PUBLIC PARTICIPATION UNDERSTAND-ING AND PRACTICES: THE CASES OF BREMEN AND GDYNIA

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AFFIDAVIT

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable development is modifying how governments govern since they look for new ways to achieve sustainability in a more participatory manner by involving citizens and incorporating their thinking into the planning and implementation of policies. This new approach rethinks and reshapes traditional representative democratic modes of government and citizens relations for new, complementary and more participatory methods of interaction between governments and citizens, thus creating new democratic and participatory governance approaches for policy making. This study aims to explore and analyze public participation understanding and practices by city and government officials in an effort to complement the existing literature with empirical public participation material and provide valuable information to enhance the exercise of participation by government officials, who are planning, implementing and evaluating policies in favor of sustainable development. A qualitative research approach is employed in this study. The research is designed as a case study, involving in-depth empirical investigation of public participation as a contemporary phenomenon in specifically the German city of Bremen and the Polish city of Gdynia using interviews as primary data collection method.

This study concludes that participation should be understood as a process that allows all citizens to be deeply involved and be engaged as partners on regular basis, via democratic governance mechanisms that permit them to influence decision and policy making on matters that affect them. It also recommends deepening the understanding that participation exceeds developing quality and effective policies since it supports legitimation of government, enhances democracy, contributes to good governance principles practices and assists in the formation of social cohesion and social capital; all conditions that work in favor of sustainable development.

Additionally, for the practice of public participation, this study concludes that a fair, inclusive and democratic approach it is necessary in order to build and develop a sense of community that surpasses individual interests in favor of a common wellbeing and culture and habit of participation. Finally, it also concludes and recommends that the employment of participation taxonomies, which are useful guidelines in the practice of participation, need to be complemented with other essential dimensions that capture the human nature of the social phenomenon of participation in order to promote the emergence of participatory governance and thus sustainable deveopment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BUSTRIP - Baltic Urban Transport Implementation and Planning

BYPAD - Bicycle Policy Audit

CIVITAS - City, Vitality and Sustainability

DYN@MO - DYNamic citizens @ctive for sustainable Mobility

EU – European Union

ICT - information and communication technology

IFSTTAR - French Institute of Science and Technology for Transport, Development and Networks

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations

OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SUMP - Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

SUTP - Sustainable Urban Transport Project

TELLUS - Transport and Environment Alliance for Urban Sustainability

UN - United Nations

VIVALDI - Visionary and Vibrant Actions through Local Transport Demonstration Initiatives

WCED - The World Commission on Environment and Development

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and background

Sustainable development requires new patterns of behaviour based on new attitudes and social values in order to face environmental, social and economic challenges. In this sense, sustainable development is changing the roles and responsibilities of governments and citizens and demands a more "people-centred approach" (Bass et al., 1995) in policy making in order to find a way to work the trade-offs among environmental, social and economic needs.

Academics and experts agree that sustainable development requires a multidisciplinary approach. Science-based methods are assisting with the technical analysis of current challenges but the decisions about environmental, social and economic trade-offs require "value judgments" (Bass, et al., 1995). Many governments have recognized this situation and have started to introduce elements of participation in governance. The transition to sustainable development needs to capture values, ideas and perspectives from a wide range of actors in order to gather more information to make better decisions and to elaborate sound and realistic policies that would be accepted for longer periods by everyone affected.

The relationship between sustainable development and public participation is well recognized. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) already recognized on its report "Our Common Future", better known as the Brundtland Report, in 1987 the essential role that participation would play in the path for sustainable development (WCED, 1987). As a result of the United Nations (UN) conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 stated that the way to sustainable development should incorporate the "widest possible participation" (UNCED, 1992). The European conference in Aalborg in 1994 was a milestone road of public participation and sustainable development, where the signatory States committed themselves to develop long-term plans of action involving a large number of citizens (Aalborg Charter, 1994). Then in 1998, the Aarhus Convention began to regulate the right to access environmental information and right to participate in environmental decisions and policy making (European Commission, 1998). By 2001, the White Paper on European Governance formulated general principles for good governance, which emphasized citizens' participation in policy planning and implementation (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). Finally, in June 2012 at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, UN Member States adopted "The Future We Want", an outcome document, which reaffirmed that broad participation and access to information is essential to the promotion of sustainable development (UNCSD, 2012).

Sustainable development views are changing citizens' attitudes about matters that affect them. Citizens are more aware, outspoken and better prepared for discussing and interacting with government policies, programs and measures that affect their lives (Gramberger 2001) ; (Prolia 2011). Thus, citizens are demanding more information, deep and sincere dialogue and insisting on more open modes of involvement and engagement in policy making (Rodrigo & Amo, 2006). Governments have come to realize that a new mode of governing is necessary.

Sustainable development is changing and reshaping the political climate in order to find ways to achieve sustainability in a more participatory manner, involving citizens and incorporating their thinking into the planning and implementation of policies. This new setting has unprecedented effects on how governments govern, rethinking and reshaping traditional representative democratic modes of government and citizens relations, and searching for new, complementary and more participatory methods of interaction between governments and citizens, thus creating new democratic and participatory governance approaches for policy making.

Sustainable development stresses the involvement and engagement of citizens in decision and policy making, thus a government system should provide reasonable opportunities as well as a setting and framework for making significant advancement towards participation. It is sometimes held that a democratic system is needed for real participation to develop (Bass, et al., 1995).

A democratic system rests on the consent of citizens (Prolia, 2011). In order to guarantee this consent, representative democracy bases itself on traditional and formal rules and principles, such as elections. Additionally, a democratic system is also based on on-going government and citizen interaction in between elections (Prolia, 2011). These two modes of interaction are the ones that sustainable development is interested in. They incorporate citizens' thinking on a steadier basis and with wider consensus and support for making sustainable policies, programs and measures capable of overcoming environmental, economic and social challenges.

Recently, citizens have become disengaged from government via those formal and traditional channels of interaction due to the notion that government is bureaucratic, inefficient and lacking in principles (Brodie et al., 2009) along with the feeling that citizens' influence through the representative mechanisms of voting in policy making is declining (Gramberger, 2001). As a consequence, and especially in Western democracies, citizens have been going in fewer numbers to cast their votes and political party membership has also been falling (Brodie et al., 2009). Some authors define the above situation as "democratic deficit" (Gramberger 2001) ; (Brodie et al., 2009).

In general, democratic deficit reduces citizens' trust in government as well as government's legitimacy and efficacy, which creates difficulties to ensure effective policy making and implementation, weakening democracy. Furthermore, citizens have lost faith that their opinions and

ideas would be taken seriously and considered, diminishing participation and deteriorating government-citizen relations. Given this scenario, and in seeking to strengthen its relations with citizens, enhancing meaningful public participation via new and less traditional participatory approaches has become a priority for governments. These new ways of government-citizen relation and interactions are the focus of this study.

Processing towards sustainable development with more knowledgeable and demanding citizens, with democratic deficit and in a complex and interrelated world is a tremendous challenge. Governments are working to create and enhance new and complementary participatory methods of relation and interaction by increasing public participation. But although participation is widely and normatively known as an essential component for sustainable development and democracy there is less agreement about what it means in practice and how to achieve it. This is the focus of this study. It examines and analyses current understanding and practices of participation in order to provide empirical evidence for public participation towards sustainable development policy making.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

There is extensive theoretical and conceptual literature about public participation, but less about empirical evidence. Therefore, in order to contribute to this shortcoming and with the desire to provide governments with valuable material about public participation and its relation to sustainable development, a deeper look to governments' experience in public participation is needed. This will assist in strengthening government-citizen relations and help them to develop a governance participatory approach by employing efficacy and sustainable participation tools and activities for facing the current environmental, social and economic challenges and in support of sustainable development. Thus, the exploratory and assessment purposes of this study will be to answer the following main research question:

How do cities and government officials understand and practice public participation in pursuance of developing sound and sustainable policies, programs and measures?

People define public participation differently. Each definition establishes a perception about relations, interactions and influences in decision and policymaking and outlines the actions that would follow. Additionally, there are a variety of approaches, activities and tools to be employed by governments in order to involve and engage citizens in decision and policy making. Each one of these approaches has different objectives and contemplates different levels and types of public participation. In exploring and analysing current public participation understanding and practices, this study is performing a deep assessment about how government officials are defining and exercising, and therefore experiencing, public participation in their attempt to develop sound and sustainable urban mobility policies by categorizing and classify-

ing views and definitions and outlining the current trends in participatory approaches, activities and tools in reference to each level and type of participation.

In order to provide empirical evidence about public participation it is imperative to review how governments and citizens interact and relate not only via public participation activities and tools but also by picturing other factors that might affect the way public participation is exercised. This study is also looking to identify and assess these factors in order to provide a more comprehensive approach about public participation and offer to governments other dimensions for enhancing their relationship with citizens in order to prescribe quality, efficacy and durable policies, programs and measures in favor of sustainable development.

1.3 Structure of the study

This study consists of five main chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction and overview about public participation and its relation to sustainable development and democratic practices with the objective to provide a context about the importance of public participation and the challenges that governments are facing in the practices of participation.

The second chapter offers an extensive theoretical investigation of public participation including public participation definitions, characteristics, typologies, dynamics and process, enables and drivers as well as barriers to citizens involvement. The chapter concludes with an explanation of why participation is desirable and works in favor of sustainable development.

The third chapter outlines the methodology used in this study, which includes the description of the research approach and design; the instruments that were used to collect primary and secondary data; and concludes with an explanation of how a framework for analysis was created and how it was used for processing and assessing information.

Chapters four and five are dedicated to presentation of the analysis and results of the exploration and assessment of public participation understanding and practices in cities by government officials in the German city of Bremen and the Polish city of Gdynia.

Chapter six provides a comparison of the above case studies for a deeper understanding of citizens' participation.

Finally, this study ends with a chapter describing the main conclusions and recommendations followed by a section that enumerates and describes limitations encountered in the elaboration of the study.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to summarize the variety of ideas and current theoretical contributions about public participation. First, a theoretical framework is considered with the objective of situating the reader in the context where participation is exercised. Then, the chapter provides a definition for participation in order to differentiate between public participation, social and individual participation. This differentiation is necessary since the focus of this study is in public participation. The chapter continues with the identification of the actors that take part in participation and also provides a deep description and explanation of how participation can be classified by making emphasis in two participation typologies: the Sherry Arnstein's ladder of citizens' participation and the participation typology developed and applied by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This latest taxonomy would be employed with the objective to classify understanding and practices of participation. Then, an explanation of the different dimensions of the participation process is provided. Additionally, drivers and enablers in favor of citizens' involvement and engagement as well as barriers to the exercising of participation are listed and briefly explained. The chapter finalizes with enumerating the reasons for the practices of participation.

2.2 Theoretical framework

In a representative democratic system, government and citizens relate and interact by representative formal and traditional rules and principles, such as voting, congressional hearings and political party memberships among others. Through these modes of government-citizen interaction, citizens transfer their ideas, values, opinions and preferences to policy makers (Bevir, 2009). Lately, these forms of relation and interaction have been deteriorating due in part to dissatisfaction of citizens about how government officials have been representing them in policy making, thus weakening the democratic principles of legitimation and accountability. As a consequence, citizens' belief and trust in their government decreases, which translates to a reduction in the numbers of citizens that participate via traditional representative democratic modes of interaction, such as voting, giving space for democratic deficit to appear.

On the basis of the above situation and with the appearance of increasingly complex environmental, social and economic challenges that demand the designing and implementation of new policies, governments are looking, creating and employing new, complementary and more direct participatory forms of interacting and relating to citizens in order to find agreements and cooperation across multiple levels, along different actors and on a regular basis. For

a government to accomplish this, it is necessary to enhance and broaden public participation definition and practices, thus creating a new approach of governance.

The figure 2-1 below shows the key concepts of this study. This figure is based on government-citizen relations and current context and recalls that this study is attempting to understand how public participation works in practice, exploring and analysing the experience of governments with these new and complementary forms of relation and interaction with citizens, outlining a new way of making policy and governing.

FIGURE 2-1: ILLUSTRATION OF KEY CONCEPTS AND RELATIONS
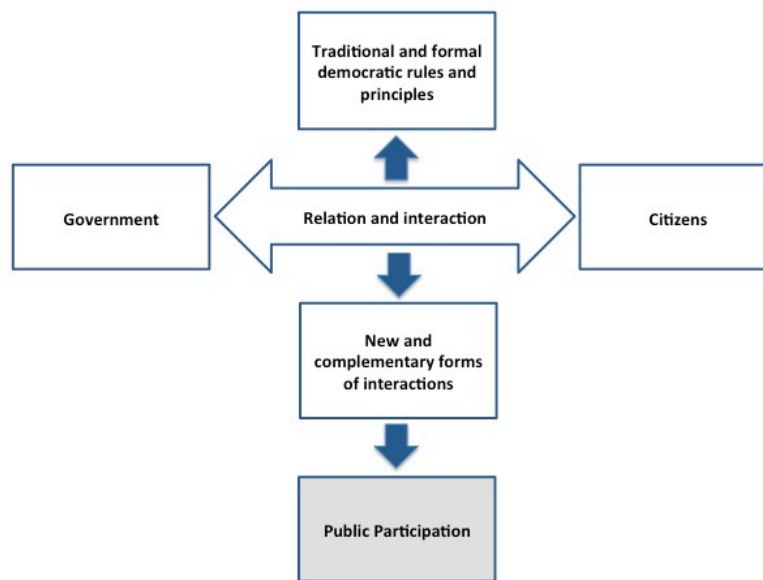
2.3 Definition of participation

Looking for a unanimous definition of participation is challenging and the literature is filled with discrepancies. Therefore, diverse concepts of participation can be identified. In a very broad sense, and based on the Webster dictionary (Participation, 2015), participation can be defined as "the act of participating" meaning "to be involved with others doing something"; "to take part in an activity or event with others". Therefore participation is widely defined by the nature of the relationship and the purpose of the activities between people involved, taking different forms depending on the context and the actors where the relation and events take place.

2.3.1 Public Participation

Brodie et al., (2009) stated that participation could be defined by public, social and individual activities. They defined public participation as interactions between citizens and the various

structures and institutions of democracy in order to express their opinions about subjects that concern them; giving citizens the right to affect decisions and enhance representation; and increasing the efficiency of government services. Specifically, public participation refers to those activities that have the intent of influencing policymaking. In the literature, public participation is also referred to as political, civic, vertical participation and/or participatory governance. Examples of public participation are voting, political parties, taking part in a government survey, focus groups and citizens' fora among many more.

In a representative democracy public participation rests on a set of formal and traditional rules and principles such as elections. But lately more attention has been given to the expansion and complement of these modes of government-citizen interaction in policy making and implementation as well as in good governance with more direct and continuous modes of relations "through which citizens may influence governments and hold them accountable" (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999). These new modes of participation place emphasis on "the importance of on-going dialogue between citizens and the State" (Baker, 2006). These modes of government-citizen interactions are also called public participation and are the focus of this study.

The traditional and formal public participation activities are mandatory. Legal regulations rigorously set actors, rights, procedures and structures. On the contrary, the recent and less traditional public participation activities are not tightly regulated, allowing for a more flexible structure and procedures. These activities are voluntary and the "central principle is tackling the problems together" (Arbter et al., 2007).

The definition of public participation presented here provides a government's perspective, focusing on the direction and flow of interactions and communication, where citizens react to government proposals and where governments must be able to react to what people want within the prevailing political, social and economic conditions. Here, governments maintain the right, power and duty to make final decisions. This instrumental view of participation emphasizes the efficacy of policies rather than on the empowerment of individuals and/or communities (Cleaver, 2004) ; (Elliot et al., 2005).

This study refers mainly to public participation and thus presents a government perspective. It is the government who creates the spaces for participation, approaches and tools and it is the government who sees itself as a participation enabler. But also it is the government who is presented with the difficult task of balancing participation since although participation is important and its nature is changing, citizens do not need to be involved in every decision making process or in every phase of the policy cycle (Elliot et al., 2005).

2.3.2   Social and individual participation

When government and citizens interact, they relate in a series of activities whose boundaries are blurred with other definitions of participation due to the "fluid and dynamic relationship

between them" (Brodie et al., 2009). Thus, for a more comprehensive understanding of public participation it is imperative to define social and individual participation.

Social participation, also known as community, civil and horizontal participation, is defined by Brodie et al. (2009) as collective activities where citizens join as part of a broader group. It may include activities in cultural, leisure and social groups (Jochum V. , 2003). Citizens choose to socially participate for diverse reasons that may be related or not with government institutions or the process of governance. Citizens could socially participate motivated by their values and beliefs; their community feeling; or by desire of friendship and coexistence (Jochum et al., 2005). Examples of social participation are trade unions, neighbourhood associations, church charity associations and volunteering in community organizations.

Individual participation refers to the activities, choices and actions that each citizen make on a daily basis and are based on an individual's values, experiences, opinions and views about the type of society they want to live in (Brodie et al., 2009). Citizens can individually participate, for example, as environmentalists, feminists, anti-racism activists and by religious beliefs. Recycling, using green energy, buying food from farmers markets, donating money to charities are some activities related to individual participation.

The three meanings of participation outlined here present different dimensions about interactions, relations, and activities but also offer different views about structures, institutions and actors.

2.4 Actors in participation

Until now this study has made reference to government and citizens as actors that relate and interact by traditional and complementary ways. Specifically this study defines government as the group of city officials in charge of planning, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and measures. This view of government provides a more local than national or regional level definition of governance. City officials often are not responsible for making the final decisions about which policy is to be implemented, on the contrary they offer to politicians and high-ranking government leaders fundamental information for delineating and defining those policies. City officials are in charge of designing, implementing and managing participation activities and they have closer contact with citizens through participatory approaches. In order to expand this picture it is necessary to review who the citizens are and how they could be classified.

Generally, citizens encompass a wide range of categories: voters, community, public, individuals, neighbours, consumers, partners and stakeholders. But Campbell & Marshall (2000) stated that every term conveys different meanings based upon the role of citizens in relation to decision-making. For example, the term citizens as voters is linked with the concept of democracy, and citizens as consumers, or customers, of public services (Agger, 2008).

One special citizen category, which often has a distinctive place in participation, is the stakeholders. When citizens have a direct interest in the issue being discussed, they are called stakeholders (Gramberger, 2001). Stakeholder encompasses those actors, individual, group or organization, which actively choose to involve themselves in a particular issue because they have an interest or concern over what is in discussion and are affected by, or able to affect a decision. Stakeholders include both private and public actors and sometimes apply to more diffuse societal categories defined by geography, gender, age, ethnicity or culture (Leach, 2006). General public, businesses, public authorities, experts and special interest groups are examples of stakeholders (Auwerx et al., 2011).

This study uses the term 'citizens' as a broad group of civil society actors who interact and relate with the government through public participation activities with the objective to provide the government with their ideas, perspectives and opinions for policy making. It is this definition of citizens that transform them from "demanding consumers of public services" to "responsible co-producers of public governance" (Agger, 2008) and gathers them in networks in order to be informed, consulted or actively invited to participate in policy issues. The term citizens stated like this, encompasses the special category of stakeholder.

Defining actors in terms of a unified category of citizens does not mean that this study recognizes citizens as a homogeneous group. On the contrary, the author is aware that differences exist, especially in the way they participate upon the influence they have in policy making. The objective is to visualize two general and broad groups of actors, government and citizens who interact by participatory governance activities and tools.

The heterogeneous nature of citizens should be taken into consideration by governments when participation activities are planned. Agger (2008) advises policy makers to reflect on how their participatory activities could, explicitly or implicitly, exclude certain groups. At the end it is the institutional design of the participatory process, as well as the choices of activities and tools, which are critical in shaping the nature of the process and "their overall inclusiveness and representativeness" (Gastil & Levine, 2005). For example, Wates (2000) recommends to government officials to include a mix of different backgrounds, age, culture, gender, etc. in order to enrich the results of the participation process with the diversity of opinions and ideas.

Citizens are very diverse and participate in various ways. Brodie et al., (2009) indicated that citizens can be classified by the diversity of activities they are involved in, by the intensity or depth of their participation in those activities and by the citizen's own preferences and interests. For example, the widely known civic voluntarism model, that has its origin in the empirical work of Verba and Nie in 1972, classifies citizens on the basis of their participation activities (Brodie et al., 2009).

2.5   Classification of participation

There are many and different typologies and criteria for classifying participation, such as ladder models, the wheel model, deliberative practices model and the target-centric approach (Garau, 2012) among many more. They explore different and yet complementary issues about participation, overlapping in their understanding of depth, scope and diversity of participatory activities and techniques. Most of these typologies contain implicit normative suppositions that place participation activities along an axis of good to bad participation (Cornwall, 2008).

2.5.1   Sherry R. Arnstein's ladder of citizens' participation (1969)

An obligatory reference in the literature of participatory typologies is Sherry Arnstein's ladder of citizens' participation. Participation practitioners have been using Arnstein's ladder as a normative reference for not only categorizing participation but also as a basis for developing their own classification criteria. Examples of these are the typologies developed by David Wilcox (1994), Jules Pretty (1995), Sarah White (1996), the International Association for Public Participation (2000) and the OECD (2001) among many more. The OECD typology would be later employed by this study for not only classifying but also for describing and analysing public participation in the cities of Bremen and Gdynia.

Since Arnstein's ladder served as a basis for the OECD typology, a description of the former one is important in order to expose the rationale behind OECD's public participation classification.

Arnstein defines participation as "citizens power" (Arnstein, 1969). For her, participation is the process by which redistribution of power from power holders to powerless, from the government to the governed, takes place, enabling citizens to contribute and be included in the discussion of goals, plans, programs, policies, and measures that affect them. Participation permits citizens to induce significant reforms, which allows them to share in the benefits of the affluent society (Arnstein, 1969).

Arnstein used a ladder and its rungs as hierarchical illustration for classifying levels of participation. Each rung corresponds to a participation type. Citizens' participation is increased by climbing the ladder. The ladder starts from citizens totally excluded from policy making to a significant increase in policymaking responsibilities. She categorized participation in eight types and organized them in patterns by three main categories following an ascending order: nonparticipation, tokenism and citizen power.

Rungs one and two are included in the lowest nonparticipation level. In here government pretends to "educate, persuade and advise" (Arnstein, 1969) the citizens with the deliberative objective of making them believe that they are participating. In this level, participation is classified in manipulation and therapy and government avoids any distribution of power.

After nonparticipation comes the intermediate tokenism category. At rungs three, four and five (informing, consulting and placation) government allows citizens "to hear and to have a voice" (Arnstein, 1969). In this level, some "aspects of dialogue are introduced which let citizens be heard but cannot ensure that their considerations will be carefully examined by the local government" (Garau, 2012). At tokenism, citizens do not have the necessary strength to influence and/or induce any change in policy making. It is worth noting that most of the current governments' participation efforts are located in this category.

