

# Competences of place leaders in Local Energy Initiatives. A multi-case study of LEI's in the provinces of Friesland and Groningen, the Netherlands.

*A Qualitative research focussing on role of place leaders in Local Energy Initiatives, coalition building and the benefits of place attachment.*



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## ABSTRACT

*Communities have been recognized as an important link in achieving a carbon neutral world in the Climate Adaptation Summit of 2021. One way in which communities achieve this is by establishing energy initiatives of their own, known as Local Energy Initiatives. However communities encountered difficulties in both establishing and operationalizing these initiatives. This qualitative research has investigated the beneficial role of local leadership, or place leadership, in establishing and operationalizing Local Energy Initiatives, coalitions formed for these initiatives and finally the role of place attachment for place leaders. The central research question of this research is: "What are the competences of leaders in establishing Local Energy Initiatives and building coalitions?". The geographical boundaries of this research being the provinces of Friesland and Groningen. Methods of data collection consisted out of a literature review and In-depth interviews with place leaders as well as umbrella energy organisations for the provinces of Friesland and Groningen. Results have shown that multiple competences are deemed important for place leaders of Local Energy Initiatives. Furthermore place attachments has proven to have an added affect upon the other competences of place leaders. Previous observation, limitation of research and suggestions for further research are given in the conclusion.*

Keywords: Local Energy Initiatives, place Leadership, coalitions, place attachment.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. background

Climate change is affecting all regions in the world in a way, with temperatures in 2030 likely rising 1,5 degrees above pre-industrial levels (European Parliament, 2020; IPCC, 2020). The consequences are felt worldwide, the Netherlands not being an exception. Some of these consequences for the Netherlands are: extremer weather conditions, increased risk of flooding and loss of biodiversity (Botzen & van dan Bergh, 2008; Milieu Centraal, 2021). Governments reacted to these consequences by calling for action against climate change caused by global warming. The primary goal of these actions is to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions caused by energy production. Decarbonisation of the energy sector requires an energy transition towards more green modes of energy production. The question is, how can this be achieved?.

Top-down approaches to sustainable energy projects have been known to meet local resistance in countries such as Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands (Connect, 2020; Whermann, 2020). This has been described as the 'Not In My Backyard' (NIMBY) phenomenon. People do want to experience the benefits of amenities, green energy in this case, but do not want to experience the negative externalities that come with it (Devine-Wright, 2009). These feelings of resistance have also been related to place attachment (Devine-Wright, 2009). Place attachment has been described as both the process of attaching oneself to a place and a product of this process (Devine-Wright, 2009; Gifford & Scannell, 2010). When changes or new developments are perceived as having a negative impact on a place, this can cause feelings of resistance by individuals or groups who have a degree of place attachment to the place in question. Furthermore, communities are also discontent with the lack of communication and participation given to them in decision making (Walsh, 2020). Resistance is not only limited to inhabitants of regions, but is also organized by municipalities, provinces and other governmental organisations, who don't always agree with decisions made at the higher level, in both Europe and the US (Hoppe et al., 2015; Marsh et al., 2021).

When people don't agree with decisions and actions taken by governmental organizations, they want to take matters into their own hands. An increasing number of people are self-organizing into projects aimed at providing public goods and services for their own community, which are defined as community-based initiatives (will be referred to as CBI's) (Igalla et al., 2019). CBI's are embedded in communities, making it more likely that solutions found are place-sensitive (Becker, 2018). Besides this, CBI's can also help in not just changing people's behaviour, but also people's values (Becker, 2018). The role of local action, in the form of community action, has also been highlighted in the Climate Adaption Summit of 2021 (CAS 2021, 2020). During this conference an Adaption Agenda was presented, which described communities as one of the key components in delivering a climate neutral world: '*We need to ensure action is locally led, to involve communities in adaptation decision-making and co-creation of solutions, and ensure climate finance reaches to communities*' (CAS, 2021, 2020). Communities can thus be considered as an important factor in climate adaption. The increased international attention for community action takes place in the context of a decentralisation in planning in the Netherlands (Aalderen & Horlings, 2020). Political, as well as institutional support for CBI's is rising. 'Green' and other CBI's are increasing in numbers in the Netherlands, and political support for this 'active citizenship', is on the rise (Soares da Silva & Horlings, 2020).

One particular type of CBI, which has tried to find local solutions for the energy transition, are called Local Energy Initiatives (referred to from now on as LEI's). LEI's are locally generated energy initiatives, where communities themselves come up with innovative ways to produce renewable

energy. LEI's can help to stimulate the transition towards green energy by involving the people within a community, promoting grassroots innovations (Artentsen & Bellekom, 2014). LEI's can thus be an important factor in achieving a carbon neutral world (Soares da Silva & Horlings, 2019).

However, LEI's face numerous issues before becoming operational. Issues such as access to funding, having to collaborate with a plurality of stakeholders and dealing with a lot laws and regulations (Germens & Wiekens, 2020; Hisschemoller, 2012; Soaras da Silva & Horlings, 2018). Problems occurred within LEI's and the coalitions that spring from the LEI's can hinder a LEI in becoming operational and fulfilling their goal of producing locally generated sustainable energy. Having someone who can guide the way through such issues, to steer the process and to give direction, could help in tackling the issues encountered by LEI's as well as guide. Leadership can thus be considered important in helping the operational issues of both LEI's and coalitions

As governmental policies have shifted to a view that emphasizes joint thinking and collaboration, the traditional top-down perspectives on leadership might not be applicable in establishing and operationalizing a LEI (Sotarauta, 2016). Leadership in a setting where there is interdependence and plurality require the ability to steer a bunch of heterogeneous actors towards a 'third' solution, that goes beyond their ambition (Sotarauta, 2016). This requires building coalitions and bringing together different organisations. Place-leadership is regarded in literature as shared, cooperative and a networking type of leadership. This type of leadership could be what is needed in this wide network of actors, parties and interests. (Horlings et al., 2018; Wellington et al., 2018).

## 1.2. Problem statement

LEI's encounter numerous issues in establishing their initiative and becoming operational (Germens & Wiekens, 2020; Hisschemoller, 2012; Soaras da Silva & Horlings, 2018). Place leaders and the competences they possess, can help to tackle the issues. Not only with bureaucratic issues of funding, laws and regulations, but also in collaboration with other parties. To achieve collective visions and agreements with other parties, coalitions are often formed. These coalitions, being diverse and autonomous, will contain different people, with different agendas, different expertise and different norms and values (De Jong, 2016). Dealing with a plurality of stakeholders and interests can be both difficult and time consuming. Besides this, awareness of place attachment and taking it into account is also necessary. Not doing so can cause feelings of resistance among communities as disruptions in the local landscape, such as an energy project, can be perceived as threatening to a place (Devine-Wright, 2009).

## 1.3. Research objective and questions

This research will investigate the role of place-leadership in establishing and operationalizing LEI's. That will be done by investigating place leadership, its functioning in setting up and guiding the LEI and building coalitions, competences required for these tasks and the potential beneficial role of place attachment. This translates to the following main and sub-research questions:

### 1.3.1. Main research Question

What are the competences of leaders in establishing Local Energy Initiatives and building coalitions? The scope of the research is a multi-case study of LEI's in the provinces of Friesland and Groningen, the Netherlands.

### 1.3.2. Sub-research questions.

- What are competences of place-leaders?
- How can competences of place-leaders help in the establishment of LEI's and building coalitions?

- How can place attachment help place leaders in fulfilling their required tasks?

#### 1.4. Societal relevance

First of all, a better functioning of LEI's is conducive for the transition of the Netherlands towards green energy. As the traditional top-down approaches to sustainable energy projects have been known to meet with local resistance, bottom-up approaches towards the energy transition are increasingly recognized as a more viable solution. More insights in the process of establishment and organization of LEI's, can benefit governmental organisations or communities who want to set up a LEI of their own and players in the energy sector such as grid operators and energy suppliers. Governmental agencies will get more insights in what issues are faced by LEI's and possible positive effect of place leaders. In gaining more insights in LEI's, governmental agencies such as municipalities might be able to reduce or take away issues faced by LEI's, as well as being more facilitating to place leaders. Furthermore, more insights in the relevance of place-attachment could also have positive implications. As by gaining more insights in how place attachment can either help or constrain development of LEI's, this can be better accounted for in future projects and financing. And this could help to reduce negative feelings towards energy projects by communities in the future and therefor making it easier to achieve the bigger goal: green energy.

Communities who want to set up an initiative of their own could also benefit from this research. As by knowing what competences are needed for the establishment of LEI's and for collaboration with other actors, this can be better accounted for. In knowing what competences are needed, communities can better prepare and build capacity, should they wish to establish a LEI of their own. And this research can give also more insights in the different actors that are relevant in the energy field, relevant advisors for green energy and the time path it takes to come to the point of really building and implementing a local energy initiative.

