

Bachelor project: Human Geography and Planning

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CLIMATE POLICY- MAKING

A research on how Dutch youth organizations try to influence Dutch climate change policy-making



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Summary

Climate change is a complex global problem and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2014), the global temperature rise, and the changing climate of the earth are mainly caused by human activities. It is future generations that have to deal with the consequences of climate change and the consequences of decisions being made now. To give young people a voice in the policy processes about climate change, youth organizations could play a primary role. Therefore, this research investigates the influence youth organizations have on Dutch climate change policy-making. The central question of this research is as follows: *“How do youth organizations influence climate change policymaking?”*. In order to answer this question, several interviews with members of Dutch youth organizations were conducted. The main incentives, roles and constraints of youth organisation within the process of climate change policy-making were analysed. The main incentives of the youth organizations concern the under-representativeness of youth within Dutch climate politics, the unique perspectives of youth, their belief of having more cognitive power than current policy makers and raising awareness amongst other youth. The constraints within their work concern the lack of recognition, only reaching people within their ‘green bubble’ and not being representative for the general population as participants of youth organizations. The main findings on how youth organizations can be effective in influencing climate change policy-making are by lobbying amongst politicians and raising awareness of sustainability amongst the youth. To achieve this, youth organizations are most effective when using their social and cognitive power. Both ultimately leads to the use of leverage power and symbolic power and thus more effectiveness and influence.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Cause

Climate change is a complex worldwide problem and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2014), the global temperature rise, and the changing climate of the earth are mainly caused by human activities. Governments from all around the world see the importance of working together to solve the issue of climate change and to protect the planet and its people (Thew, 2018). On the 15th of December 2015, for the first time, all countries of the UN have come together during the Climate conference in Paris to make ambitious efforts for more sustainable development (UNFCCC, 2019). However, this collaboration of all nations and governments have proven to be complex and difficult, which results in the slow implementation of sustainable development and little significant progress (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015). Therefore, a growing awareness has risen amongst citizens that in recent years, national governments have not yet succeeded in developing the necessary actions that lead to sustainable development (Raven, 2016). As a bottom-up process, the number of non-state actors is growing and their role to help governments with sustainable development is increasingly growing (Thew, 2018).

What is interesting is that these non-state actors and state actors are predominantly of an 'older generation' deciding the future of new generations. These future generations have to deal with the consequences of climate change and the consequences of decisions being made now. The UNFCCC's principle of sustainable development states to '*protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity*'.¹ Within this context of sustainable development, the concept of intergenerational equity is important when we talk about younger generations. This implies namely the inclusion of young people in decision-making processes to ensure a sustainable climate for future generations.

To give young people a voice in the policy processes about climate change, youth organizations could play a primary role. They could empower young people and advocate for their rights in order to let younger generations actively participate in the decision-making processes. Several non-governmental youth organizations (YOUNGO) differing from scalar level want to be actively involved in decisions concerning their future. As an example, the European Youth Forum, established in 1996, is a YOUNGO on an international level who represents over 100 youth organisations and aims to strengthen the voice of young people. Since 2006, they are interfering in the debate about sustainable development and climate change policy. They aim for not only greater, but also more meaningful youth participation. They also stress that climate change is on a global level, but it is for the EU to take the leading role as a main global player. Since the EU is seen as a 'green leader' being a role model for other state actors (Kilian & Elgström, 2010). This means it is for the EU to stand up for youth participation and to take action on climate issues, in order to achieve success on a global level.

Therefore, it is interesting to see how YOUNGO cooperate within a member state of the EU such as the Netherlands. Besides this, it is important to find out how and why these YOUNGO cooperate, in order to identify how to improve their work for greater and meaningful youth participation.

¹ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (New York, 9 May 1992; came into force on 21 March 1994), at Article 3.1.

1.2 Background on Dutch climate policy

The aim of the climate summit in Paris (COP21) was to limit global warming to a maximum of 2 degrees, and preferably 1.5 degrees (UNFCCC, 2019). 192 countries including the EU and thus the Netherlands agreed to translate this Paris agreement to own national legislation.

Therefore, the Dutch government aims to reduce CO₂ emissions in 2030 by 49% and a reduction of 95% in 2050 (Rijksoverheid, 2019). To reach this goal, the Dutch government involved organizations and companies to come up with national agreements to combat climate change. Agreements were made within five sectors: industry, mobility, the built environment, electricity and agriculture & land-use. The progress and consistency of these sectors were then monitored by a group called 'Het Klimaatberaad' (Rijksoverheid, 2018). All the agreements were eventually put together in the national climate agreement (Het Klimaatakkoord), including 600 measures to combat climate change. This national climate agreement was published in December 2018, 3 years after the COP21. Although the Dutch government opted for an approach to involve many organisations and companies, only one YOUNGO was involved in the process (Rijksoverheid, 2018).

Since the national climate agreement was published and other government started working on climate policy, there has been criticism from the youth and scientists on the governments. As scientists from various countries explain, many young people have recently been participating in climate strikes located at Amsterdam, Utrecht and Den Haag (Appendix C) because they are concerned that the current climate protection is not enough (Adrian-Kalchhauser et al., 2019). Therefore, several climate strikes in the Netherlands occurred where young people protested on the streets to force the Dutch government to act. Scientists justify and support the concerns of the youth by the best available science, which is written in a '*statement of scientists and scholars concerning the protests for more climate protection*'. Youth and scientists argue that action must be taken now in order to reach the goals of the COP21 (Adrian-Kalchhauser et al., 2019). To make these youth heard, there have been established several regional and local YOUNGO in the Netherlands who aim for more sustainability to combat climate change.