The highest category in Arnstein's ladder of citizens' participation is the "citizens power". It is only here where power is progressively distributed from government to the governed in policy making. At this level, participation really begins since citizens are able to "negotiate and engage in trade-offs" (Arnstein, 1969) with government officials by partnership, delegating power and citizens control rungs. For Arnstein, it is only on rungs seven (delegating) and eight (citizens control) where citizens are able to "obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or have full managerial power" assuring answers and actions to their needs and responsiveness to their priorities.

Although Arnstein's ladder is well known and commonly used, Cornwall and Gaventa (2001) argue that much of what claims to be public participation nowadays, she locates at the bottom of the ladder. Other limitations for this lineal hierarchical model are discussed below.

- The ladder takes into consideration and measures only one dimension, the power distribution between government and the governed in the policy making process. It fails to notice other elements, like the "dynamics and evolutionary nature of user involvement" (Brodie et al., 2009) and does not recognize the different ways and motivations of involvements. For example, the ladder does not acknowledge that some citizens may not wish to be involved.

- Brodie et al., (2009) mention the non-adaptive nature of the ladder in the face of complex situations due to its exclusively power distribution vision of participation. Cornwall (2008) suggests that a more holistic approach is needed taking into consideration the context, the issues in question and the nature of the participants.

- There is not a clear line that divides the government from the citizens. This is an over-simplification of the reality where many groups exist with competing interests.

- Arnstein (1969) acknowledges the existence of real participation barriers from the citizens and as well as from the government side but her ladder does not take them into consideration. For example, racism, paternalism and resistance to power distribution exist from the government side. On the citizens' side, Arnstein mentions "the inadequacies of communities' political socioeconomic infrastructure and knowledge base" and efforts to obtain an organized, representative and responsible citizens' group.

- The ladder is an oversimplification of reality with only eight distinctive types of participation. Certainly many more rungs exist and their boundaries are not as straightforward as Arnstein exposes.

Because of the above limitations and in order to attain a less normative approach for classifying participation, many authors have decided not to follow the basis of the Arnstein ladder and therefore have developed their own participation typologies based on other criteria. Examples of these are Desmond M. Connor (1988), Farrington and Bebbington (1993), Wiedemann and Femers (1993), and more recently Archon Fung (2006) among others.

There is not a unique and one fits-all participation typology. It is the responsibility of the researcher and/or practitioner to carefully define and adapt types, levels, categories, degrees, scope and depth of participation into their work. This study will take as reference the OECD participatory model for classifying participation understanding and practices in the cities of Bremen, Germany and Gdynia, Poland.

2.5.2   OECD typology for participation (2001)

The OECD in its Handbook: "Citizens as Partners classifies public participation in activities of information, consultation and active participation". While this typology could be considered as a variation of the linear and hierarchical participation ladder of Arnstein, it differs, as figure 2-2 illustrates, not only by the types of participation but also by how participation is understood and conceived. OECD's typology is trying to capture the new nature of the relations and interactions among governments and citizens, which demands more dynamic and complementary modes of public participation.

FIGURE 2-2: COMPARISON BETWEEN SHERRY ARNSTEIN'S LADDER OF CITIZENS PARTICIPATION AND OECD'S TYPOLOGY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
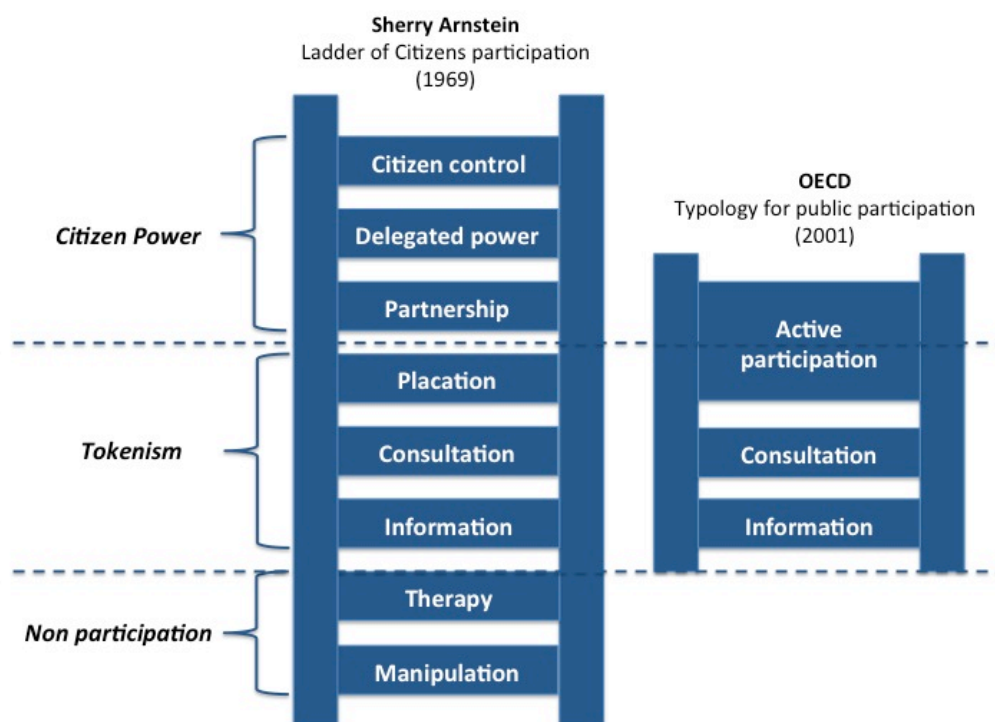
SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM ARNSTEIN (1969) AND GRAMBERGER (2001)

The OECD typology for participation emphasizes the quality of discussion and deliberation of the process more than the aggregation of power to citizens, like Arnstein's ladder. Additionally, the OECD typology focuses on the appropriateness of the context in order to provide participatory tools for each situation, actor and policy objective.

As OECD's typology moves from activities of informing, consulting and active participation, the depth and quality of participation is increased and the involvement and engagement of citizens in decision and policymaking rises. When engaging in these activities "governments do not give up their right and duty to make policy and decisions, instead, they introduce new ways of exercising it" (Gramberger, 2001). As a consequence, the new modes of interaction support, complement and strengthen the democratic process and institutions and redefine the way government governs, thus outlining new forms for participatory governance.

Although informing, consulting and active participation have their own definitions, mechanisms, characteristics and purpose, they are not mutually exclusive. Each policy, regulation, program and other measure requires different types, depth and scope of interaction between government and citizens. This is related to the nature of the issue being discussed, the resources available for the interaction, the public to be engaged and the time in the policy cycle where participation activates are introduced.

By defining public participation activities in this way, the OECD typology attempts to build a

breach between government and citizens by informing, consulting and active participation activities. Because of the importance of this typology for this study, a detailed explanation about these three types of participation as well as their tools is found below.

- Information: by informing, government creates a unidirectional relation with citizens thus disseminating and communicating information. In this type of interaction the information flows from the government to the public, who is a passive actor, a "consumer of government information" (Rodrigo & Amo, 2006). Information constitutes the basis for government-citizen interaction and builds the foundation for consulting and active participation activities.

The Public Participation Guide of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (2008) stated that using information alone, without consultation and active participation activities, does not constitute public participation. Information provides the opportunity for distributing, sharing and gathering valuable information as well as raising awareness and understanding, which are necessary and constitute the basis for providing a meaningful opportunity to participate.

Based upon the OECD participation handbook, information activities can be characterized by approach and by channel of distribution. In this sense, government can actively take the initiative and reach out to the citizens with information and/or can passively provide and distribute information. Also, it can make use of controlled and direct and independent and indirect tools for delivering information. Currently, governments are giving special attention to information and communication technology (ICT) tools for information dissemination. The table 2-1 below offers a summary of information tools and activities included in the OECD typology.

TABLE 2-1: INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES

Active Approach	• Official documents: publishing official documents by its own initiative. • Preparatory policy and legal papers: preparing and publishing draft and working papers for letting citizens know about the status for example of a regulation or law. • Reports: publishing reports in order to inform about for example the results of policies, overview of government's activities, etc. • Printed materials: offering handbooks, guides, brochures, pamphlets and posters with the objective of delivering information in an accessible and understandable language to citizens. The use of graphs, cartoons, and diagrams is very useful and common. • Audiotapes, films and games are used for presenting information in a friendly manner. Tools like videos and games are helpful for reaching and attracting youngsters.
Passive	• Interfaces for citizens' access: Using postal mail or electronic

Approach	mail to send requested information.
	• Internal information management: for internally identifying and locating requested information. For example, databases.
	• Catalogues, registers and indexes: for finding information easily by the public.
	• Questions and answers: giving answers to questions requested by citizens.
Controlled and direct channels	• Statements, briefings, presentations and speeches.
	• Direct mailing.
	• Telephone services and hotlines.
	• Information centers and kiosks, field offices and information stands.
	• Government's own events, like conferences, exhibitions, community fairs, symposiums, expert panels and open houses.
	• Advertising: The space can be used on all kinds of mass media, like billboards, newspapers, radio, television, the Internet or social media.
Independent and indirect channels	• Print and electronic Media: press releases, press conferences, and press interviews, etc. using mass media as a channel for disseminating information.
	• Co-operation with Civil Society Organizations: Governments team up with civil society organizations, such as citizens' and business associations, or trade unions, in order for them to pass information to the public.
ICTs	• Web sites and other Internet tools
	• Portals
	• Search engines, clear site structures and links: to make the search for information easier
	• Electronic kiosks
	• CD-ROMs

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM OECD'S HANDBOOK (Gramberger, 2001)

- Consultation: by consulting, government requests and receives information, creating a limited but a more intense bi-directional relation with citizens. In this type of participation citizens are able to provide their views, ideas and comments about policy issues in a "supervised and controlled manner" (Gramberger, 2001). They are consulted but the government still have the control and power to frame the issue. Anyway, citizens play a more active role in policy making since government officials provide them with opportunities to be listened to and to learn about each other's ideas and opinions.

As the table 2-2 illustrates, government receives information from the public as solicited and unsolicited and by duration of interaction. Also, it uses ICT tools for consultation.

TABLE 2-2: CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES

Solicited information	• Questioning, listening and reporting: when asking for public opinion it is important to respect and take into consideration their answers as well as make good use of the gathered information. • Comment periods and actions: in here government not only defines the period of time but also selects the mechanisms for consulting, for example mail, email, call center, etc. • Focus group: requires selecting a representative group from the population for a defined period of time. This tool allows the government to collect in-depth feedback. • Surveys, comment forms, interviews and open houses: asking open and/or closed questions to a general or representative part of the public. • Public opinion polls: provides public opinions for determined issues in a specific period of time.
Unsolicited information	• Letterboxes: entry point for comments and suggestions • Information management software packages: assist with feedback collection and analysis • Analytical reports: serve as feedback compiling place.
Formal consultation	• Inclusion of individual citizens in consultative bodies: government selects very few citizens or representative organizations for obtaining opinions. The interaction is intense and most of the time for short period. • Workshops, seminars, conferences, roundtables, group meetings and focus groups: these events enable government to enter into a direct exchange with a group of citizens. Government provides information and discusses the issues openly with citizens. • Public hearings and town meetings: a panel of government officials guides the event where experts and open public can attend to discuss and provide solutions to an issue. • Non-binding referenda: places the outcome of the decision on the public shoulders.
Permanent and steady consultation	• Open Hours in governmental offices: offers regular opportunities for meeting and discussion among a regulated schedule and with a determined amount of officials and citizens • Citizens' panels: government seeks on-going opinions and views from a group of citizens, who are selected as representation of a wider population. • Advisory committees: a group representing the citizens meets with government regularly in order to provide government with opinion and views. They are appointed by government bodies.
ICTs	• Electronic letterboxes, like email addresses • Email distribution lists • Web Fora and Newsgroups • On-line live chat events • Electronic surveys

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM OECD'S HANDBOOK (Gramberger, 2001)

- Active participation: it is the third type and highest participation level in the OECD participation typology. Here participation is also defined as a bi-directional relation between government and citizens. It is based on the principle of partnership (Gramberger, 2001) ; (Elliot et al., 2005), since government accepts and supports the role of the citizens as providers of knowledge. Effective partnership is fundamental for active participation because it opens channels for effective and meaningful communication and significant dialogue that would benefit government and citizens at the same time.

Informing and consulting often do not attempt to produce a common view or decision; at most, government officials are taking and promise to consider citizens' opinions and views for their subsequent deliberations. It is only at active participation where citizens are allowed to actively be involved and engaged in debates, contributing to and influencing policy making and building a collective point of view of the issue in discussion. By active participation, the government is seeking direct advice and ideas from citizens through most of the steps of the policy cycle. Although government and citizens can both frame the issue to a greater degree, the final decision and responsibility still rest within the government.

Active participation activities encourage more deep and intense dialogue between government and citizens. These activities result in a more knowledgeable group of citizens who can participate in further participation activities and provide advice on policy related issues in some or all stages of the policy cycle.

Active participation provides new and complementary mechanisms to cope with today's governance challenges by offering time and space for public involvement (Gramberger, 2001). Active participation tools can be used for engaging citizens in planning and agenda setting; tools for involving experts; and tools for engaging a common citizen at the local and national level. The active participation tools and activities as well as the ICT tools used for active participation are mentioned in the table 2-3 below.

TABLE 2-3: ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES

Active participation in planning	- Consensus conferences: small group of citizens meet with government officials to make questions about policy issues. Citizens discuss within themselves the answers and provide recommendations and comments (the consensus). - Citizens' juries: similar to consensus conferences. But the questioning and deliberation take place in a shorter time period and citizens are gathered in a courtroom. No consensus is needed, only recommendations and suggestions.
Active participation of Experts	- Evaluation and advisory groups: government provides data to expert groups, representatives of interests groups and civil soci-

	ety organizations, for evaluation, analysis and recommendations of concrete policy proposals. • Traditional tripartite commissions, task forces and joint working groups: selected group of experts representatives from organizations work together with government officials in the making and drafting of policies and regulations proposals. May involve sharing implementation that could foster public-private partnerships.
Activate participation of common citizens	• Open working groups and workshops: similar with the tripartite commissions but openly engages a broader group of citizens for proposal making and implementation of policies. • Participatory vision and scenario- development: group of citizens, officials and experts gather together to work on a vision and different scenarios for future developments. • Citizens' fora: gather a large and broad group of civil society representatives for deliberating and cooperating about a specific topic or issue. The outcome is a direct input for government policy. • Dialogue processes: engage broad public in policy making in order to provide information to government officials and civil society representatives, which are working on policy proposals.
ICTs	• External links • Web for on-line chats • Interactive game and scenario planning • Virtual work spaces

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM OECD'S HANDBOOK (Gramberger, 2001)

When planning and selecting tools for information, consultation and active participation activities, the government should take into consideration objectives to be reached, the type of citizens to be involved, resources to be utilized, level of expertise, available time, characteristics of the group of citizens and the nature of the issue in debate. Generally, a mix of tools and tailored approaches is necessary in order to achieve objectives, involve citizens and make best use of the available resources.

Additionally, government officials should be flexible and creative in the use of tools and approaches for participation since some of them can be applied in different participation activities following different purposes. For example, ICTs can be used for informing as well as consulting citizens, and workshops could be served for consulting and active participating activities as well. Therefore, the above tables should be seen as reference for participatory activities and not as an exhaustive list and exact classification criteria.

Information, consultation and active participation are new and complementary types of government-citizen modes of interaction that build a deeper and sincere dialogue and assist in strengthening their relation, aiming for public policy quality and effectiveness as well as government legitimacy through transparency, accountability and citizen ownership (Rodrigo & Amo, 2006).

2.6   The process of participation

Public participation should be seen as a process, a path, that involves interactions between government and a wide range of citizens through some or all stages of the policy making cycle. In general, this cycle consists of three stages: planning, implementation and evaluation (Elliot et al., 2005).

The participatory process is a "means to obtain the collective interest through the building of dialogue and networks" (Prolia, 2011), via general agreement and consensus and by representing interests, values, positions, needs and ideas related to a policy issue. It is by the process of participation that citizens' roles change from being passive to active actors. The government needs the perspective and ideas of affected citizens in order to successfully and effectively create innovative policies and comply with its representative role.

As a multidimensional process, participation demands different depths of involvement. From planning until evaluation, the involvement and engagement of citizens could be deep or shallow depending on how many stages of the policy cycle the citizens have participated in. Participation activities could involve a big number of citizens or just a small group of them changing the scope from wide to narrow. Also, participation processes may be found at national, regional or local levels. Depending on the nature and purpose of the issue, the participation process might be opened to everyone who wants to participate or just to elite citizens like stakeholders or technical experts on the issue.

These dimensions are part of the spectrum of factors that affect participation activities in combination with the context where this process moves in a fluid and dynamic manner. The participation process invites governments to promote participatory activities within the "places in which they occur, framing their possibilities with reference to actual political, social, cultural and historical particularities rather than idealized notions of democratic practices" (Cornwall, 2002). This means treating the participation concept as more functional than normative. As time passes, public participation approaches are redefining themselves in order to keep up with new demands like the social, economic and environmental ones required for sustainable development.

Finally, throughout the process of participation, different views, perspectives, and values are exposed with the sole objective to reach a consensus and make compromises. This means that all participants would accept the results after deliberation and negotiations, but this does not imply unanimity or even majority. Thus, the process of participation takes into consideration a consensus strategy and a conflict resolution approach that allows for broad support among participants. Therefore, the participation process tries its best to accommodate government and citizens' interests, "to compromise, to reach agreement when possible and to identify issues remaining contentious to be resolved later" (Bass et al., 1995).

2.7 Drivers and enablers of participation

There are factors that advocate and enable the occurrence of participation. They relate, overlap and influence each other. A lack of these drivers constitutes barriers for the existence of participation.

Participation should be gradually built and fostered within the lifestyle and norms of society until it becomes a culture. In order for this to happen, the government needs to recognize and accept the importance of participation and foster the conditions that allow citizens to participate. Thus, the continuous practicing of participation activities will increase citizens' participatory education. Educated participants possess literary skills, political knowledge and self-confidence; all necessary for meaningful participation (Brodie et al., 2009). Additionally, for participation to flourish, government officials need to develop a participation capability for actively engaging citizens in policymaking. Thus, it is essential to have an adequate structure, leadership commitment, internal awareness and to develop and foster internal skills.

Also important is providing financial, human and technical resources for fostering participation. Auwerx et al., (2011) pointed out that usually when government officials face limited budgets and resources, they do not always assign high priority to participation activities. From the point of view of citizens, their lack of financial resources constitutes another barrier for participation. More demanding roles in participation are associated with a higher financial cost of involvement (Brodie et al., 2009). For example, costs related to transportation and paying for someone to take care of children while participation activities are taking place could be seen as reasons for not participating.

No doubt that information technologies are assisting and enabling government in participation activities. They are opening a new spectrum for public participation, especially for involving and consulting citizens, who are expressing their ideas and views in a different way. Thus, government should become familiar and be creative with the many possibilities of involvement and engagement that the new technological era is offering.

A legal framework sets the ground, rules, norms and procedures for participation activities to occur. A framework relates to the rights of citizens for participation activities and to the duty of government to plan, develop and implement participatory approaches while making policies. It is well known that participation is a right and it has been incorporated in many international as well as national laws and regulations by freedom of speech and freedom of association but how to enable and exercise that right is a challenge that government and citizens have to overcome. Additionally, bureaucracy and complex government structures are often mentioned in the literature as institutional barriers for participation (Brodie et al., 2009).

Cornwall (2008) mentions that citizens' previous experiences in participation activities could be a factor for not participating anymore. She explains that when people perceive that nothing changes and that their ideas, opinions and comments have not been taken into consideration after countless participation activities they decide to "self-exclude" and not be part of activities as a "pragmatic choice to avoid wasting time once again" (Cornwall, 2008). This situation is called participation fatigue.

There are other factors that hinder citizens in taking part in participation activities. For example, sometimes citizens do not know how to get involved and what the rules and norms are for participation; they do not have time to spare in participation activities; the schedule of participation events is not convenient; citizens experience difficulties in accessing and locating the place where participation activities are going to take place; the existence of poor internet connection and lack of computer and technical gadgets skills (Brodie et al., 2009). All these barriers should be taken into account by government in order to choose and design the participatory activities and process.

Finally, for citizens to participate, government should take into consideration social-economic status, age, gender and ethnicity in order to provide a suitable and comfortable space for participation. For example, if citizens sense that participation activities are taking place where they do not belong and the groups of participants are unfamiliar to them, they prefer not to engage in the activities.

2.8   Arguments for participation

The literature provides normative and functional arguments in favor of public participation in policy making. These arguments that are "normative in purpose and pragmatic in nature" (Ball, 1995) reflect on the quality and effectiveness of policies; government legitimacy focusing on trust, transparency and accountability; principles of good governance; and social capital and social cohesion. Thus the following reasons are considered the normative-functional dimensions for public participation:

- Quality and efficacy of policies
  By seeking, allowing and accepting citizens in the making of policies, government gains access to valuable and new sources of information that provide a better basis for quality and more effective policies. By incorporating citizen's interests, views and opinions in policy making, government can better design policy to suite citizens' needs, priorities and preferences; balance opposite interests; study policy issues from a different perspective and see different angles for possible solutions getting away from professional perspectives; improve policy impact assessment via identification of desirable and undesirable consequences; and minimize enforcement costs for both government and citizens (Rodrigo & Amo, 2006). Similarly, public participation increases citizens'

sense of responsibility and provides a feeling of "shared ownership" (Rodrigo & Amo, 2006) which "ensures more effective implementation and increases the chance of greater voluntary compliance" (Gramberger, 2001). Compliance increases and compliance periods become longer not only because citizens identify, feel responsible and become stewards for the new policy due to an open, transparent and fair process but also because modifications in policies are informed in a timely manner providing citizens with time to adjust to upcoming changes. Finally, public participation leads to more effective and quality policies since it promotes trust, understanding and consensus (Bevir, 2009).

- Legitimation of government

  As described before, government and citizens interact and relate through representative and traditional as well as new, complementary and more direct participatory methods. Both forms propose different modes of relations between government and citizens and are fundamental for living in a legitimate democratic system.

  Kjaer (2004) comments that legitimacy could be "output oriented" or "input-oriented". When participatory approaches produce efficacy and quality policies, she refers to them as output-oriented legitimacy. Input-oriented legitimacy refers to governments complying with democratic rules and principles.

  Government input-oriented legitimacy comes from the perception that "elected government stands by democratic principles in governing" (Gramberger, 2001) and therefore is lawful and legally accountable to its citizens, the sovereign in any democracy. If democratic deficit persists, then the government is not being accountable to the citizens and therefore its mandate is not legitimate and rightful; it is not democratic. Thus, new and complementary participatory democracy approaches seem to extend and deepen traditional representative democracy modes of interaction via new participation activities, which give back to government the legitimacy and accountability missing because they provide spaces for citizens' involvement and engagement in policy making. Thus, public participation is an essential and prime component of new approaches of participatory democratic governance and therefore for creating legitimate governments (Brodie et al., 2009).