##### 1.4.1 Relevance for planners

Findings in this research could also prove useful for spatial planners. As bottom-up initiatives for the energy transition are becoming more relevant, gaining more insights in how such bottom-up initiatives can be stimulated is useful. By gaining insight planners can account for the needs and desires of LEI's better, which might stimulate the rise of even more LEI's. Implications for this could also contribute to the better understanding feelings of place attachment, and consequently NIMBY. These negative feelings experienced by communities are often the main cause for renewable energy projects to not be realised. More insights in how such negative feelings can be reduced, could help planners in making the acceptance of communities for future green energy project grow. Furthermore green energy production matters such as solar and wind energy have considerable spatial impact (Eichhorn et al., 2019). Demanding large amounts of space as well give a strong presence in the landscape. Therefore requiring insights in how they can be best implemented in the landscape.

#### 1.5. Scientific relevance

A lot of studies have been conducted on traditional, formal modes of leadership. There is however still a lack of understanding about the role of voluntary leaders in community bases initiatives, place leaders in the context of this research (Fazio, 2020; Sotarauta, 2016). There has been a tendency to mix leadership with formal authority (Sotarauta, 2016). Leadership required for LEI's is much more about collaboration and forming relationships, then it is about a hierarchical, top-down form of leadership. This research will shed more light on the informal side of leadership and what their role can be within LEI's. The role of LEI's in the Netherlands have already been investigated by a number

of researchers (Artentsen & Bellekom, 2014; Hirschmoller, 2012; Soares da Silva & Horlings, 2019). However the role of leadership within LEI's has until thus far, received less attention. Therefore a research regarding the role of leadership within LEI's should provide new insights and add to the scientific debate on LEI's.

Besides this, the possible beneficial role of place-attachment will also be investigated. A lot of research has been conducted place-attachment, and what implications it can hold for people. The relationship between place-attachment and place leaders, and its possible benefits when trying to set-up an LEI's, has not been receiving as much scholarly attention yet. This research will see if place leaders who have a strong attachment to a place in which they have to set up an LEI, are better capable of functioning within the LEI in question than a leader without place attachment. And if they are indeed better able to operate within that place, what aspects of place-attachment contributed to this.

## 2. Research strategy and methodology

### 2.1. Research strategy

This research will be conducted via a qualitative research approach as this research will investigate matters that are subject to opinion, feelings and thoughts. Qualitative research takes an interpretive stance, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, the words that people use and the feelings it brings to them (Jones, 1994). And it has therefore been considered the most suitable for this research. Also considering the concepts studied in this research, place leadership and place attachment, they are not always clear-cut and therefore qualitative research approach has been chosen. Choosing a quantitative method of research in order to measure and count the occurrence of a certain state or event, would simplify these concepts too much. Instead a qualitative approach has been taken to maintain the uniqueness of each case (Black, 1994). As each LEI is different and is situated in different circumstances with different people, different rules and different local/regional agencies and its place leaders are thus operating within their unique setting, context and network of actors, it is evident that a research method is chosen that is best able to capture the distinctive circumstances of each LEI.

Qualitative research has consisted of a literature review, in depth interviews with six place leaders, as well as interviews with the two umbrella energy cooperation for the provinces of Friesland and Groningen. Internet search has also been conducted in order to select and explore cases and recruit participants, which will be further explained in the next sections.

For the data collection a literature study, information about the LEI on their websites and interviews with both place leaders as well as the organisations LEI's are frequently involved with, have been used. Thus triangulation via multiple sources of data gathering is applied, increasing the reliability of the results.

#### 2.1.1. Geographical boundaries

Setting the geographical boundaries of a research is important, as this limits the scope of the investigation to specified groups, context and geography (Bosley et al., 2019). It helps to focus activities. More importantly, it also ensures that the cases that have been selected operate, to a degree, in a similar context. And as was established previously, the governmental agencies with which an LEI has to deal with can play an important role. Therefore, this research will limit itself to only two of the northern provinces of the Netherlands: Friesland and Groningen. Initially, Drenthe was also to be included. Unfortunately due to difficulties in getting responses from people involved in LEI's this province, the choice has been made to limit the geographical boundaries of this research to the provinces of Friesland and Groningen.

Reasons for not choosing cases from a wide array of provinces or even countries are the fact that different provinces have different policies regarding the matters of energy transition and the role of communities in this matter. This could hinder comparison of cases, as different institutional settings could also mean a difference in the way LEI's are established and aided by relevant governmental agencies. Although differences in the institutional settings will still occur due to differences on the municipal level, differences on the provincial level are reduced by limiting research to only two provinces. Second reason is the time in which we now live: the time of COVID-19. Due to COVID-19 it is important to restrict travelling as much as possible. Therefore interviews have been conducted online. The reason for not choosing just one province, is to make sure that there are enough cases to be found and selected. By still allowing for two provinces as a selection ground, this is ensured.

## 2.2. Case study research

In this case study the different LEI's will be described, in terms of location, reasons for establishment, goals and a short introduction on the place leader in question and their reason for involvement. A Map has also been provided a clear overview of the location of each of the LEI's (see map 1). The different LEI's have been indicated with markers on the map, with specific colours assigned to each, made clear in the legend.



### Legend

-  Amelandse Energie Coöperatie
-  Vlielandse Warmte Coöperatie
-  Energie Coöperatie Oudeschip
-  Hogelandster Energie Coöperatie
-  Trynergie
-  Energie Coöperatie Bedum

Map 1- Location of the different LEI's. Derived from Google Maps.

### 2.2.1. Amelandse Energie Coöperatie (AEC)

Amelandse Energie Coöperatie (AEC) is an energy cooperation consisting of inhabitants of the island of Ameland, which is one of the Wadden islands of the province of Friesland, the Netherlands (AEC, 2020). AEC was called into life to create a cooperation which allows participation of its members, giving them the ability to think along, discuss and make decisions regarding sustainable development projects together. Projects such as a solar park, heat pumps, the local high school which is built exclusively out of renewable materials and so on. An important aspect of these projects is that the inhabitants of the islands get to share in the profits. Profits of projects flow back to the island, which is in turn used for the sustainable development projects on Ameland. The goal of the AEC is to stimulate reduction of energy usage in Ameland, relying only on renewable energy sources for the

energy that still is necessary. With the eventual goal of becoming energy neutral in 2035. The renewable energy source used currently is solar energy, but there might also be other options in the future such as earth heat and tidal energy.

The AEC was established by Johan Kiewiet, a lifelong inhabitant of the island. After having witnessed the formation of an energy cooperation in one of the other Waddenislands, Texel, J. Kiewiet wanted to create a similar initiative on Ameland. Which led to the formation of the AEC. J. Kiewiet has played a leading role in the establishment and organisation of the AEC. Because of this he will be considered the place leader of LEI the AEC (J. Kiewiet, 2021).

### 2.2.2. The Vlieland Warmte Coöperatie (VlieWaCo)

The VlieWaCo was founded to make the residential area of Duinwijk on the island of Vlieland natural gas free (Duinwijk Warmte BV, 2020). The energy supplier which was operating in Duinwijk, Nuon at the time, left, as it wanted to concentrate on mostly large scale heat networks. Because of the gap that formed after Nuon left, the municipality decided it was time to take a more sustainable route. Together with the inhabitants, the municipality tried to reach a sustainable solution. The solution was found by way of using existing infrastructure. As the island of Vlieland is powered by electric generators, an idea was formed to use the cooling water of the electricity generators to heat the neighbourhood of Duinwijk, via the existing heat networks. After doing sufficient research, organizing consultation with the inhabitants and receiving funding, the project is currently underway.

Antoine Maartens got involved with the VlieWaCo because of his job on the island of Vlieland, which was already in the energy sector (A. Maartens, 2021). A. Maartens was asked by the Alderman of Vlieland what would be possible in terms of energy for the neighbourhood of Duinwijk. After this assignment A. Maartens continued to become more involved in the whole process, and is now the project leader as well as the director of the VlieWaCo BV. Because of his leading role in the LEI's, both in establishment and the organizing, A. Maartens is considered a place leader

### 2.2.3. Energie Coöperatie Oudeschip & Omstreken (ECOO)

Energie Cooperatie Oudeschip & Omstreken (ECOO) is an energy cooperation consisting out of inhabitants of the area of Eemshaven, located in Oudeschip, which is in the east of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands (Energie Coöperatie Oudeschip en omstreken, 2020). This area includes the villages of Eemshaven, Nieuwstad, Vierhuizen, Polen, Nooitgedacht, Koningsoord, Heuvelderij and Valom. The cooperation was called into life after the province of Groningen decided to build a windmill park in the area: Windmill park Oostpolder. Because of the realisation of this windmill park, inhabitants of the surrounding area's had to get compensated for the inconvenience they experiences due to these windmills. For this the province wanted inhabitants of the area to form a cooperation, to distribute the compensation gotten from the province themselves. By forming a cooperation of their own, inhabitants of the area were able to distribute compensation as the cooperation saw it fit. So the main reason the ECOO was established, was to compensate inhabitants of the area, for the nuisance caused by this windmill park. The cooperation is used to distribute the compensation amongst inhabitants of the area fairly, invest the money in future windmills parks being built in the area and to buy windmills for the villages themselves, so called 'village mills'.