1.3 Problem statement

It is clear that YOUNGO are actively trying to get involved in policy-making on sustainable development and climate change. However, it is still unclear whether their involvement is effectively and taken seriously by governments. This paper focuses on the (recent) established youth organizations that concern with climate change and sustainable development. What are the incentives of these organizations to take action and are they limited in their capabilities? It is interesting to see what role youth organizations have when it comes to policy making on climate change since they are the future generation and decision makers that must live with the impacts of climate change.

The aim of this research is to analyse how Dutch youth organizations can influence decisions in policy making on climate change. Therefore, the central question is as follows: "*How do youth organizations influence climate change policymaking?*". To formulate an answer to this question, several secondary questions arise logically out of the central question:

- *What are the incentives and roles of youth organizations in the process of climate policy-making within the Dutch government?*
- *What are the constraints that youth organizations encounter?*
- *How effective are Dutch youth organisations in influencing government policies?*

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows: in chapter 2 the theoretical framework is discussed. It sets out the most relevant theories about YOUNGO. Chapter 3 describes the methodology. The choice for the method of data collection is justified and it is indicated how, and through which data, answers are given to the various sub-questions. Chapter 4 then discussed the results of the study in relation to the relevant theories discussed in chapter 2. Chapter 5 summarizes the research results in the form of a conclusion.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Youth participation's roles

As explained in the introduction, non-state actors and especially non-governmental youth organisations (YOUNGO) can be seen as relatively 'new' within the climate policy processes. According to Narksompong & Limjirakan (2015), the definition of this 'new role' of youth participation is expressed as '*a process where young people are involved, as active citizens, in expressing views on and influencing decision making on issues that affect them*'. As they point out, there hasn't been that much research into what role youth can have, when they are given the opportunity to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes. This is in line with the paper of Thew (2018) which states that it is not yet understood in which way YOUNGO participate and what freedom they have in this participation.

Checkoway, (2011) has looked more into the roles of youth participation and their phenomena with general propositions about what youth participation actually is. An important proposition of youth participation is that it is only of quality when youth engage actively and have a real effect on a process or have a real influence on a specific decision (Checkoway, 2011). When taken this into consideration, according to Narksompong & Limjirakan (2015) youth participation is often not successful due to one-time discussions in politics without leading to real influence on policy decisions. Youth participation is often seen as a new kind of governance which is a solution to a series of problems, yet the negligible political status of young people in this youth participation is often overlooked (Bessant, 2003). With this, the main roles of young people or YOUNGO are mainly only empowering young people and trying to advocate for their rights. Other roles of YOUNGO are still somehow unknown due to the lack of research about them.

2.2 Incentives of youth participation.

Thew (2018) argues that further research focussing on youth and their roles is important because they will eventually have to live with the consequences of climate change. Therefore, it is interesting to look at the incentives of YOUNGO within the climate policy-making processes.

The first incentives identified by Narksompong & Limjirakan (2015) is that young people are feeling the urge to participate in climate change policy because they are getting more and more concerned about the consequences of climate change (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015). Although these YOUNGO have a relatively 'new role', they must not be ignored. This is because of the second incentives of youth participation. Youth have unique perspectives which makes their participation beneficial for decision-making processes (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015). Therefore, climate policy must include youth participation to ensure an increased capacity of the next generations to respond effectively to unpredicted futures. This has also been concluded by Thew (2018) who aims that non-state actor involvements and youth involvement is ever more important to create and implement climate policy according to the Paris agreement.

2.3 Main constraints for youth participation

The main constraint is the fact that adults refuse to share power with youth (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015). This is due to the many prejudices about young people which leads to refusal or reluctance of policy-makers to ignore these prejudices and to enter into cooperation (Bessant, 2003). These prejudices are in fact about youth as being passive or problematic instead of showing themselves as meaningful and recognized active citizens (Hickey & Pauli-Myler, 2017).

This then results in the constraint that adults believe that youth are not capable and responsible partners or citizens (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015; Bessant, 2003). This is known as a phenomenon called 'adulthood' which means that adults see themselves as better than young people because of their age (Checkoway, 2011).

Another constraint for youth participation is that young people don't see themselves as a group that can create change (Checkoway, 2011). Therefore, it is difficult to even begin with the involvement of young people. However, when youth do get involved in policy decision, they also face constraints. As Checkoway (2011) explains, they then encounter constraints about the representativeness of the participation within youth organizations. Studies have shown that the most active participants in organisations, in general, are not representative enough of the general population. Since they are most likely to be higher educated and of a higher income and socioeconomic status than the general population. Lower income and educated youth are less active in politics but more active in issues which are important to them (Checkoway, 2011). However, it is the question if they view the issues of climate change as important.

2.4 How youth participation can be effective.

Within decisions on climate change policy, YOUNGO can act as agents by lobbying and trying to influence the outcomes of policy decision (Thew, 2018). By using different power resources, YOUNGO can gain recognition from other actors and therefore can create the ability to influence these decisions on climate policy and thus have influence within the process (Thew, 2018). Within these power resources, the following 5 are distinguished:

- *Cognitive power*: having relevant information and understanding of a policy process
- *Leverage power*: having access to policy processes, thus able to influence key actors
- *Symbolic power*: having large membership numbers which support the claims of the YOUNGO.
- *Material power*: having sufficient financial and material resources
- *Social power*: having access to networks and the ability to be heard within them

According to the research of Thew (2018), YOUNGO are most successful when they focus on building relationships with individual decision-makers and offering concrete policy solutions. This ensures recognition from other actors with which they cooperate with and therefore are more able to influence a policy-making process. This implies that YOUNGO are most successful when using their *social* and *cognitive* powers.

However, for younger people, it remains difficult to use their *social* and *cognitive* power because of the lack of *material* power. When there is a lack of material power, YOUNGO experience less influence. An example of this is the inability of the YOUNGO to go to certain meetings because of money or time constraints. When this is the case, YOUNGO experience less recognition and therefore grasp to their *symbolic* power. This leads according to Thew (2018) to an even more diminishing recognition from policy-makers and therefore a decreased influence on the policy-making process.

