</li> <li>- Jargon</li> <li>- Scale of plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valuing the importance of lack of guidelines for the planning process</li> <li>- Extent to which flexibility is used in the planning process</li> <li>- The possibility to create a standard participation process</li> <li>- Extent to which respondents value the importance of culture change compared to the change in legislation</li> <li>- The importance of an open end in planning processes</li> <li>- The use or lack of use of a framework in the planning process</li> <li>- Extent to which stakeholders were transparent to each other</li> <li>- The need for tailor-made solutions in the EPA</li> <li>- Opportunities for CP in the new law</li> <li>- Risks for CP in the new law</li> <li>- Extent to which an integral approach was used and the importance of it</li> <li>- Extent to which jargon was used in the planning process</li> <li>- Description of the scale of the plan</li> </ul>
Government → governance (GG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationship between citizens, government &amp; private sector</li> <li>- Changing role of the government</li> <li>- Changing role of the citizens</li> <li>- Invitation planning (Planning systems)</li> <li>- Decentralization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extent to which the gap between state, civil society and the market reduces</li> <li>- Extent to which to government is making use of their new roles</li> <li>- Extent to which citizens are used to their new roles</li> <li>- The use of invitation planning in the experiment or area</li> <li>- The extent to how much is being delegated towards the municipal level</li> </ul>