Johan van Daalen was in the klankbordgroep of inhabitants of the area, which was called into life to voice concerns of inhabitants of the area of the windmill park (J. van Daalen, 2021). The province approached J. van Daalen, and the chairman of village interests Oudeschip, Jaap Kap, to ask them to form this cooperation together. J. van Daalen decided to agree, as this would mean active participation in the distribution of the compensation, something that would have not been possible had a cooperation not been set up. J. van Daalen is now chairman, as well as secretary. As he has

taken a leading role in the process of establishing and organizing the ECOO, he is considered a place leader for the LEI.

#### 2.2.4. Hogelandster Energie Coöperatie (HEC)

The Hogelandster Energie Cooperation is an energy cooperation consisting out of the villages in the municipality of Hogeland, formally known as the Marne (Hogelandster Energie Coöperatie, 2021). The HEC was established in order to increase sustainability in the region. After the former municipality the Marne expressed a desire to become more sustainable, three people, including Jan Hink, decided to act on this desire and form the HEC in September 2016. Numerous thoughts and ideas surrounding sustainability were already present in the municipality, but yet no centralized organisation was present to combine and organize all these ideas. A organization like HEC was necessary. Furthermore, the forming of HEC was also inspired by the formation of energy cooperation all over the Netherlands in this time, which was 2012-2013. The HEC wants to take a more local, decentralized approach to sustainable energy. Or as J. Hink stated it: *'more direction over energy'* (J. Hink, 2021). Large energy companies don't always have the same interests as the local population. By taking matters into their own hand and forming an energy cooperation, the HEC wants to be able to represent local interests, increase local participation as well as maintain power in decisions regarding issues of energy production. Important issue is also outsourcing work to local companies, ensuring that the benefits of the initiative are also enjoyed locally.

J. Hink himself was involved after being asked by the former major of the municipality, who, from her board contacts, knew the municipality wanted to become more sustainable (J. Hink 2021). As J. Hink was almost entering his pension, he decided he needed a new challenge. Because of this J. Hink decided to help the then municipality of the Marne with their ambitions of becoming more sustainable. J.Hink is currently fulfilling the function of chairman of the HEC.

#### 2.2.5. Trynergie

Trynergie is an energy cooperation located in Oentsjerk, a village in Friesland. Trynergie is an energy cooperation for the people of the municipality of Trynwalden (Trynergie, 2020). From village interest meetings from the village of Oentsjerk, a desire of the community came forward to make the village more sustainable. After a cooperation was originally founded for the village of Oentsjerk, the cooperation decided to upscale to the whole municipality, as this was a way to reach more people. Thus it became Trynergie. The goal of Trynergie is to make the Trynwalden more sustainable, by producing locally generated green energy for a fair price, making homes more energy neutral and by creating awareness. Profits generated from the production of green energy flow back to the community. In finding ways to collectively produce energy, Trynergie has founded the biggest collective solar park in the Netherlands.

Jitske Stavenga, was asked by the village interest of Oentsjerk, to establish Groentjersk (J. Stavenga 2021). It was J. Stavenga who then decided that in order to operationalize, the cooperation needed to upscale and create Trynergie. Living in Oentjersk herself for over 20 years, J. Stavenga works for the province of Friesland, which has enabled J. Stavenga to provide the knowledge required on policy and other government related issues regarding energy cooperation. Currently working as a board member of Trynergie, as well as communication, she has and is, one of the key actors the establishment and organisation of Trynergie, and is therefore considered a place leader of the LEI in question.

#### 2.2.6. Energie Coöperatie Bedum (EC Bedum)

EC Bedum is an energy cooperation located in Bedum, a village in Groningen. The EC Bedum was born out an idea of E. Ludwig. The EC Bedum was established to help create a better climate. By

putting solar panels on multiple roofs in the village and supplying this green energy back to the village, make Bedum more sustainable (Duurzaam Bedum, 2021). Profits of the initiative are invested back in the village. The eventual goal is to get at least 10% the village to join the cooperation. By enlarging the reach of the initiative, they hope to make an even larger difference, in terms of climate as well as new projects.

Egbert Ludwig has been the person who has established the initiative and is currently fulfilling the position of secretary. Already being involved in the energy transition via his professional live, he decided to *'practice what you preach'* (E. Ludwig, 2021). E. Ludwig has been responsible for a large part establishment of the initiative: Making contact with net suppliers, making local parties enthusiastic and much more. Therefore E. Ludwig is considered a place leader within EC Bedum

## 2.3. Methods of data collection

### 2.3.1. Literature review

A literature review has been conducted, in order to set the foundation of knowledge for the topic studied. By building of knowledge from previous studies, a more comprehensive view has been given. In literature important concepts and research techniques have been brought forward which has given this research a solid foundation upon which cases could be selected and interview questions have been formed. Awareness of the extent of knowledge on the topics of study in this research is also important to avoid plagiarism and making sure that research adds to the scientific debate. Furthermore, by having conducted a literature review findings of a study can be put against previous research and map any contradictions and similarities (Western Sidney University, 2017).

This literature review has been done by researching scientific papers, books and reports regarding LEI's, coalition building, place attachment, place leadership and finally competences of place leaders. I have started by investigating both LEI's and coalition building. By starting with these two concepts, more insights have been given in the conditions necessary for the formation of both LEI's and coalition building. By knowing what the necessary conditions and possible problems there are for LEI's and in coalition building, the other concepts were studied in relation to these main concepts This has resulted in a more comprehensive and detailed analyses of the relevant concepts studied in the literature. As all of these concepts are intertwined within this research it has been important to constantly link the concepts back to each other, and see how they relate, resulting in the conceptual framework used as a lens to analyse the results (see chapter 3)

### 2.3.2. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews have been chosen because of the in-depth and partially subjective matter of the information that this research will investigate. By letting people tell their story in the form of an interview, people are able to share their view, their reality (Ritchie et al., 2003). For subjects that are not straight-forward and can be considered subjective, interactions can be a way to create more certainty upon the matter. Through letting the interviewee's tell their own stories, new insights might be given.

To give interviewee's the ability to give these new insights and telling their own story, keeping a degree of flexibility in the interview is important. Even though a thorough literature research will be conducted, not everything can be covered by studying previous cases and relevant theory. So although a specific set of interview questions will be asked, there will be and has to be some room for the respondents to give new insights. This can lead the conversation to matters that initially might be considered as insignificant, or would not be considered at all. However, it will be important

to maintain the structure of the interview, in order to get an answer to all the question posed in the interview. Keeping the balance between maintaining the interview guidelines and at the same time giving interviewers room to answer in their own matter, is therefore key. In doing so, hopefully a complete, in depth picture of each LEI's can be given. Interview guides for the interviews with both the place leaders and the umbrella organisations can be found respectively in Appendix A.1. and A.2.

### 2.3.3. Selection LEI and recruitment of participants

LEI's were selected that fulfilled the following criteria:

1. Being established bottom-up.
2. Having someone within the organisation who has taken the lead in the establishment and operationalizing of the LEI.
3. Being engaged in coalitions with other parties and organisations.
4. Being located in the province of Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe, which due to lack of participants in the province of Drenthe, has been limited to Friesland and Groningen.

Besides LEI's, umbrella organisations have been contacted via mail, which work as intermediary organisations between LEI and other organisations such as governments:

- Groninger Energie Koepel (GrEK), the umbrella organisation for LEI's in the province of Groningen, the Netherlands (GrEK, 2021)
- Us Kooperaasje, the umbrella organisation for LEI's in the province of Friesland, the Netherlands (Us Kooperaasje, 2021)
- EnergieVanOns, an energy supplier that provides its customers with energy that is locally generated, by way of LEI's (EnergieVanOns, 2021).

These organisations have been asked if they know LEI's that fulfil the criteria mentioned previously as well as suggestions how to get in contact with these organisations. Furthermore, websites of numerous LEI's have also been researched, to establish whether or not they fulfilled the criteria mentioned previously. Also I searched on sites that cover multiple initiatives such as Hier.nu, Energie VanOns and hieropgewekt. Furthermore use of my own network has also contributed to finding participants for the interview: First of all my thesis counsellor was able to bring me into contact with a LEI's which she has researched herself. Secondly, I came into contact with someone who is currently also doing research regarding LEI's who provided a suggestion of a participant who is a leader of a LEI, that matches the characteristics mentioned before. With these methods of finding participants I have been able to get sufficient response, and was able to interview a number of different place leaders in LEI's as described in the section 2.2. 'Case study research' and again shortly in table 1 (see table 1)

### 2.3.4. Participants

In table 1, observed bellow, an overview of the participants has been given including the name of the initiative, the identified place leader, the location and the role of the place leader in the initiative. All of the interviews, including the interview with the umbrella organisations, have been conducted online, in order to uphold corona guidelines. People described are considered leaders within their initiatives. They have been indicated as leaders by the umbrella organisations, others members of the LEI's or saw themselves as leaders of the initiatives. Because of this, participants have been considered place leaders. They are the people who have taken the lead within the initiative and have played a significant role in realizing the initiative. They are the people that have (voluntary) spend a lot of time on the initiative, made connections with other organisations in order to operationalize the initiative and have contributed to local support of the initiative. In short, these are the people who

played a key role within the initiative. By interviewing these individuals I aimed to get more insights in the role of place leaders in LEI's and specifically their competences.