However, using *symbolic* power could also be an effective power resource to gain influence on the policy-making process. It is argued that it is also important to involve adults who support YOUNGO and are involved in their work (Frank, 2006). While adults can serve as facilitators and supporters for youth in order to create confidence among young people to reach to policy-makers with their own ideas and vision (Frank, 2006). Other ways to improve the effectiveness of YOUNGO is by creating and using *leverage* power. By having *leverage* power and being involved in the policy-making process in an early stage, there is more commitment and recognition from decision makers (Frank, 2006).

2.5 Conceptual model

Figure 1 represents the conceptual model which will be used throughout the research. The arrows between different concepts represent a causal relation. The conceptual model represents the incentives for the establishments of YOUNGO and which roles they have within the climate policy-making process. Following these roles and accordingly to certain constraints and power resources discussed in this chapter, the effectiveness of YOUNGO and their influence on climate policy-making can be analysed.

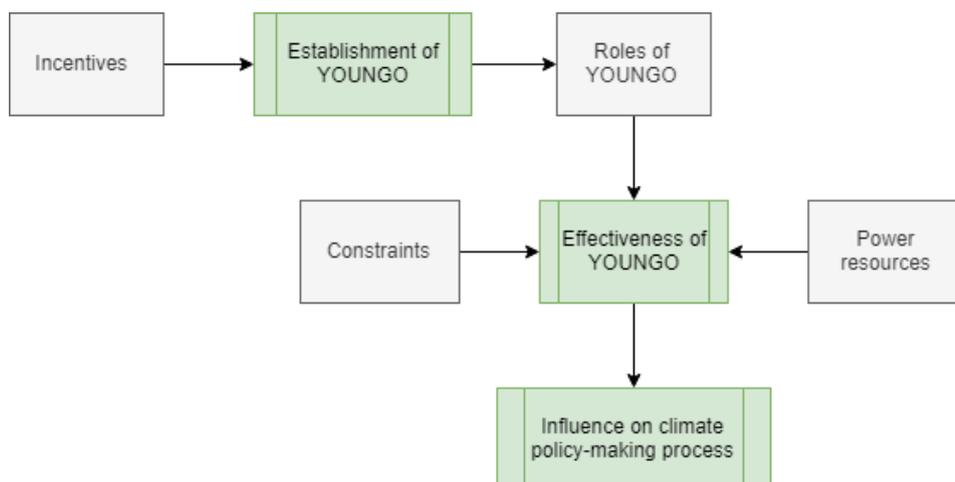


Figure 1 - Conceptual model

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

The design of this research has a qualitative focus to gain primary data. The best suitable way to gain qualitative data was by collecting it through semi-structured in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are a qualitative gathering method to receive data and get insight into the perspectives regarding the opinions and beliefs from members of YOUNGO (Hennink et al., 2011). Therefore, interviewing was chosen as a research method, since they provide insight into how YOUNGO experience their participation in climate change policy. In this way, more insight was created into the incentives and constraints YOUNGO experience. From this, the effectiveness of YOUNGO was eventually analysed. Another research method such as a questionnaire was not suitable while questionnaires do not provide the in-depth information needed. Focus group could also be considered as an effective research method, but due to the lack of capacity of YOUNGO, this was less suitable.

3.2 Data collection: interviews

To collect the required data to answer the main research question, three interviews were conducted with members of Dutch YOUNGO who are (part of) the most important youth movement in the Netherlands concerning climate change and sustainability. Before conducting the interviews, contact with several YOUNGO has been sought who were all part of 'de Jonge Klimaatbeweging' (JKB). This is a YOUNGO who unites over 70 other youth organisations in the Netherlands who aim for more sustainable development. From this, the most important organisations were interviewed, including JKB itself. These YOUNGO can be seen as one of the most important YOUNGO for this research because they actively try to influence policy. Two other interviewed organisations, who together established JKB and therefore are of great importance, are 'Jongeren Milieu Actief' (JMA) and 'Studenten voor morgen' (SvM). In table 1, all the interviewed YOUNGO are listed with information about the YOUNGO and their main goals. They all have in common that they either want to give young people the opportunity to participate in society or aim for a more sustainable society or both. The locations of the YOUNGO are in the western part of the Netherlands, similar to where the climate strikes were located (appendix C) Other YOUNGO were also contacted, but they either did not reply or they referred to one of the already interviewed organisations as the most suitable for this research.

All three interviewees are a member of the board of their YOUNGO. Boards of the YOUNGO exist of young people aged between 18 and 30 and most of them are higher educated (HBO or University degree). These boards have weekly meetings where they discuss the latest news and topics and therefore the interviewees do represent the entire organisation regarding their beliefs and visions.

Name organisation	Information organisation
<i>De Jonge Klimaatbeweging</i>	An organisation which unites the voices of 40 till 70 YOUNGO. Together they try to influence climate and sustainability policy.
<i>Jongeren Milieu Actief</i>	The youth organisation of environmental defence. Aiming for a clean and fair world, for young people in the Netherlands and for young people worldwide. They strive for climate justice in order to combat climate change.
<i>Studenten voor Morgen</i>	A national network organisation aiming for more sustainability within higher education schools and universities. It is a student network promoting a sustainable lifestyle, study and career.

Table 1: information Dutch YOUNGO

For these interviews, a semi-structured interview guide was used, which is located in Appendix A (in Dutch). The interviews were conducted in informal settings, while most of the members of the organisations are of the same age as the researcher is. In this way, respondents feel more comfortable in an informal setting. The location of the interviews were in Utrecht and Amsterdam. In order to gain the full benefit of the interviews, the interviews were recorded. Because of the younger age of the interviewees, there were no difficulties with regards to recording the interview.