  Elliot et al., (2005) define the democratic process as one that, ideally, guarantees that everyone has the opportunity to make his or her voice heard. It is this process that reconciles variety, diversity and opposite ideas and opinions in order to find "the best common solution" (Elliot et al., 2005). It is the justice and fairness of this process that allows citizens to peacefully accept the outcome. It is in this democratic process that participation focus by not only "giving structure and organization to various form of democratic dialogue and deliberation (Elliot et al., 2005) but also by increasing the legitimacy and accountability of democratic institutions' rising transparency and open-

ness, strengthening government and citizen relations and increasing and encouraging more active citizenship. (Brodie et al., 2009) ; (Innes & Booher, 2004).

By involving and engaging citizens in policy making via public participation activities, government shows openness and transparency that makes it "more trustworthy for citizens" (Garau, 2012). With greater trust, confidence and credibility in government, the relations between citizens and government are reinforced which in turn enhances the acceptance and legitimacy of the government.

- Principles of good governance

  Sustainable development is changing the way government exercises its duties since it demands more participatory approaches for making decisions about the trade-offs necessary for delineating more sustainable policies. In this sense, Kjaer (2004) announces that governance theory "explores changes in political practices and their implications for political rules". Traditionally, governance has been seen as the process of governing, however more recently, this definition has been expanded by focusing on a large variety of tools designed to "alter and channel the behaviour of individual and collective actors" (Kardosa, 2012) as well as the role of government in decision and policy making (Bevir, 2009).

  In order for governance to be effective for policy making it has to include actors beyond the government. Thus, governance needs to adjust participatory approaches to the context and dynamics of the actors for fostering collective thinking, therefore needs to be transformed into participatory governance.

  Participatory governance uses participation tools and activities for involving and engaging citizens in matters that affect them. In this regard, governance has been defined by Schneider (1999) as not only a broad reform strategy for governing but also as a set of activities that strengthen government-citizen relations with the objective of making government more participatory, accountable, open and transparent, fair and inclusive, responsive and more democratic. These principles of "good governance" acknowledge the importance of the roles of government and citizens as co-producers of policies, especially for sustainable development policies.

  Governance through "good governance" stresses the importance of a more participatory and inclusive approach from planning to implementation of policies creating more confidence in the result and in the government (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). By including more complete and better information it has the potential to produce more effective policy making, more efficient outcomes and enhances the chances for more sustainable and durable results (Schneider, 1999). Additionally, participatory governance creates accountability and effective commitment from government and strengthens and legitimates the decision and policy making process, consequently enhancing democracy.

By the principle of transparency, government provides the right to access information. Information would assist citizens in the process of policy making since it would educate and prepare them for consulting and active participation activities. Additionally, transparency provides openness into the process of participation, welcoming citizens' voices by involving, engaging and even scrutinizing policy and decision-making.

Good participatory governance also is fair in the inclusion of every citizen's voice, including ethnic minorities, disabled persons and women. It is responsive by including citizens' ideas, views and recommendations allowing citizens to trust and believe in the participatory governance and its democratic institutions.

Participatory governance empowers citizens to be part of and influence decisions and policymaking. However, this empowerment should rest in a "civil liberties" framework (Schneider, 1999). Therefore, the right of information, freedom of speech and freedom of association are part of a broader field of rule of law that is also a component of good governance.

- Social capital and cohesion

  A review of the literature suggests that participation activities empower citizens and assist in creating social cohesion, which in turn builds social capital. Social capital is "networks with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups" (Gramberger, 2001). When citizens are involved and engaged in participation, especially in active participation activities, they all acquire knowledge, build capacity and are equally empowered by information. Also, they all listen and are heard respectfully, and they all willingly work together along with the government to create shared meanings and find solutions to common policy issues that are respectfully acceptable by all (Innes & Booher, 2004). It is by this process that a transparent, genuine, respectful and sincere dialogue is created which builds social capital and social cohesion. This has been called the "transformative power of dialogue" (Innes & Booher, 2004).

  The participation activities not only build social capital, they also create institutional and political capital by providing government officials and democratic institutions with valuable information from citizens for enhancing public services and improving policy making.

  In building social capital and social cohesion, participation enhances citizenship, creates more knowledgeable citizens and builds relations and public-private partnerships for future participation. By involving and engaging citizens in participation activities the government increases citizens' self-confidence, competence and knowledge about policy issues which in turn prepares them to better understand and monitor government activities giving the basis for a more active citizen (Gramberger, 2001) (Innes & Booher, 2004) who seeks more transparency and accountability from government officials.

> To create citizenship is to enhance citizens' will by a "conscious whole" (Prolia, 2011). According to Prolia (2011), this means that each citizen is taking care of their own interests but at the same time they understand what the general purpose is and how they are contributing to it. Also, participation builds civic capacity creating more intelligent citizens who are better able to adapt quickly to changes in conditions and more competent to address difficult and controversial policy issues (Innes & Booher, 2004).

Although it is true that participation builds social cohesion and capital, participation can be "exclusionary and divisive" and not all forms of participation can contribute to the common good (Brodie et al., 2009). Citizens can group together and work in union for perverse and malicious objectives like violent movements, extreme right-wing and neo-Nazis activism.

Since it is impossible for participation to include every single citizen, thus including every single comment, idea and concern, a new policy could be unacceptable for some citizens and could be unrepresentative of a group of citizens. That is why it is fundamental for government officials to take the time to plan and design carefully the participation activities in order to design and implement inclusive and representative legislation

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology employed in this study. The chapter begins presenting the approach selected and research design used, continuing with the explanation of how primary and secondary data were collected and the instruments that assisted with this task. The chapter concludes by outlining the framework that will be used for data processing and analysis. This theory-based analytical framework has been developed by the author and includes theoretical participation notions already mentioned in the literature review chapter and additionally takes in consideration the OECD public participation typology for classifying participation tools and activities. The figure 3-1 below briefly illustrates the methodology sections employed in this study.

FIGURE 3-1: ILLUSTRATION OF THE METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED IN THE STUDY
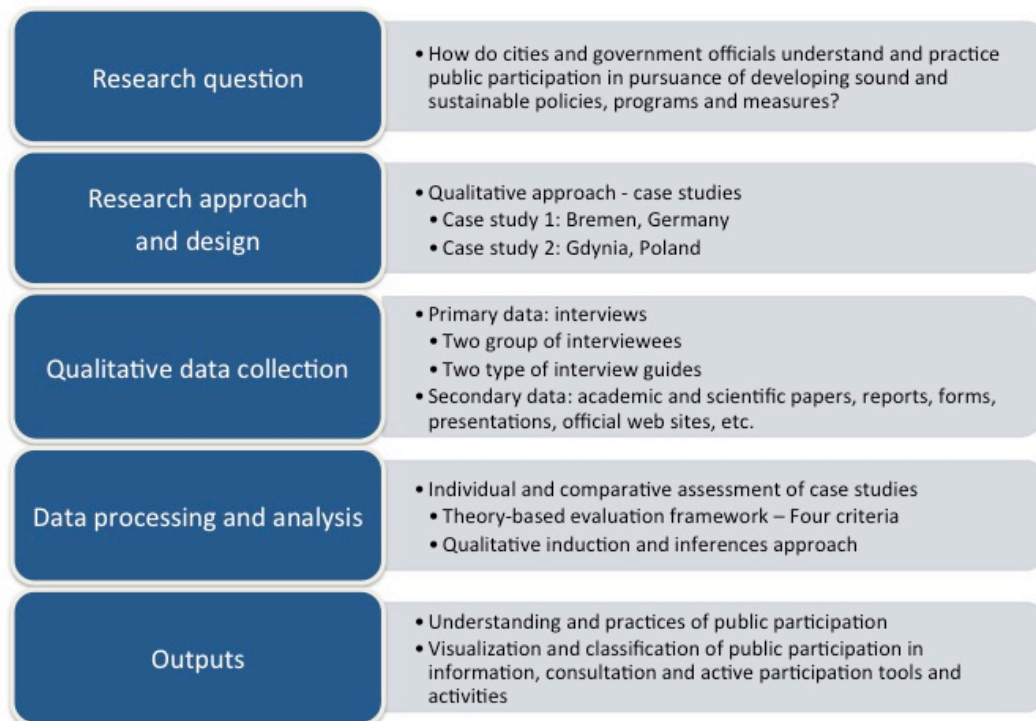
3.2 Research approach and design

A qualitative research approach was used in order to explore and analyse understanding and practices of public participation in cities and government officials. Qualitative research is a suitable orientation for conducting social research because it emphasizes the understanding and significance of a social phenomenon by its participants (Bryman, 2012). This approach helps the author in maintaining the focus on the meaning and practices that governments hold about public participation. Additionally, it facilitates the developing of a holistic picture about participation since it involves exploring, analysing and reporting different perspectives by identifying new factors that affect participation. Therefore, the qualitative angle selected for this study contributes in great deal to the deep understanding of the social phenomenon of public participation and not only assists in answering the main research question but also provides new dimensions that could guide governments in the practice of public participation.

This research is designed as a case study, involving in-depth empirical investigation of participation as a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context (Robson, 2011). This design offers insights that might not be achieved with other approaches (Rowley, 2002) and deals with complex situations by systematic simplicity. The social nature of public participation invites the selection of this research design because it has the ability to deal profoundly with the complex and ever changing nature of this phenomenon related to social reality and human behaviour. Additionally, the case study design assists in a detailed and intense situational examination of public participation by using a variety of sources and taking into consideration the context within which participation is embedded. This approach permits the author to discover and understand multiple aspects and ensures that participation is well explored, and that the essence of this phenomenon is revealed (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

In order to provide more compelling evidence and obtain a deeper review of public participation two case studies were selected. First, each case study was defined, deeply studied and assessed separately using the analytical framework below in order to examine perceptions and attitudes, activities and tools, factors, characteristics, determinants and experiences related to public participation. Then, the OECD typology of public participation was applied with the objective to visualize, classify and characterize public participation in each case. Finally, the cases were systematically compared in order to look for unique, common and contrasting features about public participation with the objective of enhancing and deepening the exploration and assessment of government's understanding and practices of public participation thus assisting in answering the research question.

The analysis of each case study has been divided into four sections: understanding; practices and dynamics; experiences; and OECD participation tools and activities, in order to be able to separately and deeply concentrate in different aspects and elements of public participation. For the assessment of the case studies and their subsequent comparison the author collected

primary and secondary data and was guided by the concepts exposed and described already in the literature reviewed. The different dimensions that each of these sections contain and that serve as assessment framework for the individual analysis and comparison between cases are later exposed in this chapter.

The depth and detail oriented focus of this research design assists in the assurance of transferability or external validity of the study since it might provide other authors with compelling information for their own studies, while enhancing the qualitative reliability or "trustworthiness", as Baxter and Jack (2008) and Bryman (2012) called it for qualitative research.

3.2.1 Case studies: two CIVITAS cities

CIVITAS is a European Commission funded programme designed to "facilitate, within its members, exchange of information and approaches in order to understand and resolve common problems in the arena of sustainable urban transport" (CIVITAS, 2013). The name of CIVITAS is derived by combining three important components: City, Vitality and Sustainability. The programme was launched in 2002 and since then more than 200 European cities have become members of this network.

In CIVITAS, the exchange of ideas, solutions and experiences about sustainable mobility and transport in cities is made by joining the CIVITAS Forum Network, National Networks and Thematic Groups. By signing the CIVITAS Forum declaration, by a city's government authority, every European city can be part of CIVITAS Forum Network. Members of this network can attend the annual CIVITAS Forum Conference where city officials engage in a dialogue via plenary and smaller technical and round table sessions. Additionally, and in order to increase the exchange of experiences, practices and knowledge, the CIVITAS Network has been including cities since its beginning in four phases through CIVITAS I, CIVITAS II, CIVITAS Plus and more currently CIVITAS Plus II. The cities that have been a part and are part of projects in these phases are called demonstration cities. The two case studies selected for exploring and analysing public participation are part of CIVITAS demonstration cities.

Since 2004, CIVITAS awards members that distinguish themselves as examples on the subject of sustainable urban mobility. Currently the award is classified in three categories: technical innovation, public participation and the CIVITAS city of the year. The public participation award category provides an ideal and convenient condition for conducting case studies about public participation since it offers empirical and current evidence of public participation in candidate cities.

The two case studies selected for exploring and assessing public participation understanding and practices in cities and by government officials are 2014 CIVITAS public participation award candidates. This convenience sample was chosen because of the qualitative and social nature of this study and because of the existence of time and location constraints. With this conven-

ience sample the study sacrificed representativeness of the population but learned in detail and depth about participation in cities and by governments' officials that are currently giving attention to this social phenomenon.

In 2014, the cities of Bremen (Germany), Gdynia (Poland) and Tallinn (Estonia) competed the in CIVITAS public participation award category. For exploring and assessing public participation understanding and practices, this study considers the first two cities and conducted interviews with one government official per case. These two city officials are responsible for managing participation approaches via activities and tools for involving and engaging citizens and they are specifically involved in designing, implementing and evaluating, within the CIVITAS network and in their own cities, sustainable mobility measures with special emphasis on public partici-pation. Additionally, the two city officials represent Bremen and Gdynia in the CIVITAS Net-work and thus attended the annual CIVITAS Forum Conference in Casablanca where the inter-views were conducted.

Bremen was granted the 2014 public participation award while Gdynia obtained the prize for first-runner up. Unfortunately, it was not possible to complete the exploration and analysis of Tallinn as a third case study because the primary and secondary data collected was not suffi-cient and adequate for the depth that this research design requires.

3.3 Qualitative data collection

One of the hallmarks of case study research is the use of multiple data sources. This strategy enhances data credibility (Yin, 2009) and supports trustworthiness and the quality of the inves-tigation. For this study, the author includes as a primary qualitative data source the infor-mation collected by interviews and as secondary qualitative data incorporated reports, presen-tations, 2014 CIVITAS public participation award application forms for the cities of Bremen and Gdynia, content and information from Bremen and Gdynia's official web and online sites, among other sources. The merging of these different sources added strength to the findings; contributed to the exploration and understanding of the phenomenon of public participation as a whole; and assisted in answering the main research question. By the use of numerous sources a lot of details were provided increasing the validity and credibility of the study data analysis.

3.3.1 Primary qualitative data

The first step for collecting data was to make use of interviews. Interviews are one of the methods commonly used in qualitative research for gathering primary data. Four structured interviews were performed for this study. Structured interviews provide the same question order and the same wording enhancing reliability and quality of the study (Bryman, 2012). Structured interviews offer some standardization in both the asking of questions and recording

of answers. According to Bryman (2012) this standardization implies that the interviewees' replies reveal the true answer minimizing any interviewer error and provides the opportunity to aggregate those answers. These characteristics served well for the further comparison of the two case studies.

Although the interviews were structured, the author maintained the option of freely and openly discussing the topic of public participation when necessary, allowing spontaneity and flexibility. With this approach the government officials could provide more details about experiences and points of view, which allowed the exploration of new angles and enhanced the collected information providing a deeper exploration of participation. In general, interviews provide a greater response rate than other tools for collecting primary data since they ensure that the questions are well understood and therefore accurate information can be gathered increasing reliability and validity.

Interviews

Interviews were used to collect primary data. The interviews were conducted using multiple methods because of the diverse location of the author and the interviewees, and the limitation of time and costs. Three of the interviews were conducted in person, face-to-face during the 2014 annual CIVITAS Forum Conference in Casablanca, Morocco in September 2014. These interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed. The fourth and last interview was conducted by telephone. This latest interview was also audio-recorded and transcribed. Recording and transcribing allows for a comprehensive and posterior examination of the answers and help in validating the interviewees' point of view and demonstrate that the analysis was not affected by the author's values and biases (Bryman, 2012).

The interviews were carefully organized. First, the author distinguished between two different types of interviewee groups. City government officials from Bremen and Gdynia represent the first group and CIVITAS public participation award juries represent the second group. The author interviewed one government official per city and two CIVITAS jurors. Interview guidelines were prepared and sent in advance by electronic mail, along with a brief description of the study to all interviewees. Two distinctive interview guides were prepared, one for government city officials and another for CIVITAS public participation award jury members.

The interview guideline for the city government officials included twenty-seven questions clustered in the following four sections: general information; understanding of public participation; public participation practices and dynamics; and experiences from the practices of public participation. These sections were developed based upon definitions and concepts found in the literature review and served also as a framework for the later analysis. Some of the questions were open-ended providing flexibility in the answers, while others were specific and

closed offering a fixed range of answers that helped in the reduction of variability in the study and assisted in the analysis and comparison of answers.

These interviews aimed to gather and provide the views, opinions, interpretations and considerations as well as the experiences about public participation in the chosen cities by its government officials. Additionally, the interviews assisted in identifying approaches and tools applied in the city in order to also classify the exercise of public participation in each case. This information is essential for the exploration and analysis of participation within the context of sustainable mobility and transport solutions.

The second type of interview guideline included a mix of twelve open-ended and closed questions and it was divided in three sections: general information; public participation understanding; and jury duty. As with the first type of interview guide, these sections are based upon theory findings.

The purpose of this second type of interview is to include an additional and non-biased perception, opinion and view about public participation for each case. Also, these interviews provided the author with a better understanding of the impact, importance and practices of public participation not only in the candidates' cities but also in a general contribution to the deep exploration, understanding and analysis of the phenomenon of participation. The author interviewed two CIVITAS public participation award jurors who were responsible for assessing the candidate cities and selecting the 2014 CIVITAS public participation winner city.

All the interviews lasted approximately one hour. A copy of the interview guidelines is presented in the appendices.

The following individuals were interviewed face-to-face during the 2014 annual CIVITAS Forum Conference in Casablanca, Morocco in September 2014:

- Michael Glotz-Richter: Mr. Glotz-Ritcher is the Senior Project Manager in Sustainable Mobility of the Environment, Construction and Transport Department of the city of Bremen in Germany and he is professor at the University of Applied Sciences in Bremen. He has more than twenty-four years of working experience in the sustainable mobility sector and he has been involved in designing, implementing and evaluating policies and measures that required the participation of citizens. Mr. Glotz-Ritcher is the CIVITAS representative for the city of Bremen. He provided a city and government official perspective and additionally offered secondary quality data about public participation measures in the city of Bremen.
- Alicja Pawlowska: Ms. Pawlowska is Head of the EU projects and mobility management unit in the city of Gdynia in Poland. She has more than nine years of working experience in the sustainable and transport mobility sector and she has been involved in designing, implementing and evaluating policies and measures that required the partici-

pation of citizens. Ms. Pawlowska is the CIVITAS representative for the city of Gdynia. She provided a city and government official perspective and additionally offered secondary quality data about public participation measures in Gdynia for this study.

- Claudio Mantero: Mr. Mantero works as Head of Research and Planning of the Department of Public Transport in Hórarios do Funchal, Portugal. He has more than eleven years of working experience in the sustainable mobility sector and he has been involved in designing, implementing and evaluating policies and measures that required the participation of citizens. Mr. Mantero is not only the CIVITAS representative for the city of Funchal; he also is part of the CIVITAS jury experts responsible for selecting the CIVITAS winners for the three awards categories. He provided a juror perspective for this study and additionally he was able to offer a perspective as a city and government official.

As mentioned, the above interviews were performed at the 2014 annual CIVITAS Forum Conference in Casablanca, Morocco in September 2014. By attending the conference, the author was able to gather additional information about public participation views, interpretations and opinions and what other CIVITAS cities are doing and which approaches and tools are being used in the involvement and engagement of citizens and stakeholders in sustainable mobility and transport solutions. This experience assisted in providing a broader view and enhancing the understanding of public participation.

The following individual was interviewed by telephone in October 2014:

- Laetitia Dablanc: Ms. Dablanc is Director of Research at the French Institute of Science and Technology for Transport, Development and Networks (IFSTTAR), and a member of METROFREIGHT, a Volvo Research and Educational Foundation Center of Excellence in urban freight research. Her areas of research are freight transportation, freight and the environment, urban freight and logistics, rail freight, freight transport policies. She is part of the CIVITAS jury experts responsible for selecting the CIVITAS winners for the three award categories. She provided not only a juror perspective but also an academic perspective for this study.

3.3.2 Secondary qualitative data

The second step in the collection of data was to gather information from secondary sources. The secondary qualitative information and data that used in this study came mainly from the available literature from international, national and regional institutions and organizations concerned with the topic of public participation. Also, academic and scientific papers and reports were included. The objective was to rely on the exploration and analysis of other sources with the purpose of reducing any reliability threats. Additionally and based on Yin (2009) and

Creswell (2014), the use of multiple sources of evidence in case studies increases qualitative validity.

The CIVITAS Secretariat also provided secondary data such as the 2014 CIVITAS candidate cities public participation award application forms. Likewise, secondary data was obtained through in-house CIVITAS resources published on the CIVITAS web site. This site provided a comprehensive online amount of data via reports, presentations and special studies about Bremen and Gdynia that complement the exploration and analysis of the understanding and practices of cities and government officials about public participation. Additionally, the city government officials from Bremen and Gdynia provided reports and presentations about participation approaches and tools employed in the cities which were combined with information found in the cities' official web sites and other official online pages with the purpose of supporting the exploration and analysis of participation thus assisting in answering the research question.

3.4 Data processing and analysis

The author established a systematic method for processing and analysing the collected data. This process contained two steps. The first step consisted of reviewing in detail the interview transcripts and the secondary data in order to inductively concentrate on the relationship between normative principles and theory described before in the literature chapter and the empirical evidence gathered. The second step of this systematic method consisted of the application of the OECD participation typology in order to classify among information, consultation and active participation the tools and activities employed in each case study and obtain a visual distribution as well as a tendency for public participation in each city. The combination of steps one and two assisted the author in defining public participation and identifying tools and activities employed for each case study with the objective of exploring and assesing participation.

The above two steps were performed consistently, equally and separately for the two case studies and an evaluation and conclusions were drawn for each case independently with the purpose of granting the study with transparency, coherence and therefore enhance (Creswell, 2014) qualitative reliability. Afterwards, a comparative case study analysis was performed between the two cities in order to find common, different and distinctive aspects of public participation with the objective of providing a deeper analysis and valuable information to not only the author and other researchers but also practitioners of participation.

3.4.1 Analytical framework

As mentioned before, the framework that was used for the analysis of the cities and subsequent comparison of cases was drawn from the concepts studied and examined in the literature review. This theory-based framework consists of four main criteria: public participation

understanding; public participation practices and dynamics; experiences from the exercising of public participation; and classification of participation tools and activities by employing the OECD typology. The first three criteria also correspond with the sections of the interview guides.

The figure 3-2 below presents in detail the analytical framework and the four criteria that this study follows for the exploration and assessment of public participation in the cities of Bremen and Gdynia.