Besides interviews with six different place leaders, two additional interviews have also been conducted with people from both Us Kooperaasje and GrEK. Unfortunately it has not been possible to conduct an interview with Energie VanOns, the umbrella organisation for LEI's in the provinces of Friesland, Drenthe and Groningen, due to their lack of time. As was mentioned before Us Kooperaasje and GrEK are umbrella organisations that play a facilitative role for LEI's in Friesland and Groningen, helping LEI's with the establishment phase, as well as their everyday tasks when in operating mode (GrEK, 2021; Us Kooperaasje, 2021). Because these organisations are in close contact with LEI's, they have a clear image of these LEI's, as well as the possible role of place leaders, and what competences can be ascribed to these leaders. Conducting interviews with Us Kooperaasje and GrEK, should thus provide useful additional insights in the role and competences of place leaders in LEI. As well as possible differences with LEI's that do not have a place leader.

LEI	Place leader	Location	Role in the initiative:	Interview date
Amelander Energie Coöperatie (ACE),	Johan Kiewit	Buren, Friesland, the Netherlands	Johan Kiewit is the director of the AEC	31-05-2021
Vlielandse Warmte Coöperatie (VlieWaCo),	Antoine Maartens	Oost-Vlieland, Friesland, the Netherlands	Antoine Maartens is both project manager of and the director of VlieWaCo BV,	10-6-2-2021
Energie coöperatie Oudeschip & Omstreken (ECOO),	Johan van Daalen	Oudeschip, Groningen, the Netherlands	Johan van Daalen is both chairman & secretary of ECOO.	02-06-2021
Hoogelandster Energie Cooperatie (HEC),	Jan Hink	Winsum, Groningen, the Netherlands	Jan Hink is the chairman of the HEC.	14-06-2021
Trynergie,	Jitske Stavenga	Oentsjerk, Friesland, the Netherlands	Jitske Stavenga is fulfilling position as both board member and communications person.	15-06-2021
Energie Coöperatie Bedum, Groningen	Egbert Ludwig	Bedum, Groningen, the Netherlands	Egbert Ludwig is the secretary of the ECB.	01-07-2021

table 1- LEI's and their place leaders.

### 2.3.5. Ethical issues

To guarantee that an ethical research has been conducted, each of the participants has been made aware of the subject of this research, the goal, and what the information acquired in this interview will be used for, in advance of the interview. Furthermore a letter of consent has also be signed (see appendix B) by all the participants, by signing the letter of consent, participants agreed that:

- They have been properly informed about the goal of the research
- They have been provided the opportunity to withheld from the interview at any time, should they choose so
- Information gathered in the interview may be used for a scientific research, as well as a presentation (the Graduation Research Day)

Furthermore to ensure that statements made in this research will not affect the participants in any sort of way, none of the participants has been mentioned by name in the result and conclusion section. Instead they will be referred to as Leader A,B etc. ensuring anonymity or in the case of the umbrella organisations as Umbrella organisations, not naming specifically which one.

## 3. Literature review

### 3.1. LEI's

As was established in the introduction, communities are an important way in which adopting more sustainable ways of living can be adopted (CAS 2021, 2020). Green energy projects used to be dominated by a techno-corporatist approach, with a focus on centralized decision making (Aalderen & Horlings, 2020). Nowadays, citizen led green energy initiatives are becoming more prominent in both the Netherlands and the UK (Soares da Silva & Horlings, 2018). These citizens led green energy initiatives have been referred to by authors and institutions as Local Energy Initiatives (LEI's). LEI's will be defined as: *'decentralized, non-governmental initiatives of local communities of renewable energy'* (Oteman et al., 2014). Such renewable energy technologies include among other things: wind turbines, solar panels and bio-digesters. Wide adaption of these renewable energy sources has resulted in a swift rise of small-scale energy initiatives by local citizens as well as entrepreneurs (de Boer et al., 2018). LEI's require the actions of involved citizens, which is seen as vital for a successful energy transition (Hasanov & Zuidema, 2018). Because climate change and energy transitions are not just environmental issues, but inherently political, societal and spatial issues, which require an approach that ensures a holistic approach (Soares Da Silva & Horlings, 2018). In doing so a solutions that is more place-based might be found. Taking a place-based approach can contribute to more sustainable place shaping and hopefully, more sustainable solutions in the energy transition. Furthermore, top-down implemented green energy projects have been known to be met with local resistance. This is due to proximity of energy projects near people's homes, which is also known as the Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) feeling. But also due to lack of participation of locals who feel as that their voice is not being heard (Walsh, 2020). Creating a more bottom-up approach and giving communities the ability to participate in the implementing of green energy projects might reduce these negative feelings. In letting communities take action in the renewable energy transition, renewable energy might also gain wider social acceptance (de Boer et al., 2018). Community-based initiatives, such as LEI's, have the power to not only change behaviour, but also change values (Becker, 2018). Furthermore, giving communities the tools to come up with their own solutions towards the energy transition can enhance the resilience and the social capital of the community (Samson, 2018). Finally, local initiatives often allow generated energy or financial benefits to be distributed locally (de Boer et al., 2018). Local activities can therefore co-benefit from LEI's, such as farming, recreation, industry (de Boer et al., 2018). In short, LEI's boost local economy, enhances community resilience, allow for more place based solutions and have to power to change people's values regarding renewable energy (Aalderen & Horlings, 2020; Samson, 2018; Soares da Silva & Horlings, de Boer et al., 2018, Oteman et al., 2014). Benefits that occur by letting communities take action themselves instead of state lead, or other forms of top-down implementation of green energy projects.

#### 3.1.1. Conditions for LEI's

There are however, numerous issues for the formation of LEI's. First of all, operating in the energy sector requires dealing with numerous different parties. This plurality of involved parties can cause LEI's to lose overview, as each of the parties has their own way of operating and their own interests at heart (Germes & Wiekens, 2020). This also makes it unclear what organisation should be contacted for which specific issues. Secondly there is the need for funding. LEI's are often dependent on government funding to stay active in the initializing phase. Gaining access to this funding can be complicated however, as this often requires dealing with a great deal of bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is not limited to only funding, but also to issues such as laws, regulation, tax regimes, infrastructures and more, which can be seen as constraining to LEI's (Hisschemoller, 2012). This

dependency upon government support also makes LEI's vulnerable to shifts in the political landscape and budget cuts (Da Silva & Horlings, 2020). Thirdly, LEI's are often dependent on volunteers, which can hinder them from becoming a legal entity with a clear organizational structure (Hasanov & Zuidema, 2018).

Place leaders could help in better dealing with the conditions necessary starting and organizing LEI's. As will be made evident further in this chapter, the conditions and possible issues for starting and organizing relate well to the competences of place leaders.

### 3.2. Place leadership

The formation of an LEI takes place within unique combinations of national or global factors, which creates a unique set of 'local social systems', or a locality (Collinge & Gibney, 2010). This uniqueness creates a need for local governments to differentiate between places or localities. Central governments have, from the 1990's onwards, tried to lay a strategic focus upon place. Many initiatives nowadays involve horizontal linkages involving a variety of stakeholders, with collaborative ways of developing and implementing policy. Hierarchical forms of public policy and harsh boundaries between public and private actions have been displaced by more fluid and horizontal relationships. Policy has shifted to a view that emphasises joined-up thinking, a holistic approach and the contextual importance of place (Collinge & Gibney, 2010).

The new approach has given rise to the idea that: '*the development of competitive, sustainable and inclusive places needs to be underpinned by forms of cross-boundary or networked relational leadership*' (Collinge & Gibney, 2010). In such regional or local development issues, the ability to steer the process rather than designing an optimal strategy, is key to strategic success, (Sotarauta, 2016). Due to the emphasis on collaboration, steering the process and networking, place leadership could form a solution in contemporary issues of local and regional development. Place leadership offers a view upon leadership which is concerned with mobilizing, directing and facilitating interorganizational development strategies (Sotarauta & Suvinen, 2019). Because place leaders operate in matters of regional or local development, traditional top-down perspectives on leadership do not have much to offer (Sotarauta, 2016). As in matters of regional or local development, no one party holds the monopoly on guiding development (Hambleton, 2015, Sotarauta, 2016). Therefore the shared and collective form of leadership that place leadership offers, is well applicable.