Opening questions are used as 'warm-up' question so that the interviewee can answer easily. It pertains indirectly to the main information needed. Namely what the incentives of the youth organisations are to operate. However, the opening questions are mainly used to put the researcher more at ease with the interviewee and it will thus make the rest of the interview flow more smoothly. After this, questions are formulated to gain more information about the incentives and constraints of youth organisations. The closing questions provide some closure for the interviewee and leaves the interviewee feeling empowered, listened to, or otherwise happy about the interview.

3.3 Data analysis: interviews

All interviews were recorded and afterwards transcribed. The transcripts are not included in the appendices due to privacy reasons of the interviewees. The transcripts were coded manually by using different colours for different themes (roles, incentives, constraints, power resources, recognition and effectiveness). All the interviews were then compared with each other and similarities and differences were sorted out. These can be found in the results in chapter 4.

3.4 Ethical considerations

During the research, there are concrete actions in terms of ethical practice. Firstly, when contacting the YOUNGO an explanation entails what the aim is of this research is and why the research will be done. Secondly, during the interviews, ethical standards are maintained on the basis of fairness, mutual respect, accountability and trust. It is important to communicate that the interviews will be conducted only for University purposes and that this research will not be published. During the interviews, there was an emphasis that the conversations are completely confidential and the information cannot be traced back to the interviewee, while it is anonymous. Therefore, only with permission, the interviews were recorded. The audio recordings will only be listened to by myself and the supervisor of the bachelor's thesis. The data within this study will not be used for other purposes and will be deleted after 5 years.

The information sheet from the Research Ethics Committee (appendix B, in Dutch), is used to contact YOUNGO. Since the participants are members of YOUNGO and are more approachable via e-mail, this is used in order to get in touch with the YOUNGO.

3.5 Data quality reflection

Since the three most important YOUNGO concerning climate change and sustainable development were interviewed, the data can be seen of good quality. However, the research could be of more value when (a few) policymakers were also interviewed on their view on Dutch YOUNGO. However, due to time constraints and busy agendas of policy-makers, this was not possible. Another interesting improvement of the research could be to make a questionnaire for younger people who are not connected to any YOUNGO and see how they think about climate change and sustainable development.

4. Results

4.1 The Dutch YOUNGO

The YOUNGO 'Jongeren Milieu Actief' (JMA) is the youth organisation of 'Milieudefensie', which is a grassroots organisation that aims for sustainability and fairness in the Netherlands. JMA is closely connected to Milieudefensie: all members of Milieudefensie aged under 30 are automatically a member of JMA and with Milieudefensie they find more time to achieve impactful campaigns. JMA carries the same vision as Milieudefensie has and puts even more emphasis on climate justice. Climate justice means a world where sustainability is achieved because everyone has fairly taken their own responsibility since climate problems are caused by social injustice and need to be solved with social justice. According to JMA, it is mostly wealthier people who reap the benefit of the causations of climate change, while less wealthy people must deal with the consequences of it. Therefore, their vision on climate justice could be seen as a capacity principle, where every citizen/company/stakeholder, by means of their capacity, must contribute to the financing of sustainable development. To achieve this climate justice, the JMA consists of a board and two youth organizers who represent the voice of the youth during campaigns of Milieudefensie. JMA organizes monthly meetups in order to inform other young people about certain topics and themes concerning climate change and climate justice.

Another Dutch YOUNGO aiming for more sustainability is 'Studenten voor Morgen' (SvM) who in particular aim for more sustainability within education. It is an overarching network providing support for sustainability bodies within higher education. They bring different member organisations in contact with each other and help with their projects. In figure 2, the organizational structure of SvM is visually presented. Within this organizational structure, all power resources are used, especially *social power* (1, 2, 3, 5, 6,). With minimal financial support (7) of 'Leren voor Morgen', an organisation with the same aims as SvM, they are able to start up their projects. One of these projects is the 'lobby project', which is a research on the integration of sustainability within education. Eventually, this research will be presented to politicians to give them an eye-opener how much still needs to be done to be sustainable. Another project of SvM is called the *sustainaBUL*, which is a ranking about the sustainability of higher education schools. Due to this ranking list, higher education schools want to improve on their sustainability in order to end up at the top of the list. Both the 'lobby project' and 'sustainaBUL' can be seen as a *leverage power* while they are influencing the key actors, politicians and higher education schools, who can provide more sustainability.

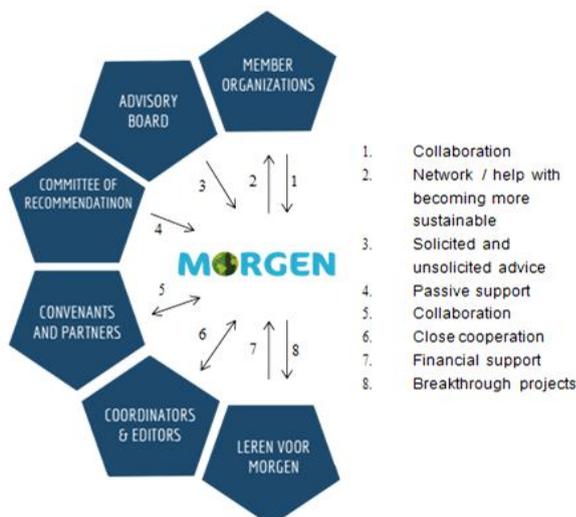


Figure 2: organizational structure SvM

JMA and SvM both have been part of the establishment of the YOUNGO 'de Jonge Klimaatbeweging' (JKB). This is a movement that tries to influence climate and sustainability policy by means of campaigns and through conversations with politicians. After the climate agreement in Paris in 2015, several YOUNGO in the Netherlands felt that young people were still not represented in Dutch politics. This has been for JMA, SvM a direct reason and incentive to found the JKB. With the founding of JKB, a lobby document was made along with 40 youth organisations as a manifesto which was presented towards the government. This manifesto eventually turned into the young climate agenda. Which is a vision document of 40 youth organisations with their ideas about 2050 and it acts as lobby document of the *raison d'être* of JKB.