FIGURE 3-2: THEORY-BASED ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK
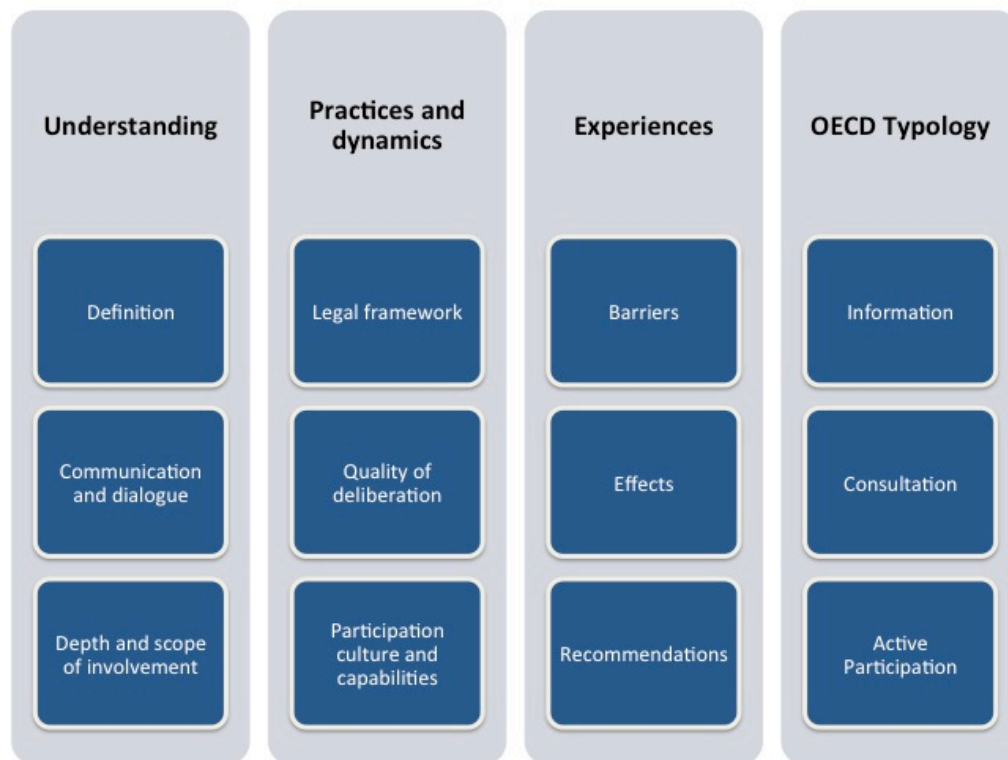
As the figure 3-2 shows, the author takes into consideration for the first criterion government officials definition, communication and dialogue, and depth and scope of involvement. This criterion focuses on how government officials understand and describe public participation And how the information flows between public and officials. It also looks into which phases of the policy cycle the public participate, the diversity of citizens involved in decision and policy making and who is included and excluded.

For the second criterion, public participation practices and dynamics, the analysis is based on different participation dimensions like legal framework, quality of deliberation, and degree of participation culture and capabilities of both government officials and citizens. This criterion explores the existence of regulations and law that provide legal and formal context to participation. Also, it studies the decision-making process, how citizens participate and who makes

the final decision about policies and measures; which tools and activities have been used in public participation; how government officials and citizens interact; and how is the environment in the public participation events and activities. It also explores and assesses the level of participation culture and habits of the city by studying how active, comfortable and able citizens are in expressing and discussing their ideas and opinions not only among themselves but also to government officials. Additionally, this criterion looks into how government officials are able to provide education and guidelines for enhancing public participation and their knowledge and capabilities for conducting participation activities.

The third analysis criterion considers the experiences of city and government officials. Specifically, it explores barriers encountered, effects of participation approaches as well as some recommendations that the city officials of Bremen and Gdynia suggest in the practice of public participation. In this criterion the author is studying and assessing the importance, impacts, and benefits of public participation, what stimulates and discourages participation; how government officials measure public participation?; and its relations with social inclusion and cohesion.

Finally, the last criterion takes in consideration the OECD participation typology as reference with the objective to classify and categorize participation tools and activities employed by each city between information, consultation and active participation. The objective is to obtain a tendency for public participation in each city base on the approaches used by the government officials.

The above analysis framework provides space for inductively studying the concepts of democracy, quality and efficacy of policies, good governance and social capital and social cohesion.

In general, the induction and deep analysis of case studies provides quality and reliability in the theoretical reasoning (Yin, 2009). Findings in qualitative research are to generalize to the theory not to the population (Bryman, 2012). It is this type of quality analysis of the inferences performed by the author that provides a deep understanding of public participation.

4 CASE STUDY: BREMEN

This chapter will systematically and inductively analyze city and government officials' understanding and practices of public participation in the German city of Bremen. The first section provides an introduction of the case which briefly describes a list of actions by which participation tools and activities are exercised in the city. The second section deeply analyzes public participation using the theory-based evaluation framework. This framework consists of four criteria: understanding; practices and dynamics; experiences; and application of the OECD participation typology in order to classify participation tools and activities used by Bremen.

4.1 Introduction

The city of Bremen, officially known as the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen is the tenth largest city in Germany, with a population of 555,000 inhabitants (CIVITAS, 2013). Bremen is a port and trade center since it is conveniently located in the northwest of the country on the banks of the river Weser, near to the North Sea. Besides its port, Bremen is known for the automobile, electronic, steel, aircraft and food industries. Additionally, this city has a university, colleges and other research institutions that make Bremen an academic center.

Bremen has been a member of the CIVITAS Network since its beginning in 2002. It participated as a demonstration city in CIVITAS I (2002-2006) within the VIVALDI project. Through this project, Bremen enhanced the public transport system in the city and contributed significantly to the development and increase of car sharing.

In 2014, Bremen presented its application for the CIVITAS Public Participation Award. In this application Bremen highlighted the latest actions, measures and/or "campaigns", as Mr. Glotz-Richter (2014) called them, that employed participation tools and activities by which citizens were involved in the design and development; implementation; and monitoring and evaluation of sustainable urban mobility measures, strategies and/or policies. In the same document, Bremen described the impact that the public participation tools and activities of these campaigns had on the mobility measures and the legal framework that sustains its exercise. In order to provide some context for the following discussion and analysis about public participation understanding and practices in Bremen it is necessary to know the mobility and transport campaigns in which the city was trying to involve and engage citizens.

Mobility and transport have an important place in Bremen. The city has a long-term strategy for accomplishing sustainability in this sector since 1990. This long-term transport and mobility strategy is commonly known as a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) in Europe. Many measures and policies have been implemented in favor of accomplishing targets contained in

this long-term strategy with the involvement of citizens throughout participation tools and activities. Bremen is in the last stage of reviewing its SUMP for the period 2020/2025 with the purpose of revitalizing and adapting the SUMP to the new economic, environmental and social challenges in the mobility and transport sector. The new version of the SUMP has motivated the city officials to "intensively" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) involve and engage citizens through a variety of participation activities and tools contained in measures, actions and campaigns. The measures, actions and campaigns that have been developed and applied via participation tools and activities, were listed and described in Bremen's 2014 CIVITAS Public Participation Award application form and were discussed among others in the interview with Mr. Glotz-Richter. These actions that served for exploring, categorizing and analysing public participation in the city are explained below.

With the objectives to reduce car use in the city and to modify behaviour and attitudes in favor of alternatives and more sustainable methods of mobility, specifically for young citizens (although also served for adult citizens), Bremen city officials decided to run two main campaigns. The first one is called Walking-Bus or also named School Express (Schulexpress in German). This measure, as the figure 4-1 shows, promotes walking to school with your friend and encourages parents to drive their kids to Walk-Bus stops, not to schools directly. The objective is to not only encourage kids to walk to school together with other children but also to reduce traffic congestion and overcrowding in school areas. Additionally, and with the same objectives, city officials promoted cycle lessons in school to enhance and teach sustainable mobility in young citizens. Bremen involved the public in the planning and implementation phases of these campaigns and it used printed materials; designed a School Express competition game; developed a website (www.schulexpress.de); and organized meetings with teachers and parents, among other participation tools and activities. Also, these campaigns counted on the involvement and support of many private businesses as well as public entities and organizations.

FIGURE 4-1: SCHOOL EXPRESS CAMPAIGN IN BREMEN

SOURCE: SCHOOL EXPRESS WEBSITE (WWW.SCHULEXPRESS.DE)

With the same purpose of reducing car use in the city and to teach alternative and more sustainable modes of transport to stimulate and create a sustainable mobility culture, Bremen city officials created the Cycle-to-Work campaign (mit-dem-Rad-zur-Arbeit in German) which involved more than 950 employers and about 5,500 employees (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014a). Similarly, the city developed cycle-ways and opened more car sharing and city-bike rental stations. All these actions and campaigns involved and engaged not only the citizens but also a variety of stakeholders including the police, NGOs, Chamber of Commerce, unions and the German Cycle Federation among other stakeholder in the planning and implementation phases of the initiative. Similar to School Express, Bremen employed printed material, like pamphlets; developed web-sites; and met with citizens and stakeholders through conducting open houses, workshops and public meetings among other participation tools and activities.

Bremen intensively involved and engaged citizens very early in the understanding and analysis, and designing and developing stages of the revision of the latest SUMP. Specifically, two public participation approaches were employed, one traditional and one innovative. The more traditional approach consisted of conducting face-to-face meetings with citizens, stakeholders and experts by running city events like public hearings, open houses, civic forums, regional committees and advisory boards among other activities. The participation activities related to the SUMP where introduced to a variety of citizens in all neighbourhoods using different tools. Noticeable is the printed material and physical display shown in local shopping mall centers which was accessible to a broad audience. The more innovative approach is represented by the use of online tools. A georeference consultation tool was designed in order to provide specific ideas, proposals and comments in reference to the SUMP in any part of the city. The comments were accessible and visible by everyone able to use online devices. Citizens were presented with the options of adding further comments to the initial statement and/or leave a sticker "I like it" or "I do not like it" as a way of agreeing or disagreeing with the comment. According to 2014 Bremen's CIVITAS Public Participation Award application form, the city received 4,241 proposals, 9,567 statements and about 106,055 stickers (I like it/ I do not like it). The georeference tool provided not only the opportunity for citizens to participate in multiple ways, depending upon how deeply they want to get involved, but also allowed the city officials to track and locate from which part of the city the citizens were providing their comments, which allowed them to understand citizens' participation patterns. Likewise, Bremen officials created a simulation scenario game in order for citizens to play with budgets and mobility measures simulating the role of city officials, thus understand what their government is trying to do and providing a useful simulation of mobility measures and future and possible scenarios in order to "educate the citizens about the new measure and increase its acceptability" (Mantero, 2014). Bremen developed a web site (http://www.bremen-bewegen.de/) that provides information on not only the progress of the SUMP but also documents in detail all steps and participation tools and activities mentioned above. The figure 4-2 below offers a screenshot of the webpage.

FIGURE 4-2: SCREENSHOT FROM THE BREMEN SUMP WEBSITE
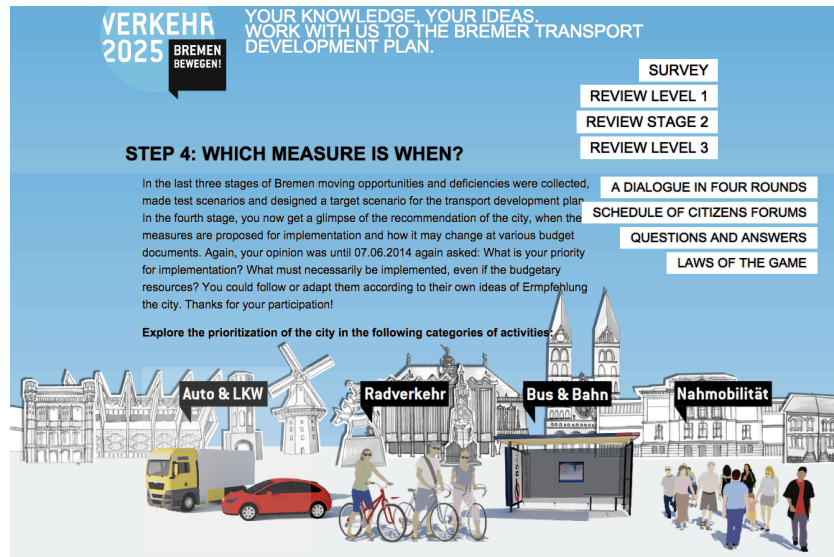
SOURCE: BREMEN'S SUMP WEBSITE (HTTP://BREMEN-BEWEGEN.DE/)

The brief explanation of the above campaigns and actions served as reference and provided a context for the interview with Bremen's official representative. In the interview, Mr. Glotz-Richter continuously mentioned those actions, among others, for exemplifying the practice and approaches of public participation in the city. These campaigns and actions have assisted the author in exploring and understanding public participation in the German city of Bremen.

4.2 Analysis

The below analysis of public participation in Bremen is characterized by systematically review-ing primary and secondary data and by performing an inductive qualitative evaluation for which the theory-based assessment framework was applied over the exercise of public partici-pation in the city by government officials.

4.2.1 Public participation understanding

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying how Bremen and its government offi-cials define and characterize participation. The criterion considers participation meaning, communication, dialogue process, and depth and scope of involvement of citizens in participa-tion in order to obtain an understanding of public participation in Bremen by its city officials.

- Definition: the city official from Bremen defines public participation as a very active and dynamic process where both citizens and government look for "consensus and compromises" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) for supporting policymaking and implementa-tion. In Bremen, the definition of public that participates in this process has a political and governmental connotation since citizens are seen as "voters" who elect their rep-resentatives and with whom these representatives need to be accountable to. This definition of citizens is related to accountability, which is one of the principles of good

participatory governance. When government officials feel responsible to their citizens (voters) they feel an obligation to work in favor of public demands and wellbeing and report back on key decisions. This feeling translates in effective commitment from government to citizens which strengthens their relation and legitimates the decision and policy making process which enhances democracy.

- Communication and dialogue: the process of participation in Bremen is characterized by bi-directional communication with direct and constant dialogue between citizens and government officials. Government not only provides voice and listens to citizens, it also understands and recognizes that the public should be part of the decision making process in an active manner since citizens provide essential and valuable information in a process characterized by continuous negotiations. Therefore, Bremen considers and applies the partnership principle of active participation in its relation with citizens and it has in placed active participation tools and activities for that objective. Bremen's government officials have experienced that by providing an informal and more relaxed environment and dividing a big group of citizens in smaller groups, communication flows better and citizens are "very productive" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) in the exchange of ideas. But, for Mr. Glotz-Richter "another kind of meeting is also important". Formal and plenary meetings are also necessary and are conducted for informing and some-times consulting citizens about plans, projects and further developments. These two approaches complement each other. City officials in Bremen make an emphasis on promoting explicit, direct and open communication, which translates to transparency and results in trust that strengthens government-citizen relations and promotes fur-ther interactions.

- Depth of involvement: In Bremen participation tends toward a deep approach since the city involves citizens in the planning and implementation stages of the policy cycle. While the city is not often involving citizens in the evaluation and monitoring phase, government officials see this task as an opportunity for reviewing and amending par-ticipation approaches, tools and activities. In Bremen, citizens are given the opportuni-ty to participate in the understanding and framing of the issue (like for example in the early stages of the SUMP) and then continuing into designing, planning and imple-menting adaptable and agreeable solutions for urban transport. The city of Bremen does not often include citizens in the evaluation and monitoring of mobility measures.

- Scope of involvement: in Bremen, participation is wide in scope. Participation activities do not only address a greater group of citizens but also a broader variety of them; from very young citizens like toddlers, teenagers, adults and aged citizens. Bremen takes into consideration the different ethnic groups that coexist and live together in the city and attention is also given to incorporating a balanced number of male and female citizens. In this sense, Bremen considers the importance to categorize citizens

in as many groups as possible in order to customize participation tools and mechanisms for motivating, involving and engaging citizens. Special attention is given to "politicians" as actors in the process of participation because they are responsible for making the final decision or "political adoption" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) about policy and measures to be enforced. Politicians' support and leaders' commitment are fundamental since they provide credibility to the measure, which results in long-term viability, and durability to the mobility measure and thus enhancing the quality and efficacy of policies.

4.2.2 Public participation practices and dynamics

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying the context by which public participation is exercised in Bremen by its government officials. The criterion considers legal framework, quality of deliberation and participation culture and capabilities.

- Legal framework: according to Mr. Glotz-Richter, participation in Bremen is supported by a legal framework that provides the right and freedom of speech, which lays down the foundation for participation. Also, the city has included in its law and regulations special sections that ensure government officials directly and continually involve and engage citizens in the decision and policymaking and promote the developing and use of active participation tools. For example, Bremen has in place "citizens assemblies" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) among similar democratic and participatory governance structures that actively and permanently involve citizens. Additionally, Bremen's SUMP specifically includes a section for public participation which lays out approaches, tools and activities for its practice. These efforts add a formal and legal character to participation activities and provide a solid ground for public participation practice, which in turn could increase credibility in the government's activities, enhance communication, build a solid dialogue and produce quality and effective policies. But despite the existence of this legal framework "the exercise of participation is not perfect in practice" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b). Participation is still in Bremen a process of learning for both government officials and citizens.

- Quality of deliberation: the process of decision-making and consensus building is always difficult to obtain since it is not easy to bring together different preferences and particular interests. Officials and citizens in Bremen have experienced the challenge that represents reaching agreement and obtaining commitment when conflict of interests exists not only among government and citizens but also between citizens themselves. Therefore and according to Mr. Glots-Ritcher, consensus is reached by collaboration, involving, negotiation and commitment from both sides. Sometime mediators are hired and extensive discussions and debates are performed. Additionally, alliances and partnerships can be developed which could work in favor or against decision

and policy making. For example, the city has experienced that a strong alliance exists between the business community and the media, which has placed pressure on government officials and authorities. The media is a strong actor in the process of participation since they can divert and manipulate citizens' opinions and views about government intentions and willingness to participate.

The decision-making process of mobility measures in Bremen ends up with political adoption by the elected Bremen Parliament Committee following the democratic and representative structures in place but before reaching this high level a " contra-flow of information" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) and intense deliberation have been taking place among citizen, other stakeholders and government officials at different levels. According to Mr. Glotz-Ritcher (2014) "a lot of steps and a lot of people are involved" in the process of consensus building to create a common vision for sustainable mobility and transport in Bremen. Decision and policy making is seen as a "continuous and never-ending process" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b) of participation and negotiations among government and citizens.

- Participation culture and capabilities: citizens of Bremen are very active in providing their opinion. A culture of participation has been built through years. The process of decision and policy making is very dynamic since many and different opinions and ideas need to converge.

One important outcome in exploring Bremen's participation process is the emphasis of educating and building a culture for participation, like the School Express and cycle-to work campaigns. Some of the approaches used in Bremen have a multiplier effect. For example by educating children in school, parents and siblings would also benefit from this information and will build knowledge which provides the basis for a positive change in behaviour and culture, especially in the context of sustainable urban mobility. For Mr. Glotz-Richter, mobility and transport measures and policies need to find a balance between what he calls "hardware and software". The hardware is the infrastructure provided by the government. In the case of the mobility, this is represented by cars, bicycles, busses, transport services, etc. Software is the "perception" or understanding of the hardware by the citizens; this is characterized by the knowledge about transport service. It is in the software where the role of participation is fundamental. Participation activities provide not only information of how measures and policies work but also communicate any further change, and provide a place for discussions and consultation, situating the practice of participation in favor of consensus building. As a consequence, transparency in the process is improved, policies are more effective and knowledgeable citizens are created with transferable skills for policy and decision making in other areas. In the words of Mr. Glotz-Richter the process of participation enhances or upgrades the "software".

4.2.3 Experiences in the practice of public participation

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying what Bremen and its government officials have experienced through public participation. The criterion considers barriers encountered in the practices of citizens involvement, effects of public participation and recommendations for practicing participation.

- Barriers: for participation to occur it is necessary to overcome some barriers that discourage its practice. Mr. Glotz-Richter elaborated on the idea that policy-making experts use a language that is too technical and difficult to follow and to be understood by citizens, which limits participation. Also, for measures and policies to work it is essential to change the mind-set of citizens. They need to understand that by participating, any adverse situation that affects their life can be changed, "they need to speak out their mind" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b). This change in attitudes and behaviour takes time and the government of Bremen is making an effort to build a strong relationship with citizens in order to assist and educate them along this path.

  Another barrier is the difference in culture, religion and language among participating citizens. Bremen still is experiencing difficulties in including minorities in their participation activities, which results in less representativeness of the decision. Likewise, the level of gender equality is not quite balanced yet. Most of the time, men participate more than women in activities. Bremen not only recognizes these problems but it is also working to resolve them.

- Effects

  o Knowledgeable citizenry and government officials: because of participation activities, citizens of Bremen have more information and are more knowledgeable about mobility and transport measures. But one determining factor in this learning process is to understand that "everyone has a role and contribution to make" (Glotz-Ritcher, 2014b). In Bremen, participation it is not only about improving technical capabilities, but is also about making fundamental changes in the attitude and behaviour of current and future generations and ethnic groups in order to prepare the basis for a better city in the future. This is a long-term view, a sustainable view. Additionally, government officials in Bremen have also benefited from participation. Now, they understand better the necessities of the citizens; they have developed a way of communicating with them by developing a common language, although there is still room for improving; they understand that openness and respect work well together and provide benefits for everyone involved; and that reaching out for citizens participation is a path supported by new technologies, especially online tools.

These tools assist in translating technical language into commonly used words in a creative, original and customized manner.

o Transparency and trust: Officials in Bremen have learned the importance that transparency and openness have for citizens. Before, decision and policy making was done by inviting separately different groups of stakeholders to discuss issues with city officials. They did not talk among each other and they did not know what the other group interests, opinions, views and recommendations were. As a consequence, the process lacked transparency and citizens were not happy with decisions. The more transparent and open participation approach that is currently developed in Bremen is changing not only the image that citizens have about their government officials but also is reshaping their relation and interactions, thus outlining new ways of governance. Trust is being created between citizens and city officials that not only prepare the basis for further collaboration but also legitimizes the government's mandate. Transparency and trust provide solid ground for more durable and effective mobility and transport measures because they openly and respectfully incorporate citizens' points and views. Citizens exert more influence in decisions and policy making and therefore peacefully can accept the result of participation activities. Additionally, a transparent decision and policymaking process are part of good governance principles.

o Good governance: Bremen considers public participation essential for the success of its mobility and transport measures and policies. In a democratic society, citizens need to be active and directly involved in measures and policies that affect their lives. Bremen's participation approaches provide opportunities for citizens to be part on a large degree in those decisions, nevertheless still the final political adoption rests on leading officials. Government officials in Bremen are aware that current needs and challenges call for changes in policy practices. Bremen's participation approaches are in favor of a government that is more fair and inclusive, open and transparent and more responsive and responsible to its citizens' demands. The new participatory tools and activities of Bremen are reshaping the way citizens and government interact and relate and most importantly are changing the behaviour of everyone involved thus outlining a new method of governance in favor of reaching sound and sustainable mobility and transport policies.

o Social cohesion and social capital: thanks to participation activities, citizens of Bremen have developed a way of respectfully dealing with issues together, finding common solutions via discussion and consensus which foster collecting thinking, and developing bonds and links which lead to increased up social co-

hesion and social capital. Bremen recognizes that a fundamental relation exists between social inclusion, social cohesion and participation, but it is a long-term process.