#### 3.2.1. Networking leadership

When we look at a definition of place leadership given by Sotarauta & Suvinen (2019): '*Place leadership works to bring different actors together, doing so by working across geographical, governance, professional and disciplinary boundaries*', we can observe an emphasis on bringing people together and working across boundaries to do so. The relevance of leaders working across boundaries has been highlighted by Horlings et al. (2017), who state that cross-thematic leadership in knowledge development is important to foster a climate that supports and facilitates learning. Horlings et al., (2017) also state that when complex issues emerge, those performing leadership must share power across loosely structured partnerships, collaborations and impermanent coalitions. This was also previously mentioned by Collinge & Gibney (2010), who stressed '*cross-boundary or networked relational leadership*'. The emphasis on networking and relational leadership, makes traditional views upon leadership not well applicable. As traditional views upon leadership consider as a single's person's ability to give orders in a top-down fashion, based upon hierarchical relations (Horlings et al., 2018). This is seen as organisational leadership, which emphasises *leading* and *managing* (Tokar, 2020). This type of leadership, which is required for a single organisation, is likely different from the type of leadership required for LEI's, which often requires dealing with a plurality

of different parties outside of one's own organisation. In short, taking a traditional organisational view to place leadership is not well suitable.

A leadership perspective that might be more applicable, is that of a networking leadership. The network perspective on leadership emphasises the ability to look beyond formal, designated relations to informal structures (Cullen et al., 2014). The networking perspective sees leadership as a shared process, that strives for collaboration and collective capacity (Cullen et al., 2014). When we compare the networking perspective on leadership to the definition of place leadership and the relevant competences of place leaders, numerous similarities can be observed, as opposed to the organisational perspective. Similarities such as looking beyond formal relations, striving for collaboration and raising collective action (Cullen et al, 2014; Horlings et al, 2018; Sotarauta, 2016; Willington et al., 2018). Therefore, place leadership will be looked at from a networking perspective.

Summarizing: place leadership offers a mode of leadership that should prove beneficial for local and regional development issues, such as LEI's. Also considering that local and regional development issues stress collaboration and networking, a networked approach to leadership will be taken. For place leaders, a number of competences will be seen as important. These competences relate to the previously mentioned conditions for LEI's, as well as the conditions for formations and guiding of coalitions, which will be discussed in the next sections. Relevant competences from the literature that will be discussed are

- The ability to network (Sotarauta & Suvinen, 2019).
- The ability to collaborate (Scholten & Meijerink, 2015)
- Having a degree of place attachment to the place in which is being operated (Hambleton, 2015; Scannel & Gifford, 2014)
- Having interpretive power (Sotarauta, 2016)
- Capacity building (Monson-Rosen, 2020)

These competences will be further explained in the 'competences' section, as well as their relation to place leadership, LEI's and coalitions.

### 3.3. Place attachment

This section will dive deeper into the issue of place attachment and how the awareness of place attachment, or having a degree of place attachment to the place in which is being operated, can be beneficial for place leaders. Place attachment has been described as both the process of attaching oneself to a place and a product of this process (Devine-Wright, 2009; Gifford & Scannell, 2010). Human geographers argue that a bond with a meaningful place, or 'sense of place' is a tie that fulfils fundamental human needs and cannot be overlooked. (Gifford & Scannell, 2010). Place attachment has been located at the regional, city, home and neighbourhood level, happening at both the individual and collective level (Devine-Wright, 2009; Gifford & Scannel 2010). It can thus be expected that place leaders will have to operate in places where people have a degree of meaning attached to them for the people who live there, possibly even for the place leaders themselves. As people derive meaning from the physical, social or symbolic attributes of a place, this can contribute to an individual's sense of self (Devine-Wright, 2009; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001). Place leaders having a connection to a place or are able to understand the connection that people have to a place, might be better able in understanding the attachment of individuals or group within that place. As whom we are, can also include where we are (Scannel & Gifford, 2014). This can be a beneficial attribute in relation to other relevant competences of place leadership, as understanding other individuals or groups better can ensure proper communication, steering and interpretations.

The emotional value that is connected to a place, and how this affects people's identity, is also likely to affect how people perceive new developments, like an LEI (Devine-Wright, 2009). When changes are perceived as having a negative impact on a place, this can cause resistance by individuals or groups who have a degree of attachment to this place. Such feelings of alienation in relation to place attachment, are especially prevalent when a place is symbolic of 'home' and when energy projects are believed to be imposed (Devine-Wright, 2009). Experiencing place-attachments, and how this relates to people's identity, can prove to be beneficial for place leaders in determining how changes are perceived. Such place leaders are better able to understand feelings derive from their attachment to a certain place. By understanding the values connected to these attachments, place leaders might as a consequence be able to better understand the people who are connected to a place. In short, being aware of place attachment or being attached to the place of operation themselves supports place leaders in execution of their tasks as this allows them to better understand the feelings and values connected to a place and as a consequence the people.

### 3.4. Coalitions

Coalitions are seen as a necessity in 21st century planning as traditional organisations relate to problems from one specific sector, or discipline, addressing problems only partially (de Jong, 2016). For LEI's, coalitions have to be formed between the various parties involved, such as governmental agencies, members from local communities and private parties, because operating in the energy sector, requires dealing with a plurality of different actors and sectors (Germes & Wiekens, 2020). By forming coalitions, a heterogenous set of actors and sectors can come together and engage in joined-up thinking, which is important in finding a place-based solution. As within the complex and interrelated society we live in nowadays, solutions for problems are likely to be found on the interface of different worlds: disciplines, sectors, domains, organisations, cultures etc. By working across boundaries different values and rationalities are confronted, combined and interwoven, creating a forum for exchange (de Jong, 2016; Wolff, 2001). Within such a forum, the potential for creative understanding of community issues, underlying causes and new ways of collaboration are enormous (Wolff, 2001). A way to create such an arena of interaction, is to build coalitions (de Jong, 2016). A coalition is defined here as: *'a group of diverse and autonomous actors (organizations or individuals) that want to achieve something better in the future'* (de Jong, 2016). In terms of LEI's this could be municipalities, energy cooperation's, network operators, energy suppliers and of course the community itself.

Members of coalitions can benefit from working together with others as a larger unified entity (Whitley, 2003). However it should be noted that this concerns community coalitions. Although it be argued that LEI's are community based initiatives, they often deal with professional organisations, such as governmental agencies, net suppliers and others. Therefore coalitions the view by Whitney (2003) cannot be fully applied to coalitions building for LEI's.

Possible benefits mentioned are (Whitney, 2003):

1. Heightened effectiveness and community voice. An organized coalition has more power and can exert more influence than an organisation or individual operating alone
2. Increased access to resources. Working together in a coalition provides opportunity for individuals and organisations to combine and share resources
3. Enhanced legitimacy. The presence of several different community members or actors banded together for a common purpose can possible attract more attention and command more respect
4. Improved overall community organisations and working relationships. Coalition building creates opportunities for groups and individuals who had never worked together before

to join forces and collaborate. Working in coalitions can establish alliances that can result in long-lasting bonds between organisations and individuals

Coalitions come into being within a public arena where individuals, groups and institutions associate with each other around ambitions. It are these ambitions that are the main motivator in a collective strive for a desired future place or situation (de Jong, 2016). The need for a collective strive is also talked about by Wolff (2001) who sees coalitions as a group of diverse actors coming together to address community needs and solve community problems. Both authors thus agree that for coalitions to form, there has to be a collective goal or collective problem, something to bind actors from a different background together. There are however, other motivations for coalitions to be formed, resulting in different types of coalitions. De Jong (2016) distinguishes three types of coalitions:

- Directive coalitions, where one actor expresses ambitions and takes a directive role in an arena of stakeholders
- Collective coalitions, actors are partners in a newly created arena of complementary stakeholders
- Connective coalitions, actors choose a facilitating role in a spontaneous arena proceeding from a personal drive

Looking at the different types of coalitions mentioned here, the collective coalition is the type of coalition most relatable to this research, as the importance of collective actions has been stressed numerous times previously (De Jong, 2016; Wolff, 2001).

#### 3.4.1. Conditions for coalition building

Place leadership, and the competences associated with place leaders can be beneficial in setting up and guiding coalitions. First of all, in order for coalitions to be formed, connections will have to be made between different parties. Second, in order for people to unite in a collective coalition, common goals have to be present and identified, as well as keeping everyone focussed around these goals. Lastly, collective ways of operating and talking will have to be found, as actors from different sectors will have different ways of operating, as well as using different jargons. In establishing these conditions, place leadership, as well as the conditions associated with place leaders, should prove beneficial. This will be further elaborated in the next section.

### 3.5. Competences

#### 3.5.1. Networking

In the case of bottom-up initiatives such as LEI's which require, consulting and bringing together a lot of different people and organisations, networking is a requirement (Scholten & Meijerink, 2015). Place leaders can help to mobilise and align different actors around an agenda (Sotarauta, 2016; Willington et al., 2018). Both having a network as well as the ability to build new connections to increase one's network, are important (Beer et al., 2018; Sotarauta, 2016). Having a network is important as this provides the possibility to bring the right people with knowledge, money or power from different organisations together, sharing knowledge and resources. By having someone who is already embedded in a wide network and commands a degree of respect within that network, actions might be taken more quickly. Such networks don't have to be limited to a place leaders formal network. Someone's informal or social network can also be useful. A wide social network can prove to be a useful trait for place leaders, as this can help in gaining wider acceptance of communities.