4.2 Incentives and roles of YOUNGO

With the incentive that young people were still not represented in Dutch politics and that young people feel an urge to participate in climate change policy because of their concern that the government is not doing enough (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015), the first role of YOUNGO can be identified. With the lobby document of the JKB (and also the Lobby project of SvM), the role of YOUNGO can be seen as lobbyists who try to let the voice of younger people be heard within politics. In order to gain this lobbying role, YOUNGO use their *social power* by cooperating with other YOUNGO. Both the lobby document of JKB and the Lobby project of SvM has started only due to cooperation with other organisations. While using this *social power*, JKB has been effective in reaching politics since they have been involved in the national climate agreements (Klimaataakkoord). In this way, JKB has gained *leverage power* by using their *social power*.

According to the literature, other roles YOUNGO are mainly raising awareness amongst the youth and empowering young people. These roles have also been identified by the interviewed YOUNGO. For example, they see many more issues on climate change and sustainability on different scalar levels that must involve the voice of young people. Therefore, YOUNGO encourage young people by organizing campaigns and events to make youth aware of the current issues and to let the youth know their voice can be heard. Although these campaigns and events are focused on making young people aware, they are less focused on activating young people to join political discussions. These roles of YOUNGO have thus mainly an indirect influence on politics: by involving more young people, YOUNGO ensure more capacity for their visions.

Another incentive of YOUNGO is about their *cognitive power*: having relevant information and understanding of the current policy processes (Thew, 2018). This incentive is in line with the fact that youth have unique perspectives, discussed in chapter 2. YOUNGO explain that young people nowadays have a whole different view on policy making for the future. This different view of young people entails that youth are more concerned with social justice and climate (justice). This view is different from older generations since youth have grown up in a totally different environment: boundaries of places and countries are much less marked due to travelling and the internet then it was in the past. Due to this, YOUNGO explain that they experience the feeling that they do sometimes can come up with a better solution than current policymakers. This counters the argument made in chapter 2 that youth do not see themselves as change makers (Checkoway, 2011).

4.2.1 Symbolic power of YOUNGO

According to Thew (2018), the use of YOUNGO their *symbolic power*, reaching back on the people who support the organisation, won't give YOUNGO the ability to effectively influence policymaking. However, all interviewed YOUNGO argue that they can be successful when they make use of their *symbolic power*. All YOUNGO argue that it is good when young people get more support and reach back on this in order to contribute to society. They explain this by using 2 examples of this symbolic power. Firstly, the climate marches, of which all interviewed YOUNGO are involved in, have according to them led to greater support for sustainability and climate justice in the Netherlands. All YOUNGO argue that the government no longer can ignore the youth of the climate marches since all youth in those climate marches are missing out on school on those days. Secondly, the 'Committee of Recommendations' of SvM (included in Appendix C) is a committee that consists of acknowledged people who support the idea behind the YOUNGO and see why these YOUNGO are important. These 2 examples are in line with the argument of Frank (2006) that it is important to include adults in YOUNGO their work.

4.3 Constraints of YOUNGO

YOUNGO experience difficulties with gaining recognition from other parties and policymakers. A member of JMA has attended the COP24 (Conference of Parties in Katowice) with several YOUNGO working groups. However, they experienced no recognition from other parties and policymakers during the COP24:

“but little is listened to us, we do have one chair which gives us one vote within COP24 but I do have the feeling that we are laughed away. I..I In general we are not really taken seriously internationally”

Source: an interviewed member of Jongeren Milieu Actief (JMA)

On a national level they do experience more recognition, this is however only a little improvement. Since they experience that nowadays a great effort still has to be made with which a lot of lobbying is needed if the youth want a place within politics. This in line with the fact that adults often refuse to share power with youth due to the phenomenon adultism (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015; Checkoway 2011).

Another main constraint YOUNGO encounter concerns their lack of material power. Due to a limited budget, the workload is often too high for the people within a YOUNGO board. All the interviewed YOUNGO explain that people within the YOUNGO are doing part-time, voluntary work. If they receive any funds from partner

organisation or companies, it will only be spent on the projects and not on the board members. Also due to limited capacity and time, a lot of opportunities and chances given to the YOUNGO to participate in are not exploited. They explain that this is an overall constraint for NGO's, however, this constraint is even more with youth organisations. Since youth are in a phase of studying, working on their career, wanting to contribute to society, working and maintain their social contacts. More funding could lower the workload however they stress the fact that receiving more funds also make them more dependent on their sponsors which they want to avoid.

The under-representativeness of people participating in a YOUNGO (Checkoway, 2011) is also recognized by the YOUNGO. In general, young people who participate in a YOUNGO are often higher education and of a certain ethnic background. This has advantages such as contributing to their *cognitive power*. However, they also experience difficulties with expressing their vision towards the general population. Most of the general population view the organisations concerning climate as a 'green bubble' and a problem for 'the elite'. The YOUNGO acknowledge that the boards of their organisation are not representative enough for the general population.

4.4 Effectiveness of YOUNGO

The effectiveness of Dutch YOUNGO in influencing government policies can be explained by the use of power resources within their incentives and how this creates constraints. Table 2 gives an overview of the main power resources and whether they are found to be effective or not.

It is clear that YOUNGO are most effective and thus successful when using their social power. Due to this social power, they argue that they have seen their visions come back in the agreements on climate policy now made. Despite this success, they do mention that it is difficult to appoint whether this success is due to them, or that other people/organisation happen to have the same opinion.