- Recommendations
  - o Participation indicators: It is not easy to measure the success of participation activities. It is true that quantitative and numeric indicators provide some indication about the situation of participation, but they only provide a number that rises or decreases. Bremen has learned that other kinds of indicators need to be developed, qualitative indicators. Bremen recognizes the fact that the "atmosphere" (Glotz-Richter, 2014b) of participation is more important and a better indicator than for example the number of people that attended a meeting. The qualitative aspect of participation is hard to measure but is essential. The seriousness, respect, attention and sincere dialogue that it is being built across different actors in Bremen mean more for the city officials than any quantitative indicator. As a demonstration, the latest political decision for the Bremen SUMP among the city Parliamentary Committee members was reached by unanimous decisions.

  - o Participation practices: according to his own experience, Mr. Glotz-Ritcher recommends the development and employment of online tools. These innovative approaches are transforming the way citizens are involved and engaged and widen the scope of participants. Although, the author couldn't find any social media online tool, like Facebook and twitter, related to urban sustainable mobility and transport solutions in Bremen. Additionally, the city's plans and proposals should be translated into a language that citizens and general public could understand. Mr. Glotz-Ritcher also suggests direct interaction with citizens in their own environment like supermarkets and shopping malls; this approach provides a confortable and neutral setting especially for information and consultation activities and thus result in higher participation. Finally, the city representative of Bremen suggests being creative and innovative in the development and use of participation approaches, tools and activities.

4.2.4 Application of OECD participation typology to Bremen

The analysis of participation presented above is complemented by classifying the different participation tools and activities used in Bremen within its mobility and transport campaigns and actions. By applying the OECD participation typology, this study classified these approaches and provides a visual distribution and a tendency for defining participation and practices in Bremen. The employment of this typology complements the qualitative analysis above.

- Information: the figure 4-3 below illustrates the usage of informative tools and approaches for participation in Bremen. It is important to notice that the author was not able to identify the employment of some of them, 8% of the total list. In these cases the table shows "not available" (NA) as an indicator. Considering only the tools and approaches for participation that were identified, the city of Bremen is using 76% of the tools and approaches listed on the OECD typology for information purposes. 16% of the total information activities listed are not currently used in the city. This demonstrates that Bremen is making an important effort to disseminate information about mobility and transport strategies, measures and policies to the citizens. With this approach Bremen is also teaching and building knowledge in citizens. Additionally, the city is keeping the public informed and provides reports about measures and actions, thus the city is being accountable to their citizens. The table 4-1 below offers a detailed classification of information tools and activities used by Bremen.

TABLE 4-1: INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)
Active Approach	• Official documents	Y
	• Preparatory policy and legal papers	Y
	• Reports	Y
	• Printed materials	Y
	• Audiotapes, films and games	Y
Passive Approach	• Interfaces for citizens' access: postal mail or electronic mail	Y
	• Internal information management: For example databases	NA
	• Catalogues, registers and indexes	Y
	• Questions and answers	Y
Controlled and direct channels	• Statements, briefings, presentations and speeches	Y
	• Direct mailing	Y
	• Telephone services and hotlines	N
	• Information centers and kiosks	Y
	• Field offices	N
	• Information stands	Y
	• Government own events: conferences, exhibitions, community fairs, symposiums, expert panels and open houses	Y
	• Advertising: billboards, newspapers, radio, television	Y
Independent and indirect channels	• Printed and electronic media: press releases, press conferences, and press interviews, etc.	Y
	• Co-operation with Civil Society Organizations	Y
ICTs	• Web sites and other Internet tools	Y
	• Portals	Y
	• Search engines, clear site structures and links	Y
	• Electronic kiosks	N
	• CD-ROMs	NA

	• Social media: Facebook, twitter, etc.	N

FIGURE 4-3: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN
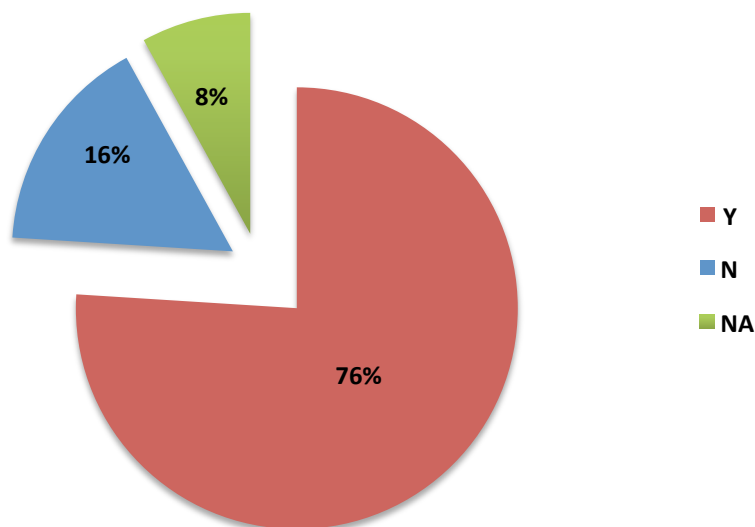
- Consultation: The figure 4-4 below illustrates that 60% of the consultation tools listed in the OECD typology are employed in Bremen in comparison with 25% that are not currently used. Similarly as in the information category, from the total list 15% of the tools are not identified. By considering consultation tools and activities, Bremen provides voice to citizens and a bi-directional flow of information between citizens and government characterized communication, relation and interactions. The table 4-2 below offers a detailed classification of consultation tools and activities used by Bremen.

TABLE 4-2: CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)
Solicited information	• Questioning, listening and reporting • Comment periods and actions (mail, email, call center, etc.) • Focus group • Surveys, comment forms, interviews, open houses • Public opinion polls	Y Y Y Y Y
Unsolicited information	• Letterboxes • Information management software packages • Analytical reports	Y NA N
Formal consultation	• Inclusion of individual citizens in consultative bodies • Workshops, seminars, conferences, roundtables, group meetings and focus groups • Public hearings and town meetings • Non-binding referenda	Y Y Y N

Permanent and steady consultation	• Open Hours in governmental offices	N
	• Citizens' panels	N
	• Advisory committees	Y
ICTs	• Electronic letterboxes (email addresses)	Y
	• Email distribution lists	NA
	• Web Fora and Newsgroups	N
	• On-line live chat events	N
	• Electronic surveys	Y

FIGURE 4-4: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN

- Active Participation: For the third category and highest level of public participation the figure 4-5 shows that Bremen used 58% of the active participation tools and activities listed on the OECD typology. The remaining 42% are not being used by the city at this time. In this case, the researcher was able to identify and classify all the tools and activities. It is clear that Bremen is making an important effort to listen, to provide voice to citizens, and to seriously and respectfully consider their opinions, views and recommendations for policy and decision-making. Also, by applying the principle of partnership some decisions are being made together but at a low level of the policy and decision making process. The table 4-3 below offers a detailed classification of active participation tools and activities used by Bremen.

TABLE 4-3: ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)
Active participation in planning	• Consensus conferences	N
	• Citizens' juries	N
Active	• Evaluation and advisory groups	Y

participation of Expert	• Traditional tripartite commissions, task forces and joint working groups (public-private partnership)	Y
Activate participation of common citizens	• Open working groups and workshops • Participatory vision and scenario- development • Citizens' fora • Dialogue processes	Y Y N Y
ICTs	• External links • Web for on-line chats • Interactive game and scenario planning • Virtual work spaces	Y N Y N

FIGURE 4-5: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN
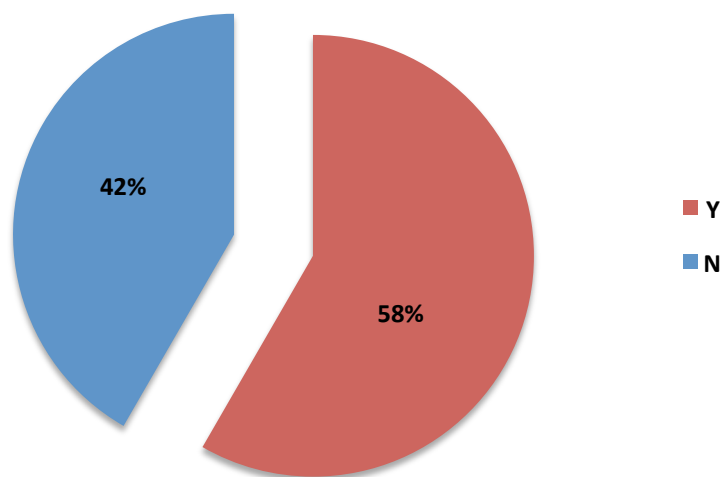
Favoring the use or non-use of information, consultation and active participation tools and activities could be explained by the nature of the campaign, the experience of the city in using this tool or that officials are not even aware that these approaches exist. But all of these possible explanations are only assumptions of this study and the author was not able to confirm them.

Bremen displayed an "impressive and comprehensive participation strategy" (Dablanc, 2014) that combines a variety of tools and activities in order to not only reach a broader variety of citizens but also to motivate, involve and engage them in decision and policy making. Ms. Dablanc was very impressed with the innovative approaches employed by Bremen, and by the complete and integrated group of tools and activities, especially the attempts made to reach schools to educate young citizens. This illustrate the experience that Bremen has gained through years of practicing public participation combined with the exchange of ideas and experiences acquired in the CIVITAS Network as well as being a demonstration city in the CIVITAS VIVALDI project. It is essential to mention that CIVITAS has provided not only guidelines to

Bremen city officials but also assisted with technical and financial resources for developing and employing urban mobility and transport measures, strategies and /or policies in the city. CIVITAS is "pushing for innovative approaches to exercise participation" (Mantero, 2014) within its network.

4.3 Conclusions

Bremen actively involves and engages citizens on mobility and transport strategies, measures and/or policies. Based upon the OECD typology 58% of participation is classified as active, 60% as consultative and 76% as informative. According to the application of the OECD typology, at this time the city tends to inform citizens more than using consultation and active participation approaches. This can be explained by the nature of the measures and the stage of those in their policy cycle (the majority of the policies are in the information and implementation stages).

One finding of this study is that in Bremen there is no recognition of the boundary and the importance between consultation and active participation approaches, it might be said that they used them interchangeably. But this is a technical definition and classification made by OECD, nevertheless it could imply a deficiency in the understanding of the influence that the public can exercise over decision and policy making and the consequences for government-citizen relations.

It is important to remember that participation has qualitative components and factors that cannot be measured by only classifying tools and activities using for example typologies for participation like the one developed by OECD. This type of typology provides a tendency and assists in visualizing participation, offering some kind of quantitative indicator for the influence that citizens can exert on policy making. Participation is the sum of the whole process, which includes many more dimensions.

The Bremen understanding of public participation provides a holistic and integrated view of a process that is inclusive, equitable and fair in the sense that it not only welcomes and listens to the interests, points of view and recommendations of a wide variety of citizens but also takes very seriously and respects citizens' input, and invites them to be part of discussions of policy issues on a frequent basis. Additionally, this definition provides an intra- and inter-generational dimension of participation since it takes into consideration the involvement of citizens of different ages thinking ahead to what kind of citizens the city wants to have in the future. This latest consideration links participation directly to sustainable development notions.

In Bremen, government is interested in building an open, continuous and active dialogue with broader groups of citizens that in turn creates trust, transparency and legitimizes the decisions

and policymaking process. Additionally, Bremen's officials keep in mind the necessity of being accountable to their citizens thus applying good governance normative principles.

In Bremen, participation is comprehensively understood and dynamicaly practiced. They recognize that participation is a long-term process, where many dimensions converge together like depth and scope of involvement, which in turn depend on the objectives, and nature of the strategy, measure and policy. City officials recognize that involvement and engagement of a broad group of citizens since the beginning of the policy cycle, especially since the understanding of the issue and reframing of the problem, is essential for participation to succeed. Additionally, Bremen is employing not only traditional tools and approaches for information, consultation and active participation but the city is venturing and deepening in employing innovative ways of involving the public, thus attracting younger generations especially. The objective is to change attitudes and behaviour, and build mobility and participatory culture within the present and future generations and generate a common vision and goal for the city.

Bremen follows the representative democratic institutions of governance. It is the Parliament representatives who in the end make the final political adoption of the mobility and transport measure and/or policy. But the process by which this policy is brought into the parliament is characterized by fairness, respect, transparency, consensus, negotiation and compromises which in turn provides trust, quality and efficient policies, legitimacy of government mandate, builds social cohesion and citizens with a higher level of participatory and political education which are transferable skills to other areas, thus enhancing the quality of the citizenry which result in social capital.

Finally, participatory governance is practiced in Bremen by empowering citizens through the use of a variety of information, consultation and active participation tools and activities, especially this last type. Government officials feel responsible for taking seriously citizens' opinions thus creating an "atmosphere" of transparency and openness, which in turn makes city officials accountable to citizens, which are now active participants and co-producers of policy making.

Bremen has reached a developed public participation undertanding and practice and it is in the process of preserving this status and disseminating its experience through the CIVITAS Network to other cities. The above participation dynamics in Bremen describes how a representative democracy coexists with participatory governance instances resulting in new, different and added methods of interaction between citizens and city officials. These new methods of interaction are slowly strengthening citizen-government relations by the use of participation but the process is far from perfect. In Bremen barriers still exist, especially in the inclusion of minorities and women, which should be overcome in order to improve the never-ending process of participation.

5 CASE STUDY: GDYNIA

This chapter will systematically and inductively analyze city and government officials' understanding and practices of public participation in the Polish city of Gdynia. The first section provides an introduction of the case which briefly describes a list of actions by which participation tools and activities are exercised in the city. The second section deeply analysis public participation using the theory-based evaluation framework. This framework consists of four criteria: understanding; practices and dynamics; experiences; and application of the OECD participation typology in order to classify participation tools and activities used by Gdynia.

5.1 Introduction

Gdynia is a port city with a population of almost 250,000 inhabitants (CIVITAS, 2013). It is located in the northern part of Poland, on the Baltic Sea. Thanks to its strategic location, Gdynia is an important naval center with significant international trade. Additionally, the city is known for science and academic education, culture and tourism.

Gdynia has been a member of the CIVITAS Network since its beginning in 2002. It participated as a demonstration city in CIVITAS I (2002-2006) within the TELLUS project. Through this project, a new trolleybus station was developed at the Swietojanska Street. As a consequence the street was transformed into a pedestrian-only area that increased the quality of life of its inhabitants and contributed significantly to the development of a more sustainable urban mode of transportation. Additionally, the city is part of the current CIVITAS Plus II (2012-2016) within the DYN@MO project. Through this project, the city of Gdynia is working to expand and further develop its initiatives in favor of sustainable urban mobility and transport focusing specifically on three sections: sustainable urban mobility planning, clean and energy-efficient vehicles, and an intelligent transport system.

In 2014, Gdynia was part of the group of candidate cities who applied for the CIVITAS annual Public Participation Award. Through the application form the city explained the latest actions, programs and/or initiatives by which participation tools and activities were employed with the objective to involve and engage citizens in the design and development; implementation; and monitoring and evaluation of sustainable urban mobility measures, strategies and/or policies. In the same document, Gdynia described the impact that the public participation tools and activities of these campaigns had on the mobility measures and the legal framework that sustains its exercise. In order to provide some context for the following discussion and analysis about public participation understanding and practices in Gdynia, it is necessary to know the mobility and transport initiatives in which the city was trying to involve and engage citizens.

Under the umbrella of the CIVITAS DYN@MO project, Gdynia is currently involving and engaging a variety of citizens by using multiple participation tools and activities. Through DYN@MO, the city is expanding its original sustainable urban mobility strategies contained in the Sustainable Urban Transport Project (SUTP) for the period 2008-2015. The SUTP was developed under the Baltic Urban Transport Implementation and Planning (BUSTRIP) project in 2009. As a result of this process a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan would be developed giving emphasis to a strong involvement of citizens and stakeholders.

In the process of developing the SUMP the government officials of Gdynia have made an effort to include a wide range of citizens' thinking by employing a combination of traditional and more innovative participation approaches. According to Gdynia's 2014 CIVITAS Public Participation Award Application Form, and as part of the traditional approaches for developing the SUMP, the city has specifically involved seniors, people with reduced mobility, and volunteers in "walking audits" in different parts of the city and through focus groups with the primary objective to give attention to discovering mobility and transport barriers in public spaces and design solutions. In schools, approximately 120 teenagers (Pawlowska, 2014a) from primary and secondary grades participated in workshops in order to be involved in designing pedestrian-friendly urban spaces with the objective to design the ideal street and analyze traffic safety problems on their way to school. Also, teachers from all primary schools have been participating in meetings, workshops and focus groups for assessing their schools surroundings safety. Additionally, around 2,500 citizens (Pawlowska, 2014a) participated in the 2014 bi-annual survey on travel preferences with the objective to discover public mobility patterns. Cyclists and NGOs were involved in roundtables, open houses and workshops in order to design and implement the first cycle map of the city. Finally, different tools and activities like direct mailing, presentation and speeches, advertising, meetings, interviews, focus groups, and round tables have been employed for informing and consulting citizens in the design and planning of pedestrian-only areas and the extension of the trolleybus lines in new neighbourhoods. The Figure 5-1 below offers some illustrations of the above mobility measures where citizens have been involved in Gdynia.

FIGURE 5-1: TRADITIONAL AND DIRECT PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA: WALKING AUDITS WITH DISABLED CITIZENS, FOCUS GROUP WITH TEACHERS AND WORKSHOPS WITH STUDENTS

SOURCE: GDYNIA'S 2014 CIVITAS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AWARD APPLICATION FORM

Besides the above participation approaches and with the objectives to reduce car use in the city and to modify behaviour and attitudes in favor of alternative and more sustainable modes

of mobility the city has promoted the Cycle-to-Work competition which attracted more than 700 participants from 74 of Gdynias' companies (Pawlowska, 2014a). Other campaigns where citizens and stakeholders have participated in the implementation of mobility measures are the "Walking and Cycling race", "Eco-way to Kindergarten" and the 2014 European Cycle Challenge. These types of competitions with a final reward or prize have proven to be effective in motivating and involving citizens in favor of implementing sustainable transport actions.

In February 2014, within the CIVITAS DYN@MO project and as part of the innovative participation approaches, the city of Gdynia officially launched "Mobilna Gdynia". This Mobility Web 2.0 Internet platform, or e-participation tool, is assisting in the creation of a more dynamic online environment that permit users to interact and collaborate among each other and to create content rather than just passively view it. The main objective of this tool is to allow the city to communicate with the public more easily and on a wider scale, to conduct online consultation and to create a place for public debate (Romanowska, 2014). Additionally, Web 2.0 allows for the development of a two-way communication and a more interactive dialogue, where information can be disseminated, awareness can be created and citizens have the opportunity to be actively involved in the planning, and developing of the on-going SUMP process.

With the Mobilna Gdynia 2.0 platform in place, the city decided to design the website http://www.mobilnagdynia.pl/ (see figure 5-2) along with other internet applications like "see, Click and Fix" specifically for cyclists and "Let's Fix it" addressed to walkers. Through these online tools, Gdynia's government officials are collecting data for learning more about public opinion, to obtain a better understanding of citizens' attitudes and receive concrete proposals through comment boxes, opinion polls, online questionnaires, surveys and micro blogs like "My Gdynia" (Moja Gdynia in Polish), which specifically allows users to create content by themselves such as articles, opinions, photos, videos, links, etc.

FIGURE 5-2: SCREENSHOT FROM THE GDYNIA WEBSITE
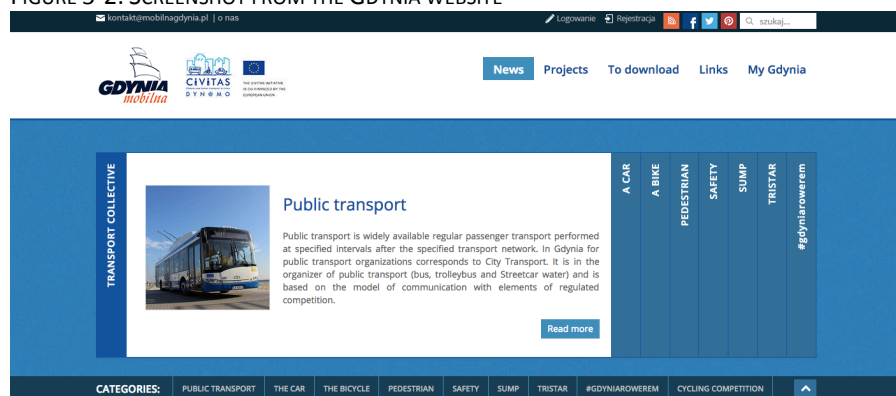
SOURCE: GDYNIA'S WEBSITE: HTTP://WWW.MOBILNAGDYNIA.PL/

Additionally, the city has actively used since 2013 its Facebook profile "Mobilna Gdynia" (https://www.facebook.com/MobilnaGdynia?ref=ts&fref=ts) and more recently its Twitter and Pinterest accounts as innovative approaches for involving and engaging citizens in designing

and implementing current and future mobility and transport measures and activities. These social media participation tools are linked to the portal. The below figure 5-3 offers a screenshot of the Gdynia's Facebook page.

FIGURE 5-3: SCREENSHOT FROM THE GDYNIA FACEBOOK PAGE

SOURCE: GDYNIA'S FACEBOOK: HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MOBILNAGDYNIA?REF=TS&FREF=TS

The brief explanation of the above actions and measures served as illustration and provided a context for the interview with Gdynia's government official. In the interview, Ms. Pawlowska constantly mentioned those actions, among others, for demonstrating the practice and approaches of public participation in the city. These campaigns and actions have supported the author in exploring and understanding public participation in the Polish city of Gdynia

5.2 Analysis

The below analysis of public participation in Gdynia is characterized by systematically reviewing primary and secondary data and by performing an inductive qualitative evaluation for which the theory-based assessment framework was applied to the exercise of public participation in the city by government officials.

5.2.1 Public participation understanding

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying how Gdynia and its government officials define and characterize participation. The criterion considers participation meaning, communication, dialogue process, and depth and scope of involvement of citizens in participation in order to obtain an understanding of public participation in Gdynia by its city officials.