Having a social network, and the ability to act inside or outside of it, can also be viewed as social capital. Social capital is a concept originally used by Putnam and Bourdieu (Siisänen, 2003). Putnam puts his emphasis on trust, norms and values whereas Bourdieu emphasizes conflicts and power relations (Siisänen, 2003). Social capital is defined as: *'The norms and networks that enable people to act collectively'* (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). From a networking perspective it stresses the importance of vertical and horizontal associations between people and of relations within and among such organizational entities as community groups and firms (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). There are three forms of social capital (Claridge, 2013):

- Bonding, links to intercommunity ties. Bonding is often described as a horizontal tie, and is mostly associated with local communities where people know each other (Claridge, 2013).
- Bridging, links that cross various social divides. This is often described as vertical ties, and often means working through different organisations and hierarchical structures (Claridge, 2013).
- Linking, links to people or groups further up or lower down the social ladder. This puts emphasis on the ability to work across different power relations, instead of different identities, as opposed to bridging.

This divide between bonding, bridging and linking overlaps well with what has been considered as important characteristics of place leaders in numerous studies (Beer et al, 2018; Scholten & Meijerink, 2015; Sotarauta, 2016; Willington et al, 2018). The different forms of social capital are also related to styles of leadership: leading by doing, which uses the bonding aspect of social capital and leading by talking, which uses the bridging aspect of social capital (Beer & Clower, 2013). Also considering that bottom up initiatives are often dispersed and require collaboration between different parties, the networking perspective on social capital is well applicable for this research. This will be most likely be related to the bonding aspect. Also in the formation of coalitions networking should prove a useful competence. As coalitions consist of people from different organisations, the bridging aspect will be an important factor.

### 3.5.2. Collaboration

The realization of LEI's, as well as the coalitions that form as a consequence of these LEI's, requires discussion and negotiations between different parties (Scholten & Meijerink, 2016). Such multi-partner arrangements require mobilization and coordination (Vallance et al, 2019). Both the collaboration and guidance of these collaborations are needed. Place leaders are seen as individuals with a strong commitment to collaboration as well as the ability to steer development when engaged in collaboration, so they should prove useful. (Hambleton, 2015; Sotarauta, 2016)

Looking at a definition of leadership by Hambleton (2015): *'Leadership involves shaping emotions and behaviour to achieve common goals'*, we can already observe that leadership is entangled with the guiding of both people's behaviour and emotions. Meaning that place leaders could not only be important in shaping behaviour and actions taken in collaboration, but also in dealing with people's emotions during collaborations. This could prove especially useful for place leaders operating in communities with a high degree of place-attachment. The NYMBY concept associated with local opposition towards new developments near homes and communities, particular energy technology, is often founded upon processes of place attachment. Having a place leader who is aware of the presence of these processes, could reduce local opposition (Devine-Wright, 2009).

When different views and opinions are brought together, exchanges of knowledge and learning can take place. Place leaders can help in shaping these exchanges, improving knowledge sharing (Hambleton, 2015). As was mentioned before, place leadership is not based upon top-down

relations. The ability to shape a process is more important than a pre-designed optimal strategy (Sotarauta, 2016). Collaboration between different stakeholders also means there will be potential conflict and as different parties have different interests; progress can be slow. In these situations, place leaders can help the process by: *'Stimulating imagination, the (re)-framing of issues and the development of new agenda's and helping to 'think the unthinkable'* (Horlings et al., 2018). In doing so, new interpretations can emerge and take shape, which can have a positive impact on development of new ideas or the perception of old ideas, helping the process move forward (Sotarauta, 2016).

### 3.5.3. Interpretive power

Sotarauta (2016) views interpretive power as the ability to: *'frame issues discussed, to lead sense-making processes and hence to influence which issues are on the agenda and also who is involved in communication'*. This influence is based upon understanding both the needs and resources of different organisations and different objectives and strategies (Sotarauta, 2016). Someone who is aware of this, will be better able to get the attention of others, as they are able to translate the issues faced in a way that is collectively understandable. (Sotarauta, 2016). By framing issues in a certain way, such as energy transition matters, people might be more prone to accept changes. This in turn could help reduce feelings of NIMBY. Place attachment, and related place identities, can be beneficial here, as this can help in creating understanding of local ties to the place, and in establishing a shared reality. In doing so place leaders work towards shared belief systems, facilitating interorganisational understanding (Sotarauta, 2019). Furthermore, by creating a shared language place leader could also help in creating understanding between different sectors and different scales. This could prove to be especially useful in coalitions, which often involve people from different sectors, from different scalar levels. Having someone who is able to create a shared language amongst such a group could greatly improve communication and knowledge sharing. In mobilizing collective sense-making, place leaders can also help to draw the focus upon *what* is being argued for, instead of *who* is arguing (Sotarauta, 2019). Drawing attention to the actions required, instead of someone's personality, can make sure everyone's attention is focussed on the task at hand, instead of the differences in stakeholders, organisations etc. In the case of collective coalitions previously mentioned, creating such a shared goal is important. A place leader who is able to mobilize the actors involved around these collective goals, should be beneficial.

### 3.5.4. Building capacities

First a definition of capacity building will be given. Capacity building is defined as: *'The process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organisations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive'* (United Nations, 2020). Capacity building is important for the proper functioning of companies, but also for non-profit organisations, like LEI's. LEI's are third-sector citizens-led initiatives, community oriented and not for profit (Da Silva & Horlings, 2019). In such community-oriented organisations, it is important to create sufficient knowledge and capabilities, in order for the initiative, the LEI in this case, to function properly. Energy transition initiatives encounter many barriers, such as laws, regulations, tax regimes, infrastructures etc. (Hisschemoller, 2012). Building the capacity to handle these barriers therefore is important in enabling community initiatives to act and reach their goal. The conceptual framework for capacity building used by organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) suggests that there are four levels of capacity building (Bolger & Consultant, 2000). First level is the enabling environment, representing the broad context within which development processes take place. Environment can be either constraining or enabling. This can relate to policies, structures, attitudes values (Bolger & Consultant, 2000) . Matters of regional development, such as LEI's, are often faced

with: *'dead-locked situations caused by procedures, regulations and problems in multi-actor cooperation'* (Sotarauta et al., 2012). Place leaders that can help to push the development further by creating a more enabling environment, will prove relevant. Second level is the sector/network level. This refers to the importance of creating a shared strategy, and inclusion and collaboration within the different sectors involved (Bolger & Consultant, 2000). The sector/network level relates back to the importance of being able to network in matters such as an LEI (Scholten & Meijerink, 2015). This ability to network and align different sectors, might also prove beneficial in capacity building. Third level is the organisational level, focussing on organisational structures, resources and management structures and how this can be improved to increase capacity (Bolger & Consultant, 2000). Last level is the individual level, referring to building and strengthened individuals skills to contribute to the achievement of objectives.

### 3.6. Conceptual model

Based upon the main and sub-research questions, as well as the concepts described in the literature review, a conceptual model has been made (see figure 1). This model represents the supposed relations between place leadership, competences of place leaders and place attachment, and how they affect the establishing and operationalizing of both LEI's and coalitions. Place attachment is expected to help place leaders in the execution of his or her tasks. Being attached to a place could allow place leaders understand feelings and values connected to a place, and as a consequence the people. In this way place attachment is expected to support place leaders in fulfilling their competences.

For the establishing of coalitions and the establishment and operationalizing different competences are expected to be of influence. Furthermore it is expected that interpretive power is different when it is used in establishing coalitions than when it is used in establishing and operationalizing LEI's. As can be observed, interpretive power for coalition building is used to identify collective goals and create a shared language among actors from different backgrounds (Sotarauta, 2016). By creating a shared language collective goals can be identified and actors can be mobilized around these collective goals. As collective goals are the main reasons for collective coalitions to be established (De Jong, 2016). In establishing and operationalizing LEI's, interpretive power can be used to frame issues in a way that is understandable for community members, as place leaders are more aware of local ties, due to their place attachment and awareness of place attachment.

The networking ability is also expected to be used differently within coalitions building and in establishing and operationalizing LEI's. As in establishing coalition for LEI's, often cross-sectoral networking is often required (Germes & Wiekens, 2020). Therefore the bridging and linking ability are expected to be more relevant, as these relate to cross-sectoral networking and working across different power relations (Claridge, 2013). Whereas in the establishment of the LEI's itself, gaining support from the community and finding people who want to cooperate in the LEI, should play a more prominent role. In this, the bridging ability should prove more relevant, as this emphasizes networking across intercommunity ties (Claridge, 2013).