The awareness-raising role the YOUNGO gained through social power was experienced as successful by the YOUNGO. All interviewed YOUNGO experience that the voice of younger people is slowly beginning to emerge. This is mainly due to the successful use of their social power through which they have successfully cooperated with other YOUNGO. In this way, they've experienced that they stand much stronger with a stronger vision towards politics. An example of this cooperation is the recently organized climate strikes in several locations in the Netherlands (Appendix C). The YOUNGO experienced a much larger reach and a more diverse group of youth instead of only (mostly) the typical youth involved in youth participation described in chapter 2.

Social power use has also created leverage power and symbolic power for the YOUNGO. The climate strikes led to greater support for sustainability and climate (justice) in the Netherlands. While the Dutch government can hardly ignore this anymore and therefore the YOUNGO are successful by using their symbolic power.

In table 2 there are also point where YOUNGO lack of effectiveness (10, 11, 12, 13). Most of these can be improved by the use of social power. As SvM explains, much is being done about creating brand awareness in order to reach new target groups who want to join the organization and to find partnerships who would like to sponsor them. They stress the fact that it is really important to get more brand awareness in order to continue to exist. This could tackle the constraint of the high workload of the YOUNGO boards and the constraint that YOUNGO concerning climate and sustainability are seen as under representative and in a 'green bubble'.

5. Conclusions

The main incentives of the youth organizations are firstly the under-representativeness of the youth within the Dutch politics. Secondly, YOUNGO feel that they have unique perspectives and a whole different view on policymaking as there is now. They experience that their *cognitive power* is of a higher level than current policymakers. Thirdly, YOUNGO want to make other young people aware of current climate issues and encourage them to participate in this subject.

The roles of youth organizations that can be identified in the process of climate policy-making are the lobbying and awareness raising role. By using their *social power*, YOUNGO are trying with a lot of effort and lobbying to gain recognition from policy-makers to influence climate change politics. YOUNGO also try by using their *social power* to make other young people aware of current issues among climate change and sustainability. By showing young people their capabilities, YOUNGO could activate youth to participate in climate politics.

The main constraint that youth organizations encounter is the ongoing lack of recognition on an international level. More recognition is experienced on a national level, however, this is only by the people in, as the YOUNGO explain, their 'green bubble'. Outside this 'green bubble', gaining recognition is still difficult. This is a major constraint for influencing climate policy-making. This constraint is consistent with the constraint that the youth participating in the YOUNGO are not representative of the general population. Therefore, it is difficult to reach people outside of the 'green bubble'. The third constraint concerns the lack of material power with regard to the capacity of the young people participating in YOUNGO since there is too much workload compared to which they can cope with.

Therefore, youth organizations influence climate policy-making by lobbying and raising awareness among the youth. They do so by little use of their cognitive power, but mainly by using their social power. Both ultimately led to the use of leverage power and symbolic power. There are still improvements that need to be done in order to be fully effective in their work. These improvements can again be done by using YOUNGO their social power.

Discussion and recommendations

The important strength of this research is the inclusion of the three most important YOUNGO when it comes to climate change and sustainability within the Netherlands. Since this was a qualitative research, it only includes information from the side of the YOUNGO. Interesting for further research could be to find out what the meanings and ideas of youth are concerning these topics who are not connected to any YOUNGO. This could be done by a questionnaire which could be analysed to see how YOUNGO can improve their organisation to fit the general youth's ideas and visions.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A: Interview guide

Contact via mail:

Beste ...,

Ik ben student aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen en zit op dit moment in het derde jaar van de studie Sociale Geografie en Planologie. Voor mijn afstudeerscriptie ben ik geïnteresseerd in jongeren en jongerenorganisaties in Nederland die zich bezighouden met het klimaat, het klimaatbeleid en duurzame ontwikkelingen. Ik vind het interessant om te zien welke rol jongerenorganisaties hebben als het gaat om beleid over het klimaat. Juist omdat de jongere generatie zal moeten leven met de gevolgen van klimaatverandering.

De Jonge Klimaatbeweging is een beweging waarbij veel jongerenorganisaties zijn aangesloten en ook de Jonge Klimaatagenda hebben ondertekend. Zoals ik zag op de site van de Jonge Klimaatbeweging, staan jullie ook bij de lijst van aangesloten jongerenorganisatie, vandaar deze mail! Het doel van mijn onderzoek is om te achterhalen hoe Nederlandse jongerenorganisaties beslissingen in beleidsvorming over klimaatverandering kunnen beïnvloeden. Ik lees veel over jongerenorganisaties die het beleid proberen te beïnvloeden. Wat ik interessant vind om te weten, is welke redenen deze jongerenorganisaties hebben om actie te ondernemen en welke beperkingen ze hierin tegenkomen.

Ik hoop dat ik op deze manier goed in contact kan komen met jullie! Ik vroeg me af er meer informatie voor mij beschikbaar is en of het mogelijk is om eventueel face-to-face te ontmoeten voor een interview.

Graag hoor ik van je en alvast bedankt!

Met vriendelijke groeten,
Willemijn Schreuder
06-30833584
willemijnschreuder@home.nl

Interview guide – Nederlands (Dutch)

Ik ben een derdejaars student aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen en volg de studie Sociale Geografie en Planologie. Ik zou je graag willen interviewen voor mijn Bachelor scriptie, die gaat over de betrokkenheid van jongerenorganisaties bij de politiek over het klimaat. Het doel van dit interview is inzicht krijgen in hoe jongeren beleid over het klimaat kunnen beïnvloeden. De hoofdvraag van mijn scriptie luidt als volgt: *'How do youth organizations influence climate change policy making?'.*

Ik wil benadrukken dat ons gesprek volledig vertrouwelijk is en de informatie kan niet naar jou of de organisatie worden getraceerd, het is volledig anoniem. Met je toestemming zou ik graag het interview opnemen. De audio-opnames zullen alleen worden beluisterd door mijzelf en eventueel mijn supervisor van mijn scriptie. De gegevens zullen niet voor andere doeleinden worden gebruikt en na 5 jaar zullen ze worden verwijderd.