- Definition: in Gdynia, public participation means, "involving citizens in matters that concern the city" (Pawlowska, 2014b). This definition of participation could be linked to the concept of governance since the city is changing traditional and government-

only practices by incorporating public thinking and actions in decision and policy making and by providing new spaces for government-citizen interactions and relations. For Ms. Pawlowska participation is not seen as a requirement to pass legislation. Public participation provides the opportunity for valuable interaction between citizens and government officials, where the city is modifying its governing approach to become an open and transparent entity who works for, by and with the public and seriously considers, values and incorporates citizens' ideas, views and recommendations. At the same time, participation offers the opportunity for citizens to express and share problems, ideas and opinions about matters that affect them, thus acquiring a voice and attention from government. In this context, the public is defined as all people that live and work in the city implying an inclusive and broad view of citizen participation and welcoming their engagement in new governance instances.

In Gdynia, participation is perceived as a time consuming but necessary long-term process. Government officials in Gdynia recognize that this long process would satisfy citizens' needs, would improve their quality of life, and city government officials would fulfil their duties. As a consequence, the government is legitimate and accountable to their citizens, for whom it works, thus stressing 'good governance' principle practices.

- Communication and dialogue: government officials are energetic in inviting citizens to participate since they recognize the value that citizens' opinions and ideas bring into decision and policy making. But despite this approach, citizens' involvement is reduced only when specific and individual "interests are at stake" (Pawlowska, 2014b). In this sense, communication is sometimes unidirectional since information flows only from government to citizens and no answer or feedback appears to emanate from the public despite government objectives and efforts to establish a two-way relationship and communication with citizens. But when citizens finally become involved and engaged in participation activities they appear to be pleased, motivated and proactive; as a result an open, respectful and direct dialogue is developed between government and citizens. In these occasions the relationship between government and citizens could be characterized as bi-directional where information flows in both ways, from government to citizens and vice versa.

  The irregular participation tendencies of citizens of Gdynia interfere with the development of a continuous dialogue thus weakening government-citizen relations and limiting the time for interactions which in turn could result in poor quality and ineffective policies and measures, deteriorating democracy and impeding governance to flourish. Government officials in Gdynia not only recognize this situation but also they are working in favor of transforming citizens from passive to active participating actors, from consumers to co-producers of policies on a more permanent basis by offering a variety of participation tools and activities depending on types, interests and preferences of participants.

City officials in Gdynia have experienced that traditional participation tools and activities like workshops, meetings, focus group, direct mail, advertising and other forms of written communication tend to attract the same segment of the city population. Thus, the city officials are approaching participation by combining traditional with innovative participation tools and activities. By mixing these two approaches the group of participating citizens is enriched, especially because younger citizens are included. As a result, policies and measures, for example the SUMP, would take in consideration ideas, views and recommendations from different generations that will be included in the future vision for the city. As a consequence, communication in Gdynia is characterized by a combination of formal and informal, traditional and innovative and direct and indirect participation approaches, tools and activities.

The selection or combination of participation approaches is related to the nature of the measure, the characteristics of the participants and the stage of the policy cycle. For example workshops, citizens meetings and surveys represent a more formal, direct and traditional approach and are frequently used for involving adult and older citizens. Social media tools, like Facebook, add a more informal, indirect and innovative dimension to participation and are employed for engaging younger citizens. With this combination of approaches city officials are able to widen the variety of citizens that participate. As a result an inter- and intra-generational view is captured and a more holistic and sustainable mobility strategy is produced.

Based upon the experience of Ms. Pawlowska and her colleagues, citizens in Gdynia are in favor of using indirect ways of participation because by remaining anonymous they are able to better express without any third party judgment their ideas, views and recommendations. For example, citizens are willing to take part in online surveys and express their opinion through the web site when registration is not needed but when registration is needed the number of respondents is lower. Also, by using indirect approaches, citizens are able to sincerely and explicitly provide their opinions and do not feel threatened and under pressure to publicly support and agree with other citizens. But by leaning in favor of the use of indirect ways of communication a sincere, open and direct dialogue is missing in the process of participation. This situation could reduce the efforts for consensus and decision-making and could escalate into poor policy quality and effectiveness. Additionally, it could make the work of government officials in participatory activities more difficult and counteract the development of participation culture, social cohesion and the construction of a common vision for the city, therefore working against sustainable development.

Although government officials try to be very open and approachable to provide information and discuss with citizens their opinions and ideas, it is difficult to motivate, involve and engage citizens in Gdynia. In some opportunities, workshops, meetings and events have been organized and prepared but few citizens have attended. Sometimes information flows just in one direction, from government to citizens when it was sup-

posed to be in two-way. As mentioned, they are trying different approaches to motivate citizens to participate, among them games with some kind of reward, which "have been functioning well" (Pawlowska, 2014b). Games have been beneficial in the implementation phase since they not only educate citizens about how the measure works but also contributes to the "adoption and acceptance of policies" (Mantero, 2014) by the public. Additionally, city officials have learned that citizens prefer to participate in small groups since they feel more confortable and the discussion and debate have turned out to be productive. By using these and other approaches citizens have starting to become more active, communication is flowing in two-ways, and natural and respectful dialogue is developing, thus slowly building a culture for participation.

- Depth of involvement: In Gdynia, citizens are starting to take part in the process of decision and policy making but for government officials the depth of their involvement relates to the nature of the policy in discussion. Sometimes the policy requires citizens' engagement beginning with the framing of the issue (like in the developing of the SUMP) continuing with design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of mobility measures and policies. In other opportunities, participation requires a more shallow or selective involvement of citizens, for example in only one stage of the policy cycle, like in the implementation of the "cycle-to-work Competition". Particularly, the city officials of Gdynia have learned that it is easier and more important to involve and motivate citizens in the design and implementation of mobility measures than to engage them in the later monitoring and evaluation stages. For the city officials, the engagement of citizens at the first stages in the policy cycle provides a legitimate and transparent character to the participation process and creates quality, effective and durable policies since it "reduces the time of complains, cost of implementations and creates ownership" (Pawlowska, 2014b) about the project, measure and/or policy.

- Scope of involvement: participation in Gdynia tends to be wider in scope. City officials are making efforts to include a broad variety of citizens with multiple tools and activities as mentioned before. The city's intention is to involve and engage different age groups and a variety of stakeholders with diverse expertise and interests who represent different points of view that contribute to the measures and/or policies through projects favoring sustainable mobility and transport solutions. According to Ms. Pawloswka the process of participation seems to be very balanced between both male and female participation. But minority groups are difficult to reach, motivate, involve and engage in participation tools and activities. This group is very small within the city, thus government officials tend to concentrate efforts and resources in the rest of the population.

5.2.2 Public participation practices and dynamics

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying the context by which public participation is exercised in Gdynia by its government officials. The criterion considers legal framework, quality of deliberation and participation culture and capabilities.

- Legal Framework: through the CIVITAS DYN@MO project, the city of Gdynia is in the process of developing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for 2015-2025 which includes as a "novelty" (Pawlowska, 2014c) citizens and stakeholders active participation in the design of the plan as one fundamental and obligatory component. Previously, the city had in place an SUTP that was used as a guideline but did not constitute a legal or binding document for sustainable transport policies and was developed with narrow public participation. By developing a SUMP the government is trying to provide a more formal and legal character to this long-term strategy that in turn offers a more stable and sustainable environment as well as guidelines and strategy for participation to occur. The government of Gdynia would like to pass and approve the SUMP by having more than 50% of public acceptance (Pawlowska, 2014b).

  Besides the SUMP and the SUTP, other documents and acts are in placed that emphasize the importance and the need for public participation in decision and policy making. For example the Bicycle Policy Audit (BYPAD) which is a self-evaluation tool that assists cities, through public involvement, in the analysis of problems and finding solutions with the objective of improving cycling policies, and the Programme of Cooperation between NGOs and City of Gdynia for 2010-2015, among others (Pawlowska, 2014b). Like the SUMP, these documents count on the support and approval of the Mayor of Gdynia. This support is essential for motivating and involving citizens since it provides credibility, transparency, and a legal basis for participation approaches.

- Quality of deliberation: Decision-making and consensus building in Gdynia is experiencing difficulties with the convergence of variety of opinions and conflicting interests. A tense and unfriendly environment sometimes prevails in participation activities. This situation is reinforced by the lack of communication skills of government officials; the use of a very technical language from mobility and transport experts; and the lack of a transparent, open and respectful dialogue among citizens. As a result, the mayor of Gdynia relies on an Advisor for community involvement whose main responsibility is providing assistance in favor of improving communication, participation, and therefore strengthening government-citizen relations. Despite these circumstances, citizens and government have been able to reach understanding in some opportunities.

  High-ranking government officials, like the mayor of the city, are responsible for making the last decision about policies. This mode of decision-making is based upon the representative democratic governance structure in place. According to Ms. Pawlowska, citizens exert some influence over that decision-making, since they not only have

the opportunity to take part in deliberation and discussion by using tools and activities offered to them but also can have a direct influence to the city authority who is open to listening to the citizens and who is willing to withdraw his decision if the policy does not have the support and consent of the majority of citizens.

- Participation culture and capabilities: In Gdynia, government officials and citizens are in the process of learning about the exercise of public participation. Government officials are discovering approaches, tools and activities for developing and nurturing a culture of participation with the public. On the other side, citizens are in the process of learning how to express their views and ideas not only to the government but also among themselves, learning a mode for expressing views and opinions and therefore to open, sincere and direct relate with government officials and more importantly to fellow citizens.

  Throughout the elaboration of the SUMP within the CIVITAS DYN@MO project, city officials are acquiring skills to communicate with citizens, are discovering communication and participation approaches that better suit the culture and way of living of the public, and are developing and enforcing tools and activities based upon the nature and purpose of measures since there is not a one-fit-all solution. Also through the developing of the SUMP, citizens of Gdynia are learning and experiencing the art of public participation.

5.2.3 Experiences in the practice of public participation

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying what Gdynia and its government officials have experienced through public participation. The criterion considers barriers, impacts and recommendations for participation.

- Barriers: government officials in Gdynia understand that participation is a continuous but difficult process. They acknowledge that participation is hard to plan, design, implement and exercise. Government officials need to rely on time and resources in the process of motivating, involving and engaging citizens. Therefore, for government officials it is easy to be discouraged when few technical and monetary resources are available and when the public does not attend events or use participation tools.

  Additionally, for participation to develop it is necessary to have the willingness and commitment of not only government officials but also politicians and city authorities such as the mayor. Their support is essential for the credibility of participation approaches.

  Citizens can also be discouraged in the practice of participation. Past experiences and ad hoc participation activities conducted for different purposes than seriously taking their views have been driving away citizens' involvement in Gdynia. Also, absence of participation culture, poor mobility and transport knowledge, too technical language,

lack of communication skills and organizational aspects like convenient time and place of meetings or knowledge about how different and new participation tools and activities work are barriers for citizens' participation and qualitative interactions. Gdynia recognizes that mediators and communication advisors are needed sometimes in assisting with the development of participation and communication strategies, in this sense media channels have been useful for spreading news about participation tools and activities in favor of sustainable urban transport measures.

- Impacts
    - o Knowledgeable government officials: participation is a difficult, laborious, time consuming and long-term process. But government officials in Gdynia are learning that public involvement and engagement should be done on a frequent and permanent basis since it is beneficial not only for the quality and efficacy of policies, and thus for government's mandate, but also for the wellbeing and good of the citizens since provides to them the opportunity to inform and discuss views and ideas that will eventually improve their lives. Therefore, it is fundamental for government officials and especially for politicians and city authorities to recognize and acknowledge that citizens must participate and that this participation should be constant and regular. Additionally, by practicing participation, government officials are discovering and acquiring experiences in the exercise of public participation; they have already understood that specific measures and different segments of the public require diverse participation approaches; that participation assists them in learning more about the necessities of citizens and therefore allow them to enhance their governmental responsibilities; that communication skills and a not too technical language is essential for participation to flourish; and that a culture for participation, along with an open and respectful dialogue, should be nurtured in the citizens of Gdynia.

    - o Quality and efficacy of policies: city officials in Gdynia have experienced how participation enhances applicability, viability and durability of policies, since it for example "reduces the time of complaints" (Pawlowska, 2014b) and costs of implementation which results in more efficient policies. Additionally, Gdynia recognizes that citizens' thinking is a valuable asset for policy making since it not only provides another perspective of the issue but also assists in finding suitable solutions thus improving the quality of mobility and transport policies.

    - o Ownership and social cohesion: government officials are conscious about the impact that participation brings into decision and policy making. They have learned that via participation activities citizens feel empowered and a sense of ownership about the new measure/policy is created. Ownership brings citizens

together since it helps them to identify themselves as part of the community and therefore feel "more responsible" (Pawlowska, 2014b) for the well being of their city which motivates them to become involved and engaged again in future activities, thus nurturing a participation culture. Empowerment provides citizens with the feeling that their opinion matters, that they have been listened to and their thinking taken into consideration, and that they can exercise some influence over policies and government's mode of governing. Government officials have learned that participation can "open the eyes of citizens" (Pawlowska, 2014b) for seeing beyond their own benefits and in favor of a common vision which lays out the path for social cohesion, mobility and participation culture and sustainable development.

- Recommendations
    - ○ Participation indicators: Gdynia is experiencing the complex task of measuring participation. They acknowledge that measuring participation is essential but not easy to do. City officials are quantitatively measuring participation via surveys and counting Facebook posts among others. But they are also trying to assess citizens' preferences for tools and participation activities in order to enhance government-citizen communication flow via qualitative indicators. Additionally, government officials recognize the impact that quantitative and qualitative indicators exercise over present and future public participation approaches, thus they are in the process of enhancing the monitoring and evaluation of public participation.

    - ○ Participation practices: Ms. Pawlowska stresses the importance and support that online tools are providing for involving and engaging the public. These tools have the potential to broaden the group of citizens and redefine the way communication is done not only between goverment and citizens but also among citizens themselves, thus encouraging the development of a culture for participation. Also, the constant and open commitment of politicians and city authorities have become fundamental for the credibility and exercise of the potential mobility measure and/or policy. Finally, overly technical language should be avoided because it may drive away the involvment of citizens.

    - ○ Employment of customized participation tools and activities: as mentioned before, different groups of citizens require different approaches. Additionally, different measures require different participation tools and activities. There is not a one-fit-all solution. For participation to develop and flourish in Gdynia, a mix of direct and indirect participation tools and activities have been working well so far. But this outcome is the result of extensive trial and error and an effort from government officials on the art of public participation. Therefore,

Gdynia recommends knowing and understanding your citizens in order to apply the participation approaches that suit them better.

5.2.4 Application of OECD participation typology to Gdynia

The analysis of participation presented above is complemented by classifying the different participation tools and activities used in Gdynia within its mobility and transport strategies and actions. By applying the OECD participation typology, this study classified these approaches and provides a visual distribution and a tendency for defining participation in Gdynia. The employment of this typology complements the qualitative analysis above.

- Information: the table 5-1 and the figure 5-4 below illustrate the use of informative tools and approaches for participation in Gdynia. As in previous cases, the researcher was not able to identify the employment of 8% of the total list. These cases are marked as "not available" (NA). Considering only the tools and approaches for participation that were identified, the city of Gdynia is using 64% of the tools and approaches listed on the OECD typology for information purposes. 28% of the total information activities listed are not currently being used in the city. According to these percentages, Gdynia is making an important effort to disseminate information about mobility and transport strategies, measures and policies to the citizens.

TABLE 5-1: INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)
Active Approach	• Official documents • Preparatory policy and legal papers • Reports • Printed materials • Audiotapes, films and games	Y N Y Y Y
Passive Approach	• Interfaces for citizens' access: postal mail or electronic mail • Internal information management: For example data-bases • Catalogues, registers and indexes • Questions and answers	Y NA N Y
Controlled and direct channels	• Statements, briefings, presentations and speeches • Direct mailing • Telephone services and hotlines • Information centers and kiosks • Field offices • Information stands • Government own events: conferences, exhibitions, community fairs, symposiums, expert panels and open houses • Advertising (mass media: billboards, newspapers, radio,	Y Y N NA N N Y Y

	television)	
Independent and indirect channels	• Printed and electronic media: press releases, press conferences, and press interviews, etc.	Y
	• Co-operation with Civil Society Organizations	Y
ICTs	• Web sites and other Internet tools	Y
	• Portals	Y
	• Search engines, clear site structures and links	Y
	• Electronic kiosks	N
	• CD-ROMs	N
	• Social media: Facebook, twitter, etc.	Y

FIGURE 5-4: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA
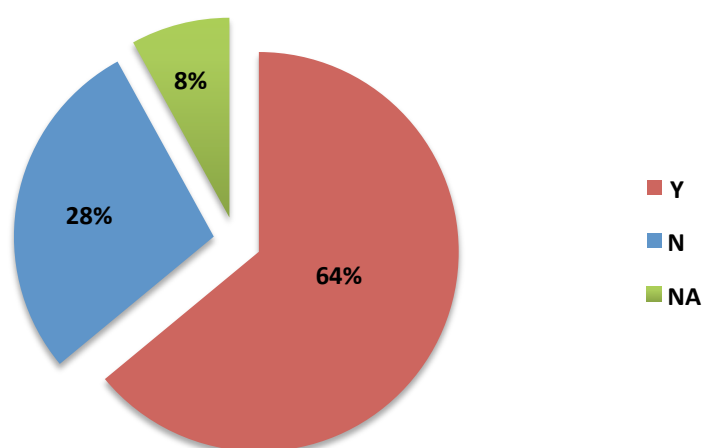
- Consultation: The figure 5-5 below illustrates that 65% of the consultation tools listed in the OECD typology are employed in Gdynia in comparison with 30% that are not currently used. From the total list only 5% of the tools and approaches are not identified. The city strongly considers consultation tools for its participation activities in order to build a bi-directional flow of information and relation with citizens and to learn citizens' thinking about measures and policies, especially the SUMP. The Table 5-2 shows a detailed classification of the consultation approaches used in Gdynia.

TABLE 5-2: CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)
Solicited information	• Questioning, listening and reporting	Y
	• Comment periods and actions (mail, email, call center, etc.)	Y
	• Focus groups	Y
	• Surveys, comment forms, interviews, open houses	Y
	• Public opinions polls	Y
Unsolicited	• Letterboxes	Y

information	• Information management software packages	NA
	• Analytical reports	N
Formal con-sultation	• Inclusion of individual citizens in consultative bodies	Y
	• Workshop, seminars, conferences, roundtables, group meetings and focus groups	Y
	• Public hearings and town meetings	Y
	• Non-binding referenda	N
Permanent and steady consultation	• Open Hours in governmental offices	Y
	• Citizens' panels	N
	• Advisory committees	N
ICTs	• Electronic letterboxes (email addresses)	Y
	• Email distribution lists	N
	• Web Fora and Newsgroups	Y
	• On-line live chat events	Y
	• Electronic surveys	N

FIGURE 5-5: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA

- Active Participation: the figure 5-6 shows that the city of Gdynia used 42% of the active participation tools and activities listed on the OECD typology. The remaining 58% are not being used by the city at this time. In this case, the author was able to identify and classify all the tools and activities. City officials of Gdynia are starting to listen, providing voice to citizens, and seriously considering the inclusion of their opinions, views and recommendations for policy and decision-making although still there is room for improvement. The Table 5-3 shows a detailed classification of the active participation approaches used in Gdynia.

TABLE 5-3: ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)
Active participation in planning	• Consensus conferences • Citizens' juries	N N
Active participation of Expert	• Evaluation and advisory groups • Traditional tripartite commissions, task forces and joint working groups (public-private partnership)	N N
Activate participation of common citizens	• Open working groups and workshops • Participatory vision and scenario-development • Citizens' fora • Dialogue processes	N Y Y Y
ICTs	• External links • Web for on-line chats • Interactive game and scenario planning • Virtual work spaces	Y N Y N

FIGURE 5-6: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN GDYNIA
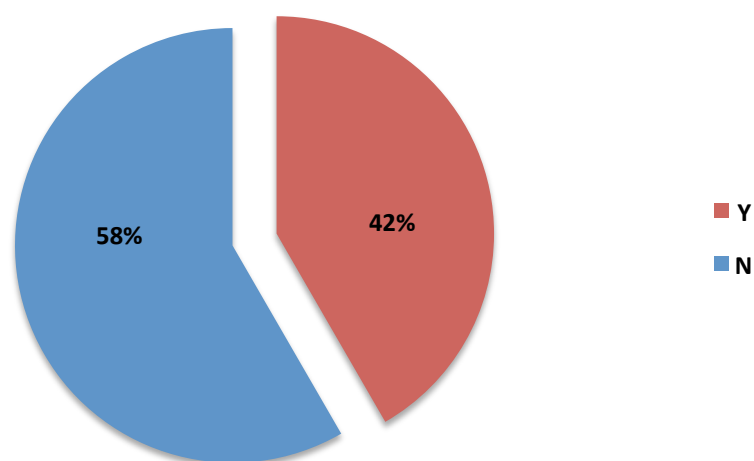
Favoring the use or non-use of participation tools and activities could be explained by the nature of the campaign, the experience of the city in using this tool or that officials are not even aware that these approaches exist. But all of these possible explanations are only assumptions of this study and the researcher was not able to confirm them.

Gdynia is using a mix of information, consultation and active participation tools and activities. As a result a wide range of citizens are participating, although it is still problematic to motivate

and engage them on regular basis. But due to the support of CIVITAS trough the CIVITAS DYN@MO project, the city is learning about how to better involve citizens, use participation approaches and develop and build participation tools that better fit the necessities and culture of their citizens.

5.3 Conclusion

In general, the public participation in Gdynia tends to be more consultative and informative than active. According to the application of the OECD typology over the tools and activities employed in Gdynia, the city is using 65% consultative participation approaches, 64% informative participation approaches and 42% active participation approaches for citizens involvement. Therefore, government officials in Gdynia tend to include citizens by using consultation and information participation tools and activities more than employing active participation.

As explained before, Gdynia is in the process of developing its Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan and based upon the OECD typology, one might say that, the city is interested in knowing and including the public's opinion about this plan. Additionally, the lack of participation culture and the irregular and sometimes problematic mode of participation in Gdynia could also explain the employment of consultation and information tools ahead of active participation approaches. The city and its citizens are not ready for this type of public participation practices and government-citizen relation.

Apparently, government officials in Gdynia do not recognize the differences that exist between consultation and active participation approaches, they even sometimes treat them as the same concept without realizing the important difference that their meanings make over the type of relations and interactions, and especially about the influence that citizens can exercise over decision and policy making. But this is a technical definition and classification made by OECD, nevertheless it could imply a deficiency in the understanding and practices of public participation.

As mentioned, typologies like that of the OECD, assist in the classification of participation tools and activities, offering an indication of how citizens are involved and engaged in decision and policy making by using different tools. For a deeper understanding of participation in Gdynia it is necessary to qualitatively explore and inductively assess further the dynamic of public participation.