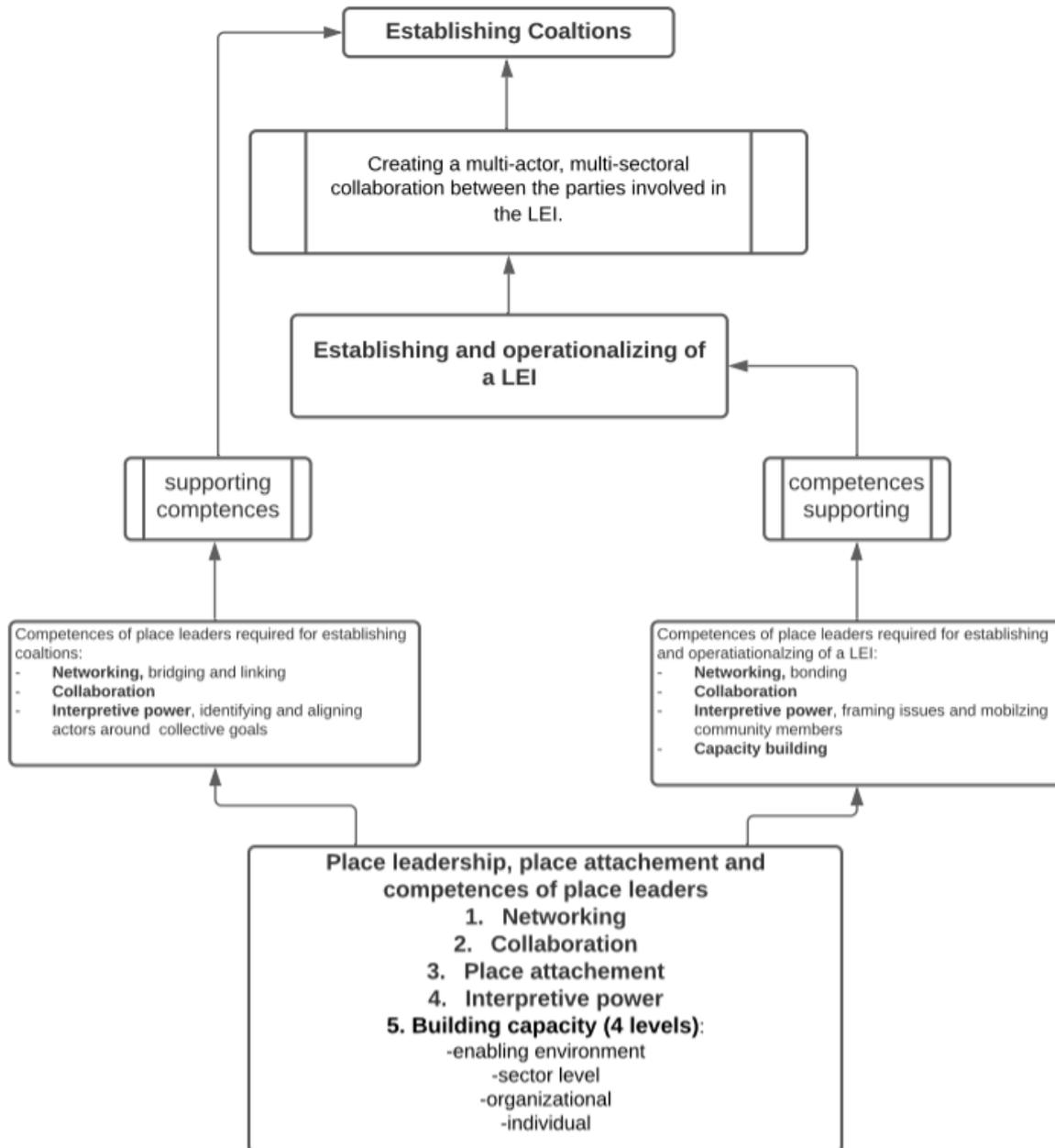


Figure 1- Conceptual model.

## 4. Results

In this section the findings in the interviews with both leaders of the LEI's and the umbrella organisations have been analysed. The different competences of place leaders from the interviews have been analysed to see how they contribute to both the realizations of LEI's and the building of coalitions. This has been done in accordance with the different competences discussed in the literature review to get an answer to the main and sub-research questions.

### 4.1. Networking

As discussed in the literature study, having someone involved in the initiative who is embedded within a network and has the ability to command a degree of respect within this network is important. Bridging, bonding and linking were thought to be relevant, all of which have been observed. One respondent saw the ability to network as a key characteristic: *'The leader also needs to be able to connect to the right people to him or her. The leader needs to be able to bind to people that know more or who have other characteristics'* (Leader E, 2021). Furthermore in the interviews with the umbrella organisations, the importance of being able to network was also confirmed (GrEK 2021, Us Kooperaasje, 2021). Including a networker in the LEI, someone who is able to activate local networks as well as networks outside parties, proves to be one of the key actors within LEI's (GrEK, 2021; Us Kooperaasje, 2021)

#### 4.1.1. Bonding

Having a network within one's community, and being able to call upon this network, bonding, has been observed with multiple respondents as important. Leader A used the bonding ability to help establish the LEI's in the initial phases: *'We started (with searching), with people around their 50's, who lived on here for years, usually with a technical background'* (Leader A, 2021). Leader F (2021) also used his local network to find board members. By using the bonding ability, respondents were able to find the competences necessary for establishing the LEI. It can be labelled as bonding, as both the respondents searched for people within their communities, making it intercommunity links (Claridge, 2013). Leader B (2021) also used the knowledge within the community to gain the necessary knowledge for the initiative. Although he is not a resident of the community, he still has a network: *'I have been around here (the village), for 8 years, so I have gotten to know the people'*. The respondents confirmed the relevance of bonding to obtain the knowledge and capacities necessary for establishing an LEI. This importance of having such a local network, also highlights the importance of having an informal network.

This involvement in a local network was also seen as an important characteristic by the umbrella organisations (GrEK, 2021; Us Kooperaasje, 2021). It was also seen as one of the reasons why LEI's don't succeed: *'When you get someone from outside the province, who wants to do a project like this, but is not able to create local support, who does not have the network, than it won't succeed'* (Us Kooperaasje, 2021). Having a local network and being able to call upon this network in the form of the bonding capital, can be considered an important competence for place leaders in establishing LEI's.

#### 4.1.2. Bridging

When engaged in bridging, someone works across organisational structures to find the necessary people and organisations. This bridging ability has proven to be relevant in finding the necessary organisations for coalition building, as well as finding the necessary people to establish the LEI's themselves. Having a formal network to start with, can be beneficial to build the LEI. As Leader E stated: *'Because I am embedded in this professionally, this (finding relevant organisations) was very logical for me'*. By being embedded within a network, whether formal or informal, finding the

necessary organisations and people and establishing new connections between them, can be even more simple: *'Yeah that (collaborations), happens on its own, within your own network. As you by example know a commissioner who has a vacation house here'* (Leader A, 2021). This was also confirmed by the other leaders.

Leader C, who was engaged in a collaboration with an umbrella organisation for LEI's, found the project leader of his LEI via this cross-organisational networking. By being embedded within a network of other corporations, finding the right people *'Happened a little natural'* as Leader D stated (Leader D, 2021). Leader E, who is embedded within a relevant formal network, also confirmed that by being engaged with relevant organisations professionally, finding such organisations: *'Happens on its own. As you are already in the circuit'*. So although we cannot say for sure whether or not being embedded within a formal or informal network is a requirement for working across different organisational structures as Scholten & Meijerink, (2015) state, it makes finding the right people and organisations a lot more easy. When asked about having people with the initiative embedded in relevant organisations, the respondent from Us Kooperaasje and GrEK confirmed this: *'That (being embedded within a relevant organisation), is really helpful, because you know which way the wind will turn'* (Us Kooperaasje, 2021).

#### 4.1.3. Linking

When engaged in coalitions, the LEI's often have less power than other parties in the coalition, because they are often the party in need: a network connection, a subsidy or knowledge regarding solar panels to give a few examples. This makes the linking ability a necessary aspect of networking, especially in building coalitions. Leader B did so by opening up a new communication line with a utility company. He stated: *'As I opened up the communication line (with the utility company), I opened that line'*. Leader B was the party who needed something, which meant the utility company was the party with more power in this matter. Looking back at the literature, this type of networking can be seen as linking (Claridge, 2013). Since LEI's, which are taking place on a local scale, often have reach out to parties that operate on a much larger scale, both in terms of their size, as well as their geographical reach. This was also the case in the interviews, where connections were laid with companies and organisations with a lot more influence than the LEI's in question. So although linking has not been mentioned explicitly very often, the linking ability is still considered a relevant networking ability based on the specific nature of their activities.