Graag wil je je bij voorbaat bedanken voor je deelname aan mijn onderzoek. Voordat we beginnen, vroeg ik me af of je vooraf nog vragen hebt?

1. Kan je iets over de organisatie vertellen?
 - Omvang, wat voor mensen
 - Algemene doelen
2. Wat is de visie van SvM over het beleid van klimaat en duurzame ontwikkeling?
3. Wat zijn de redenen voor SvM om hun stem te laten horen/deze visie te hebben?
4. Welke middelen worden gebruikt om informatie in te winnen over klimaatbeleid en/of jullie visie?
5. Op welke manier verspreiden jullie informatie, visies etc?
 - Sociale media/activiteiten
6. Met welke partijen/belanghebbenden hebben jullie regelmatig te maken?
 - Hoe weet je welke partijen/belanghebbenden belangrijk zijn?
 - Hoe gaat de samenwerking met verschillende partijen/belanghebbenden?
7. Ervaren jullie erkenning in de samenwerking met andere partijen en belanghebbenden?
8. (Hoe) is de organisatie betrokken bij politiek?
9. Wordt de organisatie beperkt op een manier?
10. Hoe gaat de organisatie om met financiën?
11. Wat is de positie van jongeren organisaties over het algemeen wat betreft klimaat politiek?
 - Relatie met beleidsmakers
 - Aanbieden van beleidsoplossingen

Closing questions

12. Als je iets zou mogen veranderen aan jullie positie binnen de klimaatpolitiek, wat zou dat dan zijn?
13. Zijn er nog dingen die niet ten sprake zijn gekomen, maar die je nog wel belangrijk vindt om te vertellen?

Appendix B: Agreement to participate - Research Ethics Committee (REC).

in the research project of Willemijn Schreuder
Title: Youth participation in Dutch climate policy

The purpose of the research is to gain insight into how Dutch youth organizations influence decisions in climate change policymaking.

- I have read and I understand the information sheet of this present research project.
- I have had the opportunity to discuss this study. I am satisfied with the answers I have been given.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the study up to three weeks after the interview, and to decline to answer any individual questions in the study.
- I understand that my participation in this study is confidential. Without my prior consent, no material, which could identify me will be used in any reports generated from this study.
- I understand that this data may also be used in articles, book chapters, published and unpublished work and presentations.
- I understand that all information I provide will be kept confidentially either in a locked facility or as a password protected encrypted file on a password protected computer.

Please circle YES or NO to each of the following:

I consent to my interview being audio-recorded YES / NO

I wish to remain anonymous for this research YES / NO

If YES

My first name can be used for this research YES / NO

OR

A pseudonym of my own choosing can be used in this research YES / NO

“I agree to participate in this individual interview and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this consent form and the research project information sheet.”

Signature of participant: _____ Date: _____

“I agree to abide by the conditions set out in the information sheet and I ensure no harm will be done to any participant during this research.”

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Please fill in the following information. It will only be used in case you want to be sent a copy of interview notes so that you have the opportunity to make corrections.

Address:

Email:

Information sheet – Research Ethics Committee (REC)

Scriptie van: Willemijn Schreuder (S3229009)

Title: Youth participation in climate change policy

Hartelijk bedankt dat u de tijd hebt genomen om te overwegen deel te nemen aan mijn Bachelorthesis.

Als derdejaars student van de studie Sociale Geografie en Planologie, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, ben ik bezig met mijn bachelor scriptie om af te studeren. Mijn onderzoek gaat over jeugdorganisaties die zich bezig houden met het klimaat en het klimaatbeleid.

Ik richt me op de (recente) gevestigde jeugd organisaties die zich bezighouden met klimaatverandering en duurzame ontwikkeling. Wat zijn de redenen van deze organisaties om actie te ondernemen en hoe worden ze beperkt in hun doen en laten? Ik vind het interessant om te zien welke rol jeugd organisaties hebben als het gaat om beleidsvorming over klimaatverandering, omdat zij de toekomstige generatie zullen zijn die moeten leven met de gevolgen van klimaatverandering.

Vertrouwelijkheid en deelnemersrechten

- De interviews worden opgenomen en tijdens het interview worden notities gemaakt.
- U hebt het recht om te vragen om de opname uit te schakelen wanneer u dit beslist en u kunt het interview op elk moment beëindigen.
- Desgewenst ontvangt u een kopie van de interviewnotities en hebt u de mogelijkheid om correcties aan te brengen of te vragen om de verwijdering van alle materialen.
- De informatie die u verstrekt, wordt vertrouwelijk bewaard in een afgesloten faciliteit of in een met een wachtwoord beveiligd bestand op mijn computer tot vijf jaar na het voltooiën van mijn onderzoek.
- Het belangrijkste gebruik van de informatie die u verstrekt zal mij helpen bij mijn bachelorscriptie.
- Tenzij u uitdrukkelijke toestemming hebt gegeven om dit te doen, worden persoonlijke namen of andere informatie die dient om u als informant te identificeren, niet opgenomen in dit onderzoek.

Als deelnemer hebt u het recht om:

- weigeren deel te nemen;
- weigeren om een bepaalde vraag te beantwoorden;
- vragen om de audiorecorder op elk moment uit te schakelen;
- het interview op elk gewenst moment te beëindigen
- zich terugtrekken uit de studie tot drie weken na deelname aan het onderzoek;
- op elk moment tijdens de deelname vragen te stellen over het onderzoek; en
- te vragen om het wissen van alle materialen die u niet wenst te gebruiken in rapporten van deze studie.