In Gdynia, public participation understanding begins with allowing citizens to intervene in the way government exercises its duties, therefore recognizing the existence of a different and more participatory mode of governing and outlining a new government-citizen relationship. In Gdynia, participatory governance is slowly giving space to citizens, through the use of traditional and innovative participation approaches, in order to build a more inclusive, equitable, open, transparent and democratic influence over decision and policy making. By defining par-

ticipation in this way, government officials in Gdynia recognize the importance of seriously taking into account and incorporating citizens' thinking in the elaboration of quality and efficient policies. By producing quality and efficient policies that address citizens' needs, government is able to fulfil its duties and as a consequence its mandate can be characterized as responsible, legitimate and more democratic.

Although the above understanding of public participation in Gdynia converges with the normative notions of good governance principles, the practice of participation in the city provides a different perspective. The transformation of government officials and citizens to active and co-producers of policy making and the exercising of the active participation partnership principle are in the beginning stages in the city. Gdynia's government officials and citizens are in the process of understanding and practicing that working together is beneficial for all and needs the involvement of everyone. They are taking steps to discover their own unique way to developing a trusting, respectful, open, transparent and direct dialogue.

Government officials in Gdynia recognize that citizens can provide a valuable contribution to policy making, therefore they are exercising participation by giving emphasis to incorporating citizens' thinking in framing of the issue, design and implementation of mobility policies. Also, despite the final policy adoption being made by the city authority or high-ranked government officials based upon representative democratic governance structure, the government acknowledges and takes into consideration public acceptance and support before any decision is made. This situation illustrates that citizens exercise " some" (Pawlowska, 2014b) influence and that their opinion matters which in turn creates confidence and trust for regular and further participation.

In practicing participation, the city of Gdynia has discovered and learned that it is necessary for different participation approaches and depth of involvement in accordance with the nature of the policy, the characteristics of the public involved, and the stage of the measure in the policy cycle in order to motivate and involve citizens. Additionally, government officials are trying to include and combine diverse citizens ideas and opinions with the objective of obtaining suitable and durable policies by broadening the type of citizens that participate through the use of a mix of traditional and more innovative participation tools and activities. This latest approach is incorporating an intra- and inter-generational dimension in policy making which is directly associated with sustainable development ideas. Additionally, the city is taking into consideration other aspects like setting up a legal framework and exchanging ideas and experiences about participation through the CIVITAS DYN@MO project in order to provide the most ideal context for communication to develop and participation to flourish.

By practicing participation in this way, city officials in Gdynia are making efforts not only involving and engaging citizens in decision and policy making, they are also working in favor of developing a culture for participation and constant communication, thus redefining the way

they relate, interact and government governs. But they recognize that the process of obtaining a participation culture is long, arduous, costly and full of disappointments and should be done with care and technical, financial and political support.

Despite the above government officials' efforts and participatory governance approach, the citizens in the city still are not feeling comfortable with the idea of openly discussing matters, especially among themselves. Also they do not consistently use participation tools and activities offered to them by the city. The process of participation requires sacrifices and compromises in favor of a common vision and goal, which will result in improvement of the city as a whole and not favoring individual interests in particular. Therefore, through time and constant exercise of participation it will eventually foster not only a culture of participation and consensus building but also, and most importantly, social cohesion and a common vision for their city that would allow sustainable urban mobility policies to develop.

6 COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY BETWEEN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

6.1 Introduction

The following comparative case study between the cities of Bremen and Gdynia involves the analysis and synthesis of similarities and differences in the understanding and practices of public participation by their government officials. This comparison enhances the in-depth exploration and analysis of public participation contributing to answering the research question of this study. As done previously, the assessment is conducted by inductively analysing and comparing the collected data and the individual assessments performed on both cities in previous chapters, and by systematically applying the theory-based analysis framework which contains the following four criteria: understanding; practices and dynamics; experiences; and the application of the OECD public participation typology for classifying the tools and activities employed in each city with the objective to involve and engage citizens in the planning, implementation and evaluation of sustainable urban mobility measures, strategies and/or policies.

6.2 Analysis

6.2.1 Public participation understanding

This criterion analyzes public participation by comparing how the cities of Bremen and Gdynia and their government officials define and characterize participation. The criterion considers participation meaning, communication, dialogue process, and depth and scope of involvement of citizens in participation in order to obtain an understanding of public participation in these two cities by their government officials. Table 6-1 illustrates a summary of the comparison.

Both cities and their government officials recognize the importance of deeply and widely involving and engaging citizens in decision and policy making since they consider the public to have a valuable contribution to make for producing quality and efficient policies, for enhancing governments in their responsibilities and duties, and for improving citizens' quality of life. Bremen incorporates citizens in the process of governing by alluding to the partnership principle of active participation by which citizens are treated as permanent "partners" or equals in the process of framing, planning, implementing and monitoring and evaluating policies, thus building together a common vision for the city through a process characterized by compromises and consensus. In Gdynia, the government is inviting citizens as temporary "guests" to the city's space in order to contribute with their thinking to policymaking in planning and implementation stages. Although by inviting citizens to participate, the city is altering the way government governs in favor of a more participatory approach thus leaning to the practice of participatory governance, this approach still needs to develop a sense of continuity, which would

result in assigning permanent spaces to government-citizen interaction via governance instances and resulting in the strength of their relation and building of trust which in turn would legitimate the government's mandate.

Because of the above public participation understanding, communication and dialogue are different in both cities. In Bremen, citizens naturally, openly, respectfully, and directly provide views, opinions and recommendations thus outlining a bi-directional flow of communication and establishing a constant dialogue and relation among them and government officials. In Gdynia, on the contrary, citizens tend to prefer indirect forms of communication for interacting and relating with government officials and with fellow citizens. These differences outline contrasting participation understandings that can be explained by not only gaps in the participatory education and communication skills but also and most importantly how in general citizens in these cities are used to discussing and relating among them. Therefore participation is also related to the history and culture of these communities. The customs of a society definitely rule the way they behave and interact, the mode by which they resolve problems and the manner of how they live daily. In accordance to the evidence, citizens in Bremen are used to discussing their problems in a direct and open way while in Gdynia, they are not used to an open and direct dialogue; participation is still not a habit and therefore is not permanent. As a consequence, government officials in Gdynia are working in favor of developing a culture for participation by using a mix of participation approaches in order to motivate citizens to participate and therefore discover the benefits that can be involved in decision and policy making provide to them and to the city.

TABLE 6-1: COMPARISON OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION UNDERSTANDING IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

Criterion	Bremen	Gdynia
Definition	• Participation is a continuous and never ending process by which government and citizens seek a common vision for the city through compromises and consensus. • Partnership principle: citizens are considered as equals in the process of providing valuable knowledge. • Public as voters to whom the city is accountable.	• Participation is a long process of involving citizens in the city's duties by giving them space and through which both parties will gain valuable benefits. • Participation principle of good governance: including citizens' thinking. • Public as all people who live in the city. All have the same opportunity to participate.
Communication and dialogue	• Constant and active bi-directional communication. • Easy to motivate citizens	• Irregular and passive communication. Sometimes unidirectional and others bi-directional, de-

	to participate. • Open, direct, transparent and respectful dialogue.	spite government efforts. • Difficulties in motivating citizens to participate. • Mix of indirect and direct dialogue. • Anonymity is a preferable way for communication. • Citizens tend to feel more comfortable using indirect modes of participation for communication.
Depth of Involvement	• Fairly deep involvement: participation of citizens in framing of the problem, planning and implementing of measures and policies. Reduced involvement in evaluation.	• Fairly deep involvement: Participation of citizens in framing of the problem, planning and implementing of measures and policies. Reduced involvement in evaluation.
Scope of Involvement	• Fairly wide scope of involvement by generation. In general, men are participating more than women. Difficulties in involving different ethnic groups because of cultural, religious and language barriers. • Essential involvement of politicians and leaders' commitment.	• Fairly wide scope of involvement by generation and gender. Minority groups do not participate. • Essential involvement of politicians and leaders' commitment. • Customized participation approaches to widen scope.

6.2.2   Public participation practices and dynamics

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying the context by which public participation is exercised in Bremen and Gdynia by its government officials. The criterion considers legal framework, quality of deliberation, and participation culture and capabilities on the practice of participation. Table 6-2 displays a summary of the comparison.

As table 6-2 shows, both cities coincide in recognizing the importance that the existence of a legal framework provides to the exercise of public participation and as a consequence regulations and laws require government officials to inform and consult citizens in decision and policy making. But it seems that the realization of this importance is better captured in Bremen than in Gdynia. Mr. Glotz-Richter acknowledges that before prescribing any regulation or strategy that provides a legal basis for participation, it is imperative to take into consideration that citizens have the "right" to be involved and engaged in matters that concern them. This right should be embedded in for example "the right of freedom of speech and assembly" that often is incorporated in the constitutions and principles of any Nation. Therefore, despite both

cities having regulations and laws that provide a legal charter for public participation it seems that Bremen more deeply understands that participation is a fundamental right and should be done on a regular basis. In Bremen, special governance structures like citizens' assemblies are formally and legally established and therefore provide a step forward in the active involvement and engagement of citizens over the city of Gdynia.

Another dimension in the comparison of public participation practices and dynamics between Bremen and Gdynia is the quality of the deliberation and the way governments and citizens interact with the objective of commonly making decisions and developing policies. When analysing this dimension it is clear that government officials and citizens in Bremen have been able to discover and develop a way of dealing with issues and problems together, something that is still missing in Gdynia. Of course, in both cities, differences and challenges always exist in the art of consensus building since there are many different interests involved and many trade-offs to do with the final objective of pursuing a common vision for the benefit of all citizens in general.

The above dimensions of participation are closely related to the existence of a culture for participation and the developing of communication skills in citizens and in government officials. Both cities are working toward changing habits and behaviour in favor of the use of participation approaches to discuss and consider common problems in an open, respectful and transparent manner. Although the participation culture in Bremen is more developed and it has been built through years of practice, there are always challenges to overcome and room for improvement, especially when teaching younger generations and including minorities in public debates. In Gdynia, the culture for participation is in its beginnings. Citizens are not used to openly discussing problems and even less to finding solutions together. But government officials in the city are trying to find and develop different participation approaches to motivate and drive participation. Also, government officials in both cases are constantly learning to how to communicate with citizens and how to develop participation approaches that are more suitable for their citizens.

TABLE 6-2: COMPARISON OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRACTICES AND DYNAMICS IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

Criterion	Bremen	Gdynia
Legal Framework	• Law provides right of freedom of speech. • Regulations enforce officials to involve citizens in policy making. • SUMP and other official documents contain participation provisions. • Existence of democratic and participatory govern-	• Regulations and laws that require officials to involve citizens in policy making. • SUMP, SUTP and other official documents contain participation provisions.

	ance structures that actively and permanently involve citizens through active participation tools and activities	
Quality of deliberation	• Existence of consensus and commitment challenges when different interests are at stake. • Intense and deep deliberation. • Mediators are occasionally used. • Existence of alliances and partnerships that work in favor or against consensus building. • Final decision is made through political adoption by government authority with constant support and approval of citizens, stakeholders and government officials. • Most of the time common vision and decisions are reached thanks to an open, transparent and direct deliberation process.	• Difficulties in reaching consensus and commitment when individual and particular interests blurred the vision for a common goal. • Lack of open, direct and sincere dialogue. • Sometimes there is tense and unfriendly environment for discussion. • Presence of problems for motivating public to discuss and provide their views and ideas. • Need for mediators. • Existence of alliances and partnerships that work in favor or against consensus building. • Final decision is made through political adoption by government authority with the support of citizens, stakeholders and government officials. • Sometimes common decisions are reached thanks to open and direct participation process.
Participation culture and capabilities	• Government officials and citizens have acquired communication and participatory skills that have built a participation culture and a mode of commonly making decisions for the benefit of the whole community. • Participation culture has been developed through years of practices and changing in attitudes and behaviour.	• Government officials are acquiring communication and participatory skills to involve citizens. They are learning about tools and activities that are more convenient and suitable for the citizens. • Citizens are slowly understanding that being involved in participatory approaches provides benefits for them as a community.

	• Participation strategies concentrate on nurturing participation culture and behaviour in all citizens, especially in young citizens.	• No culture of participation has been developed yet, fewer changes in attitudes and behaviour.

6.2.3 Experiences in the practices of public participation

This criterion analyzes public participation by studying what Bremen and Gdynia and their government officials have learned and experienced through public participation. The criterion considers barriers, impacts and recommendations for participation. Table 6-3 provides a summary of the comparison.

Bremen and Gdynia have encountered common and different barriers in the exercise of public participation. For example, both government officials mentioned the necessity to simplify and even translate into an ordinary language the technical words that transport experts use in presentations, reports and documents and to look for approaches that motivate citizens to participate. In Bremen, they still experience difficulties in the inclusion of minorities based upon the differences in culture, religion and languages. In Gdynia, government officials are encountering barriers in respect to their lack of communication skills, organizational aspects, financial and technical resources and the necessity of political support.

Public participation has affected Bremen and Gdynia differently. Each of these cities is in a singular place in regards to not only their participation culture and communication skill but also in their understanding and practices of public participation. For example government officials and citizens in Bremen are more knowledgeable in the field of urban mobility thanks to the involvement and engagement in participation approaches. A culture of participation has been built through years of practice and through them, they have discovered a way of respectfully dealing with issues together, their interaction is direct and open, thus it is transparent, fair and trustful, they have found common solutions via discussion, compromises and consensus, and they have developed bonds and links that in turn work in favor of social capital, social cohesion and principles of good governance. In Gdynia, the city officials and the public are in the beginning stages of acquiring participation and communication capabilities and skills for building a participation culture; they are in the process of discovering and developing their own way of communicating and understanding. Government officials in Gdynia recognize that via participation mobility measures, strategies and policies are more effective since the cost of implementation is lower, the acceptability and viability are greater thanks to the developing of ownership, and durability is longer, thus they are leaning in favor of involving public in decision and policy making in order to eventually obtain these impacts of participation. In Gdynia there

is knowledge about the benefits that public participation practices provide to the society but they recognize that it is a long-term process.

By exercising public participation, both city officials identified that it is necessary to use quantitative but more importantly qualitative indicators for monitoring and evaluating public participation. There is a deficit for qualitative assessments of participation. In this regard, CIVITAS is developing and assisting cities by providing guidelines for the process of meeting with citizens after mobility policies have been implemented in order to ask for their opinion about the functioning of these measures. This process of evaluation is not only assisting with this shortcoming but is also working in favor of participation.

Finally, both cities have received the benefits that new information technologies, especially online tools provide to participation. Government officials of Bremen and Gdynia highly recommend the use of these tools since they assist in broadening the variety of citizens that participated and thus work in favor of a more holistic and sustainable view for mobility in the cities. Also, both cases have experienced how barriers exist in communicating technical information to citizens; therefore they recommend simplifying and translating mobility and transport technicalities to ordinary language. Besides these shared recommendations, Bremen calls for exercising participation on a neutral ground, and even advises approaching citizens in places frequented by them, where they feel comfortable to participate. Gdynia recommends the development of customized participation approaches based upon the nature of the issue and measure, and the type of citizens. Additionally, it emphasizes politician's support and leaders' commitment in participation activities.

TABLE 6-3: COMPARISON OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CONSEQUENCES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

Criterion	Bremen	Gdynia
Barriers	• Existence of technical language. • Differences in culture, religion and language. • Difficulties in changing the mind-set of people that do not want to participate.	• Existence of technical language • Organizational aspects: inconvenient time and place for participation activities. • Lack of participation skills and knowledge. • Technical and financial resources • Political unwillingness to endorse and support participation activities. • Past participation experiences.
Effects	• Knowledgeable citizens and government officials.	• Government officials are more knowledgeable in

	• Transparency and trust. • Developing and practices of good governance principles. • Social cohesion and social capital.	the practice of public participation. • Obtaining quality and efficient policies. • Social cohesion and ownership.
Recommendations	• Quantitative vs. qualitative participation indicators • Best practices: online tools, neutral environment; creativity; ordinary language.	• Quantitative vs. qualitative participation indicators • Best practices: online tools; politician support; ordinary language, customized tools.

6.2.4 Application of OECD participation typology to Bremen and Gdynia

The qualitative analysis of participation presented above is complemented by classifying the different participation tools and activities used in Bremen and Gdynia in favor of mobility and transport initiatives, measures and actions. By applying the OECD participation typology, this study classified these approaches and provides a visual distribution and a tendency for participation in the city.

- Information: It can be seen through table 6-4 and Figure 6-1 that Bremen is using 76% of the information tools while Gdynia is employing 64%. According to these percentages, it can be said that government officials in both cities are making a significant effort to provide and disseminate information to citizens with the objective to educate and inform them about sustainable urban mobility and transport issues, although Bremen makes use of more tools than Gdynia. Additionally, by using informative tools and activities both governments are being open, transparent and accountable to their citizens about their efforts and actions in favor of sustainable mobility.

TABLE 6-4: COMPARISON OF INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)	
		Bremen	Gdynia
Active Approach	• Official documents	Y	Y
	• Preparatory policy and legal papers	N	N
	• Reports	Y	Y
	• Printed materials	Y	Y
	• Audiotapes, films and games	Y	Y
Passive Approach	• Interfaces for citizens' access: postal mail or electronic mail	Y	Y
	• Internal information management: For	NA	NA

	example databases	NA	N
	• Catalogues, registers and indexes	Y	Y
	• Questions and answers		
Controlled and direct channels	• Statements, briefings, presentations and speeches	Y	Y
	• Direct mailing	Y	Y
	• Telephone services and hotlines	N	N
	• Information centers and kiosks	Y	NA
	• Field offices	N	N
	• Information stands	Y	N
	• Government's own events: conferences, exhibitions, community fairs, symposiums, expert panels and open houses	Y	Y
	• Advertising (mass media: billboards, newspapers, radio, television)	Y	Y
Independent and indirect channels	• Printed and electronic Media: press releases, press conferences, and press interviews, etc.	Y	Y
	• Co-operation with Civil Society Organizations	Y	Y
ICTs	• Web sites and other Internet tools	Y	Y
	• Portals	Y	Y
	• Search engines, clear site structures and links	Y	Y
	• Electronic kiosks	N	N
	• CD-ROMs	NA	N
	• Social media: Facebook, twitter, etc.	N	Y

FIGURE 6-1: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF INFORMATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

• Consultation: table 6-5 and Figure 6-2 illustrate that both cities are in favor and looking

for consulting citizens, although Gdynia is using more consultative tools and activities (65%) than Bremen (60%). This result can be explained by the current efforts of Gdynia for motivating the public to be involved in decision and policy making by offering multiple participation tools and activities. They are trying to boost participation since the city is in the process of developing its SUMP and many participation approaches have been offered for this purpose. On the contrary, Bremen is in the final stage of reviewing its SUMP. These results mean that government officials in both cities are interested in receiving citizens' opinions, views and recommendations in favor of policy making. When consulting, the relation between government and citizens is bi-directional and communication provides valuable information that officials in both cities are seriously taking into consideration. But although public now has a voice and it is being heard by the city officials they still do not have enough influence to frame the issue and induce changes on decisions and policy making.

TABLE 6-5: COMPARISON OF CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)	
		Bremen	Gdynia
Solicited information	• Questioning, listening and reporting	Y	Y
	• Comment periods and actions (mail, email, call center, etc.)	Y	Y
	• Focus groups	Y	Y
	• Surveys, comment forms, interviews, open houses	Y	Y
	• Public opinion polls	N	Y
Unsolicited information	• Letterboxes	Y	Y
	• Information management software packages	NA	NA
	• Analytical reports	N	N
Formal consultation	• Inclusion of individual citizens in consultative bodies	Y	Y
	• Workshop, seminars, conferences, roundtables, group meetings and focus groups	Y	Y
	• Public hearings and town meetings	Y	Y
	• Non-binding referenda	NA	N
Permanent and steady consultation	• Open Hours in governmental offices	NA	Y
	• Citizens' panels	N	N
	• Advisory committees	Y	N
ICTs	• Electronic letterboxes (email addresses)	Y	Y
	• Email distribution lists	NA	N
	• Web Fora and Newsgroups	N	Y
	• On-line live chat events	N	Y
	• Electronic surveys	Y	N

FIGURE 6-2: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF CONSULTATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA
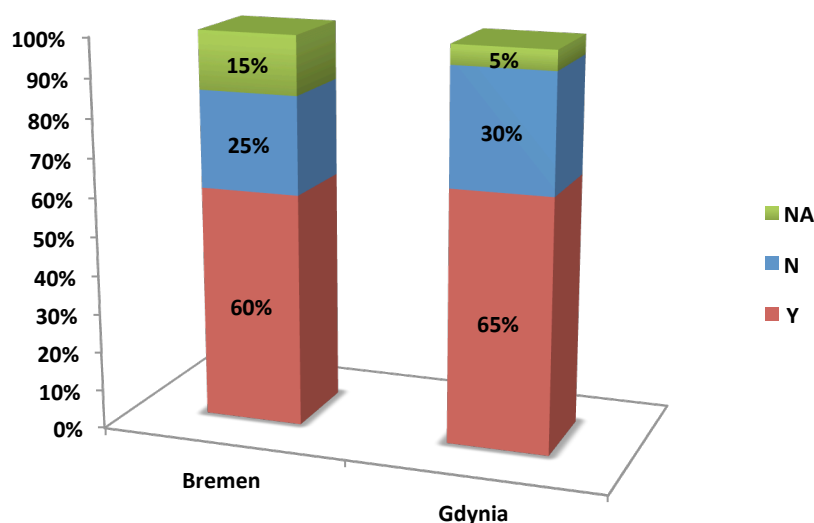
- Active Participation: It can be seen through table 6-6 and Figure 6-3 that while both cities used active participation tools and activities, Bremen (58%) is using more active participation approaches than Gdynia (42%). This is not surprising since Bremen has developed a culture for participation and a way of openly, respectfully and permanently dealing with issues together. With active participation the relation between government and citizens is reinforced and the public has a more starring role in the process of decision and policy making on a more frequent basis. It is in this participation category where citizens are treated more as equal "partners" since they exert more influence and can induce changes in the process of decision and policy making.