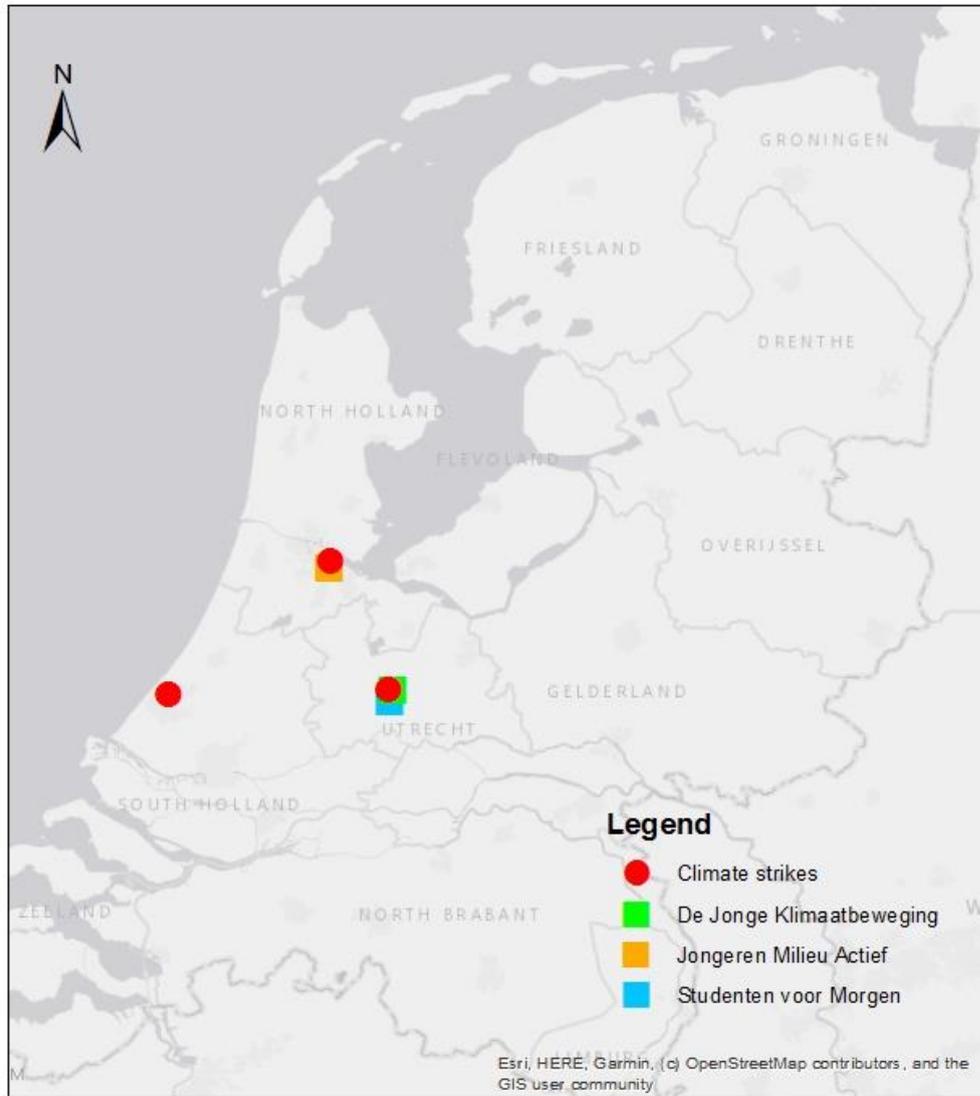
Ik bedank nogmaals dat je de tijd hebt genomen om meer te weten te komen over mijn bachelorscriptie. Ik sta tot uw beschikking voor alle vragen die u heeft. U kunt ook contact opnemen met mijn supervisors op het onderstaande adres.

Hoogachtend,
Willemijn Schreuder

Contactgegevens onderzoeker: Willemijn Schreuder 06-30833584 w.e.schreuder.1@student.rug.nl	Contactgegevens supervisor: Yongjun Zhao +31503633864 yongjun.zhao@rug.nl
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Dit onderzoeksproject is goedgekeurd door de Research Ethics Committee van de Faculteit Ruimtelijke Wetenschappen. Vragen over het ethische gedrag van dit onderzoek kunnen worden gericht aan de secretaris van de commissie, mevrouw Alida Meerburg: e-mail a.meerburg@rug.nl Fysiek adres: Faculteit Ruimtelijke Wetenschappen, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Landleven 1, 9747 AD Groningen, Nederland.

Locations YOUNGO and the climate strikes



Appendix D: Table 2: effectiveness power resources

Power resource	Effective	Examples	Not effective
Social power	1. Gives YOUNGO a lobbying role 2. Cooperation with organisations	Incorporation of YOUNGO's vision in the climate policy: - CO ₂ taxes - Focus on public transport - Vision on education	10. Uncertain whether the success of YOUNGO is due to them
Social power			11. Underrepresentation for the general public and 'green bubble'
Social power	3. Awareness-raising role	Young people's voice is slowly emerging	
Social power	4. Through cooperation standing stronger towards politics	Climate strikes which involved a more diverse group of youth	
Social power	5. Created leverage power	By cooperating with other organisations and lobbying within politics	
Social power	6. Created symbolic power	By cooperating with other organisations and organizing climate strikes	
Leverage power (through social power)	7. Access to a policy process	SustainaBUL Lobby project of SvM Lobby document of JKB	12. Little recognition from other parties and policy-makers
Symbolic power (through social power)	8. Greater support the visions of the YOUNGO	Climate strikes prevent the government to ignore youth and the Committee of Recommendations	
Cognitive power	9. Unique perspectives of youth		
Material power			13. Due to lack of it, the workload is too high