TABLE 6-6: COMPARISON OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA

Classification	Tools	Yes/No/No Available (NA)	
		Bremen	Gdynia
Active participation in planning	• Consensus conferences • Citizens' juries	N N	N N
Active participation of Expert	• Evaluation and advisory groups • Traditional tripartite commissions, task forces and joint working groups (public-private partnership)	Y Y	N N
Activate participation of common citizens	• Open working groups and workshops • Participatory vision and scenario- development • Citizens' fora • Dialogue processes	Y Y N Y	N Y Y Y
ICTs	• External links	Y	Y

	• Web for on-line chats	N	N
	• Interactive game and scenario planning	Y	Y
	• Virtual work spaces	N	N

FIGURE 6-3: DISTRIBUTION AND VISUALIZATION OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES IN BREMEN AND GDYNIA
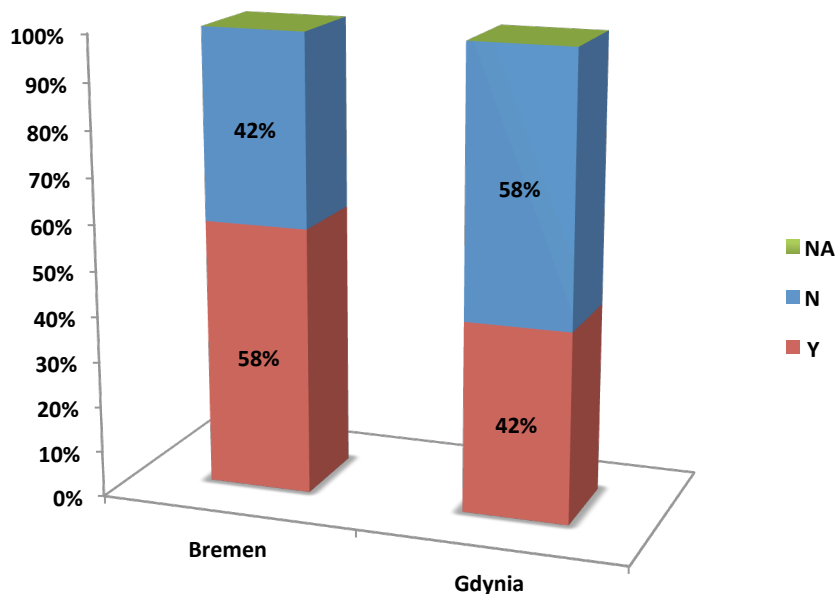
6.2.5   Conclusion

Through the above comparative analysis between the cases of Bremen and Gdynia it is clear that participation is understood and practiced differently in each city. Although, both cities have similar knowledge about the benefits and reasons for involving and engaging the public in decision and policy making, like for example the creation of quality and efficient policies, the way each city approaches participation is intimately related to the history, nature, customs, habits and culture of their society.

It is clear that understanding and practicing participation is not only a technical concept; it is also a matter of human nature. Thus, in each case government officials have to discover and develop the participation approach that best suits the nature of their citizens. Additionally, city officials have to find the way to advocate in favor of an open, transparent, respectful, inclusive, direct and sincere dialogue not only between government and citizens but also among citizens themselves. By promoting this type of dialogue, through their own unique way, social cohesion and capital is developed, trust is materialized which in turn works in favor of strengthen government and citizens relations, resulting in legitimation of the government's mandate and developing new democratic participatory governance.

Finally, it is important to mention that thanks that both cities are members of CIVITAS their public participation experiences are disseminated, share and exchange in the field of public

participation within the sphere of sustainable urban mobility solutions. This approach assists in enhancing the undertanding and practices of participation in favor of sustainable develop-ment.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.1 Main conclusions and recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore and analyze the understanding and practices of public participation by city and government officials. The aim of this purpose is not only to complement the literature with empirical public participation material but also provide valuable information to enhance the exercise of participation by government officials, who are planning, implementing and evaluating policies in favor of sustainable development.

Considering the mentioned purpose, the author conducted an extensive literature review regarding participation, and learned that participation can be described based on relations and interactions. Participation can be defined in terms of public, social and individual participation. This study mainly refers to public participation since it explores and studies the relations and interactions between government officials and citizens. Therefore, in order to understand and practice participation, city and government officials need to deeply comprehend and take into consideration the various dimensions that affect their relations and interactions with the public with the aim of obtaining quality and effective policies that work in favor of sustainable development.

7.1.2 Understanding public participation

Through review of the prevailing and extensive literature regarding public participation, the author was able to develop a theory-based analytical framework combining and classifying different dimensions for exploring and analysing public participation understanding and practices in the German city of Bremen and the Polish city of Gdynia.

Specifically, and by applying the theory-based analytical framework, the author learned that the understanding of public participation in these cities by their government officials differs in some aspects but they also share some similar characteristics. For example, while in Bremen, participation is defined on the basis of finding common solutions through consensus and compromises via permanent partnership with the public, in Gdynia, participation is understood as the invitation of citizens into spaces of government domains in order to regularly assist in policy making. Also, for both cities, participation was defined as a long-term process that includes a variety of citizens of all ages, minorities and gender, in the planning, implementation and sometimes evaluation stages of the policy cycle.

These two definitions of participation highlight different modes of relationships between government and citizens, one as partners and the other as guests, although both recognize that involving and engaging citizens should be done constantly, deeply and widely. The difference

in understanding participation could be explained by the existence of a more developed partic-ipation culture and capabilities in Bremen than in Gdynia, which has been built by years of practice, and allowed officials and citizens in Bremen to earn experience and develop a special and natural dynamic for participation which is embedded in their own habits and customs.

- This study concludes that for developing policies in favor of sustainable development, it is necessary to **understand** participation as a **process** that allows **all citizens** to be **deeply involved** and be **engaged** as **partners** on **permanent basis**. Thus, it is necessary to provide **democratic governance mechanisms** to citizens that permit them perma-nently to really and profoundly **influence** the decisions and policies regarding issues that affect them. Through the constant use of these mechanisms, both government of-ficials and citizens, would gradually develop a relationship based on trust and trans-parency which allow participation culture and capabilities to develop and find the city's own natural and particular dynamic for public participation.

Government officials in Bremen and Gdynia recognize that in order to obtain quality and effec-tive policies in the context of urban mobility in their cities, it is imperative to incorporate citi-zens' views and ideas because their involvement reduces cost of implementation and increases viability and durability of policies due to the fact that a feeling of ownership and empower-ment is created when their recommendations are considered.

- Although the above goal oriented government approach is accompanied by a sense of responsibility and accountability to their citizens, this study concludes that govern-ment officials still need to **deepen their understanding** about public participation. Par-ticipation goes beyond quality and effective policy making, it supports in **legitimating governments** by strengthening government-citizen relations, it assists in enhancing the exercise of **democracy**, and it contributes to developing **good governance** principles practices, all conditions that work in favor of **sustainable development**.

Bremen's government officials and citizens have been able to develop a transparent, fair, in-clusive dialogue based on trust and democratic instances through years of practice, changing habits, behaviours and attitudes, and learning from trial and error. In Gdynia, city officials and citizens are in the process of building this fundamental type of dialogue, thanks in part by its involvement in the CIVITAS DYN@MO project, which in turn supports their communication skills and develops a culture of participation, features that Bremen already possesses.

- In order for government officials and citizens to develop a **participatory partnership** that is consistent with sustainable development notions, such as good governance principles and influential decision and policy making, this study concludes and recom-mends to **understand**, **build and maintain** a **deep, transparent, fair, inclusive dialogue** based on **trust and democratic** instances. This essential dialogue can only be devel-

oped with **communication** that flows regularly in **two directions**, from government to the public and from the public to the government, thus creating a **direct, respectful, accountable and open relationship** between government and citizens.

7.1.3 Practicing public participation

The aforementioned dialogue is essential for the presence of quality in the decision-making process. Practicing participation conveys trade-offs among many individual and common interests. Thus, for developing a collective and sustainable vision for the city, it is necessary that both government and citizens make efforts in reaching consensus through compromises.

- This study concludes that the way to reach agreement in the **practice** of public participation is through a **fair, inclusive and democratic** approach, which provides voice, seriously listens, and incorporates the opinions and recommendations of all citizens into decision and policy making. This approach ensures acceptance and implementation of the final decision and therefore **viability, continuity and sustainability**.

Through quality deliberation, government officials and citizens of Bremen are able to make, most of the time, decisions jointly in the area of sustainable urban mobility policies, but in Gdynia the practice of deciding together is experiencing some difficulties because individual interests prevail against the common welfare despite having in place democratic participatory mechanisms for consensus building.

- In the **practice** of public participation it is necessary to develop a **sense of community and mutual benefit** in order to commonly find solutions that surpass individual interests and work in favor of sustainable solutions. This sense of common wellbeing is developed when participation is embedded as **habit** and **tradition**, thus as a **culture,** thanks to the constant practice and use of participation tools and mechanisms for a long period of time.

Citizens have the right to be asked and be involved in decision and policy making but also the duty to responsibly make use of that right. Correspondingly, city officials should understand that the enforcement of that right is not an obstruction of their work, on the contrary, it assists by giving their duties the necessary formality to respectfully gain the label of a government that is democratic, accountable to and legitimate by their citizens, definitions that are intrinsically related to sustainable development. In this sense, this study found that the city of Bremen surpasses Gdynia in the understanding and practices of this legal framework.

- In the **practice** of public participation, this study concludes that cities should consider developing a **legal framework** that democratically guarantees the **rights** of the citizens and the **duty** of governments in the practices of participation.

The continuous practice of participation will increase government and citizens' participatory education. Educated officials and participants possess literary skills, political knowledge and self-confidence; all these are attributes necessary for meaningful involvement and development of a culture of participation. In this sense, both Bremen and Gdynia are emphasizing the importance of nurturing a culture of participation. Bremen is at the stage where government and citizens already possess a culture of discussing issues together in order to reach common decisions favorable for the whole city. This culture of participation has been built through years of practice. The government officials of Bremen constantly focus on educating its citizens especially the younger ones. In the case of Gdynia, a culture of participation is still in early stages, nevertheless, government officials recognize its importance and are making efforts to promote its development not only in citizens but also among government officials.

- This study concludes and recommends that *practicing* participation is a *culture* that should be gradually built and fostered within the *lifestyle and norms* of society until it becomes a *habit* and *custom*. In order for this to happen, this study affirms that authorities and politicians need to recognize and accept the *importance and essential role* of participation. They should *foster the conditions* that allow citizens to participate with the objective to change attitudes and behaviours in favor of sustainable policy making.

In the practice of public participation, city officials are encountering barriers in their efforts to involve citizens in decision and policy making. In the cases of Bremen and Gdynia common and different obstacles have appeared in their exercise of participation. Among the mutual barriers these cities share the existence of a technical language coming from engineers and policy experts.

- This study concludes and recommends that when *practicing* participation, in order to *involve citizens and have communication flowing,* it is necessary to use an *ordinary and common language* between governments and citizens. Additionally, it is noticed that the lack of communication skills of both experts and government officials reduces government-citizen interactions.

Particularly, Bremen is encountering barriers in involving minorities and women in their participation activities due to their differences in cultural and religious beliefs. Lack of availability of technical and financial resources; problems in the organization of participation activities; poor support from politicians as well as negative past participatory experiences are hindering participation in Gdynia.

- This study concludes that a wide range of barriers exist in motivating, involving and having engaged citizens in decision and policy making. It is recommended that in the *practice* of public participation government officials need to discover and develop the

> ***appropriate participatory approach, tools and mechanisms*** that better ***suit and adapt*** their particular culture and nature of their society and the type of intended policy. This is done for example by steadily practicing participation with creativity and taking advantage of new technological advances.

This study also explores and analyzes the effects and the recommendations that city officials learned through their experiences in practicing participation. Common and different effects and recommendations were found between Bremen and Gdynia. With regard to the effects, this study has mentioned that participation contributes to the production of quality and effective policies. Also, city officials and citizens have become or are in the process of becoming more knowledgeable and skilled not only in the matters of sustainable urban mobility but also in the practices of participation.

- This study concludes that in the ***practice*** of public participation government officials and citizens should be ***educated and have experience in participatory mechanisms in order to gain confidence*** and therefore be motivated to participate on a regular basis.

Regarding recommendations, both cities' officials expressed on repeated occasions the need for an ordinary language to freely interact and relate with citizens; the willingness and support of politicians and city authorities; and the need to use and develop not only quantitative but also qualitative indicators for assessing participation.

Additionally, both cities emphasized the advantages of using online tools and ICT for broadening the spectrum of citizens that participate, especially younger citizens. As a consequence, new perspectives are being captured in order to create a more realistic collective thinking, which in turn supports the developing of an intra- and inter-generational approach, thus coinciding with sustainable development perspectives.

7.1.4   Public participation typologies

With the objective to classify the practice of public participation and expand further the exploration and analysis, this study used the public participation typology developed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development with the objective to categorize government-citizen relations and interactions in informing, consulting and active participation.

By applying the mentioned typology, which is closely related to the Arnstein Ladder for citizens' participation, the German city of Bremen tends to use more information tools and activities, while Gdynia inclines in favor of using consultative approaches. These results could be misinterpreted implying that Bremen tends to relate with citizens in a more unidirectional way and Gdynia supports a bi-directional form.

- This study concludes that **typologies** of public participation, like the one developed by OECD, although they provide information about the existence and usage of tools and activities in government-citizen relations and interactions, **are not able to capture other important dimensions** and thus to provide a comprehensive assessment about the involvement of the public. Therefore, it is recommended for participation practitioners to learn about and apply these types of participation typologies for obtaining an instrumental and practical view about the availability and use of participation tools and activities but it is **essential to combine them with other dimensions**, like the ones included in the theory-based analytical framework used in this study, in order to deeply understand participation tendencies in their cities, with the objective to customize participation practices to the nature of their citizens, thus promoting the development of a culture of participation and obtaining the successful involvement of the public in decision and policy making.

In the exploration and analysis of public participation in Bremen and Gdynia, this study determines the existence of difficulties in understanding, defining and categorizing participation tools and activities by government officials, taking as reference participation typologies, like the OECD. City officials interchangeably use the concepts of consultation and active participation without realizing the important difference their meanings imply in their relations with the citizens as well as the degree of influence that those can exert in decision and policy making processes.

- This study concludes that government officials are **not conscious of the existence of participation typologies** the implications that **citizen's influence scale** contained in these taxonomies, and the **consequences** that the different degrees of influence can exert over policymaking, governance and sustainable development.

In short, Involving and engaging citizens relate to changes in the level of influence that the public can exercise. As the figure 7-1 illustrates, this change supports the development of a new approach for making decisions and policies together, thus outlining a new mode of government-citizen relations that complements the traditional representative democratic method of governing; this new approach is commonly known as '**participatory governance**'. Sustainable development emphasizes participatory governance because it not only strengthens government-citizen relations and assists in the trade-offs in decision making but also works in favor of changing behaviours and attitudes in favor of a common vision.

Through participatory governance, individual interests are reconciled thanks to discussing and considering common problems in an open, respectful and transparent manner which leads to producing quality, efficient, viable and durable policies which work in favor of sustainable development.

- This study affirms that through ***participatory governance***, government officials and citizens ***acquire communication and participatory skills*** as well as a culture that can be ***useful*** in the discussion and deliberation of ***any topic*** that concerns them and therefore develop a participatory approach that relates to sustainable development.

FIGURE 7-1: ILLUSTRATION OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND ITS RELATION WITH THE KEY CONCEPTS OF THIS STUDY
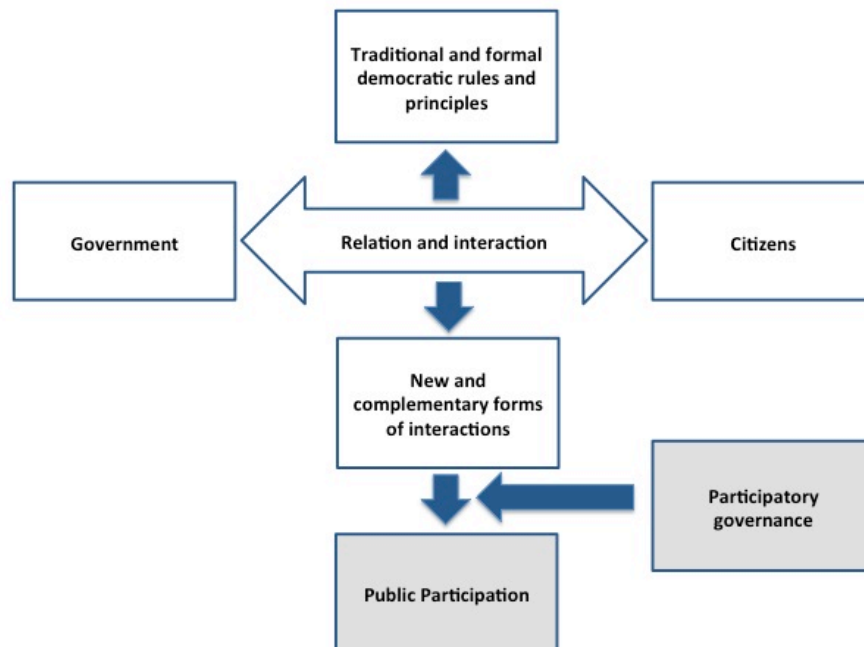
Through the deep exploration and analysis of public participation in the cases of Bremen and Gdynia, this study concludes that ***understanding and practicing public participation are closely related to, not only technical and instrumental aspects, but also to other important dimensions of human nature***.

This study recommends that city and government officials deepen their understanding of public participation in order to apply such knowledge into their extensive public participation experience. In doing so, they should be in a position to create and make use of participation approaches specific to the goals of their city, nature of the policies, and habits and customs of their citizens. Also, they need to further comprehend that, the objective for involving citizens in decisions and policy making, should not only be obteining quality and efficient policies. Participation fosters democracy, government legitimation, good governance principles practices, social cohesion, social capital, and therefore sustainable development.

8 Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the low number of respondents of the interviews. The original research strategy consisted of a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The data collection techniques comprised a questionnaire to all CIVITAS demonstration cities and interviews to experts in public participation.

A model questionnaire was prepared and sent out for testing to public participation experts. The general opinion received was that by using this type of method for collecting data and obtaining information would not really capture the essence of public participation in the cities. CIVITAS city representatives would provide not only one point of view, government' officials view, but also a biased opinion. The recommendation was to survey not only government officials but also other stakeholders, like citizens, business, organizations, etc. with the objective to obtain more compelling information. Sending questionnaires to citizens and other stakeholders in different cities and conduct in-person interviews were not viable options because the existence of language, time, resources and location barriers.

CIVITAS Secretariat personnel and the European Commission CIVITAS contact person suggested to focus on 2014 CIVITAS public participation award candidates since specific, current and detailed information about participation approaches would be available for a depth exploration and analysis of public participation in these cities. As a consequence the research strategy was modified for case study using interviews as data collection technique in order to deeply explore and intensively analyse the social phenomenon of participation in the cities of Bremen, Gdynia and Tallinn.

As mentioned, the author assisted at the 2014 CIVITAS Forum in Casablanca, Morocco where government officials for the above cities would be attending, thus assuring conducting the interviews of the three candidate cities for CIVITAS public participation award and therefore collection of the necessary primary data.

Unfortunately, one official for Bremen and one for Gdynia assisted to the conference resulting in a low number on respondents of the interview for each city. Additionally, the Tallinn representative that assisted in the conference did not feel confortable in answering the questionnaire since he was not the person responsible for the development of the participation approaches and strategies in that city. The Tallinn specialist responsible for public participation was no longer working as a government official and thus she did not attend the 2014 CIVITAS annual Forum. Furthermore, the author was able to contact this person and forward by electronic email the public participation questionnaire. But the answers received were incomplete and thus the author was not able to use the submitted data.

As a result of the relatively small sample size, the findings of this study cannot be generalized. Case studies are designed for deep study and not generalization. The use of a larger and more representative sample size could lead to stronger results and add further richness to the study, but this approach could compromise the in depth focus of this study and make the workload unmanageable.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guide for 2014 CIVITAS Public Participation award candidate cities

Part I: General information

City:

Interviewee:

Place of Work:

Occupation:

Q1: Please choose the population below that best represents your city:

Up to 50,000 inhabitants

50,000 to 200,000 inhabitants

200,000 to 500,000 inhabitants

500,000 to 800,000 inhabitants

800,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants

More than 1,000,000 inhabitants

Q2: Is your city a:

CIVITAS demonstration city? If yes, which initiative?

CIVITAS non-demonstration city?

Q3: How long has the city been a CIVITAS member?

Part II: Public Participation understanding

Q4: How would you define public participation?

Q5: How would you define public?

Q6: Why is public participation important for your initiative?

Q7: What are the benefits that public participation provided to your initiative?

Q8: What do you think stimulates public participation in your initiative?

Q9: What do you think discourages public participation in your initiative?

Q10: What do you think have been the main obstacles for?

Reaching the public

Motivating the public

Engaging the public

Q11: In which of the following phases of your initiative was public participation essential?

Design

Development and adoption

Implementation

Monitoring and evaluating

Part III: Public Participation practices and dynamic

Q12: Do you have a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)?

Q13: Does this document contain a section for developing a public participation strategy related to urban mobility?

Q14: Describe the decision-making process for reaching consensus for your initiative.

Q15: Which of the following tools and activities have been used in public participation?

Forms, Web sites, Social networks, Open houses, Focus groups, Surveys, Public meetings, Workshops, Deliberative polling, Public advisory committees, Consensus building, Other (please specify)

Q16: Describe the "communication" in the public participation process for reaching consensus about your initiative.

Informal/formal

Direct/indirect

Horizontal/vertical

Explicit/secrecy

Flow/stuck

Q17: Describe the attitude of the public in the participation process.

Proactive/Passive

Interested/not interested

Collaborative/non-cooperative

Q18: How do people organize themselves in the public participation process?

Do any alliances or partnerships exist?

Do any intermediary groups assist?

Are minority groups interested?

Are both genders interested?

Are all age groups interested?

Q19: How would you characterize the environment between the different people involved?

Q20: Who makes the final decision about which initiative will be implemented?

Q21: How would you characterize public participation in your initiative?

Informative, Consultative, Involvement, Collaborative, Partnership, Empowerment, Citizen control

Part IV: Experiences

Q22: What was the impact of your public participation approach on the public?

Q23: What would you recommend to other cities with respect to public participation? Best practices.

Q24: What do you think is essential for developing a successful public participation approach?

Q25: How do you measure the success of your public participation process? Have any indicators been developed?

Q26: How do you think public participation assists in reaching?

Social inclusion

Social cohesion

Mobility culture

Q27: Is public participation an essential component for your initiative? What is its impact?

Appendix B: Interview Guide for 2014 CIVITAS Public Participation award jurors

Part I: General information

Name:

Place of Work:

Contact information:

Q1: How long have you been part of the CIVITAS Jury that grants the Public Participation award?

Part II: Public Participation understanding

Q2: How would you define public participation?

Q3: How would you define public?

Q4: What is the importance of Public Participation in CIVITAS initiatives for sustainable urban transport? Why do you think CIVITAS has a public participation award?

Q5: What do you think are the benefits of public participation?

Q6: What do you think stimulates public participation?

Q7: What do you think discourages public participation?

Q8: How do you think public participation impacts initiatives for sustainable urban mobility?

Q9: In which stage(s) of the initiative process should public participation appear?

Design

Development and adoption

Implementation

Monitoring and evaluating

Part III: Jury Duty

Q10: What type of methodology/criteria do you personally employ to select the public participation winner city?

Q11: What elements/characteristics should a city initiative have in order to win the award for public participation? What do you look for?

Q12: What are the most common practices that you have seen for Public Participation within the CIVITAS winners in this category?

Q13: What are the most impressive/original practices that you have seen for public participation within CIVITAS winners in this category?