## 4.2. Collaboration

Collaboration has been identified as one of the most important competences of place leaders, both in establishing LEI's as well as in coalition building. Numerous respondents highlighted the ability to collaborate. Both within their respective LEI's, as well as with outside parties. Leader E stressed the ability to work together within the LEI itself *'You must not do this for yourself, you can be on the monkey rock'* (Leader E, 2021). Whereas Leader C mentioned collaboration with outside parties, stressing collaboration within coalition building: *'Maintain a good relationship with all parties, especially the ones you are involved with. Collaboration, collaboration is key'* (Leader C, 2010). Within collaboration the following aspects are important which will be discussed below: steering development, shaping opinions and coalition building.

### 4.2.1. Steering development

Within collaborations, whether in coalitions or in LEI's themselves, the ability to steer development is seen as an important ability. Steering development is seen as the ability to give direction within the initiative. Looking at the statement from Leader B (2021): *I took the initiative and I gave direction to the solution, so I think I did take the lead, but that is more a sort of informal lead'* as well as: *'I am a*

*bit of the driving force*'. Although not mentioning collaboration specifically, Leader B was a person who 'made it happen' and guided people to take action within the LEI. Furthermore, Leader B did not derive this ability to give direction from his formal function, as specially mentioned that he took an informal lead. Meaning the fact that he is able to guide and give direction, is derived from the ability to steer development, not from top-down relations. Being able to give direction within collaboration and within the initiative was also mentioned by Leader D (2021): *'You need to find it useful (an energy cooperation), you need to enjoy having some influence, and trying to get others to do what you think is right'*. The ability to steer development within an LEI, can be seen an important factor within LEI's.

#### 4.2.2. Shaping opinions

Within the different collaborations that have been observed, differences of opinions have also occurred. Within such collaborations, both within the LEI, as well as within coalitions, everyone's opinion needs to be heard: *'I think everyone is entitled to their opinion so that a consideration can be made, and it could be that that consideration won't be in my favour'* (Leader B, 2021). Here the importance of listening to community members of the LEI is mentioned. Leader B also tried to take away people's concerns, by coming up with new solutions, that would take away local concerns. This was also observed in the interview with Leader A: *'We thought that the (the solar park) won't discourage tourists from coming. But we do listen to critics we receive. So although we decided to build the solar park on the airfield, we also decided to withdraw it from sight'* (Leader A, 2021). In both the cases, respondents have helped the process move forward. This was done by stimulating the imagination of community members and frame the issue in such a way community members were more prone to accept the energy transition (Horlings et al., 2018). Furthermore by giving the community the right to participate in the decision making process, acceptance of the energy transition also increased. As lack of participation is often a reason for protests, ensuring that sufficient possibilities are provided to participate is important in maintaining community acceptance (Welsh, 2020). In doing so, respondents have shaped communities members opinion for the better. Differences of opinions within coalitions can also occur. Listing to everyone's opinion was again highlighted: *'Ask questions, also invite other parties to ask questions, but eventually also make a decision. When you have heard all the opinions you try to reach consensus, not by counting heads, but by trying to reach a consensus'* (Leader C, 2021).

#### 4.2.3. Collaboration within coalitions

Within coalition building, the importance of collaboration was also highlighted multiple times. Respondents stressed working together with all relevant parties, even the ones who are not willing to collaborate with others (Leader C, 2021; Leader A, 2021). Meaning that indeed, place leaders are individuals with a strong commitment to collaboration (Hambleton, 2015; Sotarauta, 2016). One such difference of opinion came forward in the interview with Leader A (2021). The net-supplier his LEI's was involved with wanted to make profits from the LEI. Whereas Leader A and the members of his LEI's did not see this as a necessity. Here Leader A clearly saw a difference of opinion between private partners with a revenue model on the one hand and the LEI, which did not have a profit motive. Here having a collective goal was seen an important factor in continuing the collaboration and solve the problem.

##### 4.2.4.1. Coalition building

As is often the case within coalitions in LEI's, differences will occur. As some parties will have profit as their main motivator for collaboration, whereas others will have sustainability as their main goal. When parties have separate interests, clashes can happen. Leader A saw a clear difference between the private party involved on the one hand, and the governmental agencies and the LEI itself on the

other (Leader A, 2021). This led to conflicts during the negotiations. However, as was mentioned in the literature study, such coalitions are formed on the basis of a collective goal (De Jong, 2016). It was by keeping this collective goal in mind, that differences of opinions were able to be worked out (Leader A, 2021). But, as has come forward in the interviews, not all established coalitions were collective, collective coalitions were also observed. Differences in the type of coalitions also resulted in differences in how place leaders operated within the coalition. When the type of coalition is more connective (De Jong, 2016), it is important to pay close attention to *'As they (the other parties), have an underlying interest, they want to build windmills. So you need to be on your qui vive, and to make sure you keep collaboration strictly business related,* as Leader C (2021) mentioned. When engaged in such connective coalition, being aware of the underlying attention or goals of other parties, is something that should be kept in mind according to Leader C (2021)

When a collective goal is not present, collaboration can also come to an end: Leader B (2021) was looking for a law firm to help him set-up the legal part of the initiative. As a law firm, their interest or goal was to ensure a strong legal position for Leader B. This meant the law firm wanted to take up a confidentiality clause within their contract, preventing communication to the people within the community. Leader B (2021), saw this as a problem stating: *'I was not going to keep my mouth closed about this, because this is a community project, and the community has a right to this (the project)'*. Here we can clearly observe a conflict of interests, as the law firm had another goal than Leader B who wanted to ensure open communication to his followers. After this, Leader B ended collaboration with the law firm. Helping the process move forward, can sometimes also mean ending certain partnerships. It also gives an indication on how important having a collective goal is within collaborations.

### 4.3. Interpretive power

Being able to formulate problems clearly and communicate this to both the members of the LEI as well as outside parties, was seen as a key characteristic for place leaders. For example J van Daalen: *'Being able to summarise and formulating the problem clearly is also a characteristic. To everyone, to the board, its members and to outside parties'* (Leader C, 2021). As well as for Leader E *'It (the LEI) needs to add up, and you need to be able to explain it, and explain it to others'* (Leader E, 2021).

#### 4.3.1. Interpretive power within the LEI

Made evident in the literature study, certain issues which are framed can help to reduce feelings of protest and gain acceptance of the community. Leader A did this by framing the AEC in a way that emphasized self-sufficiency and participation *'We set out marketing, not only for sustainability, but also for decision-making power. Instead of being pushed-around by big corporations and having no say in the matter. Which is how we brought it to the inhabitants: We want to be self-sufficient in terms of energy. And that self-sufficiency and participation did very well'*. Here we can clearly observe how the formulation of the issue helped in gaining the acceptance of the community. By understanding the local values, and stressing concepts such self-sufficiency and participation, that aligning with local values, Leader A was able to gain the communities acceptance. No other examples of how interpretive power can help to gain acceptance of local communities have been observed. Gaining acceptance of local communities has been observed more in relations to related to rootedness within the local community. This will be further elaborated on in the 'place attachment' section of the results.

In the interviews with the GrEk and Us Kooperaasje (2021) interpretive power was seen as the ability to formulate technical issues regarding LEI's. In their dealings with LEI's, the GrEK and Us Kooperaasje often observed that some place leaders place too much emphasis on the technical

aspect of the LEI (GrEK, 2021; Us Kooperaasje, 2021). Whereas community members are more concerned with the motivation behind establishing an LEI, and what their gain is (GrEK, 2021). Having a place leader who is able to translate these technical issues into matters more relatable to the community, is thus also of importance. The respondent of the GrEK even labelled lack of the ability to translate the technicalities to the community thereof as: *'The most occurring defect in LEI's'*. Regarding interpretive power in this way numerous examples can be found in the interviews. As community members were often sceptical of new developments, respondents attempted to reduce this scepticism by clarifying any issues community members might have: *'How did I contribute to this? (changing people's opinion), by answering the community has'* (Leader F, 2021). Another respondent tried to take away concerns of locals by building model homes, in which community members could observe how the new techniques were implemented (Leader B, 2021).

#### 4.3.2. Interpretive power in coalitions

Within collective coalitions, having collective goals is important. A shared goal can help the collaborations to continue when tensions are present, as was also mentioned in the 'collaboration' section of the results. The relevance of finding such a shared goal, within coalitions was highlighted: *'everyone has their own ambition, and you find each other where you collectively have benefits'* (Leader E, 2021). This once again confirms that having a collective goal is an important factor within coalitions as was stated by De Jong (2016). When having a collective goal different parties such as governmental agencies, private partners and LEI's can be brought together (Leader A, 2021). So that when different parties differ, in terms of motivation or way of operating, the collective goal can help to continue collaboration (Leader A, 2021).

Interpretive power within coalitions was also identified as an important competence of place leaders. The relevance of keeping all parties focussed at the tasks required has been stated by respondents. However, how exactly this relates to the interpretive power competence, has not come forward from the interviews: *'We work together with around 7 parties. Which are all frogs that need to stay in the wheelbarrow'* (Leader B, 2021). Something that was explicitly mentioned by multiple respondents was the importance of keeping relations on good terms. (Leader B, 2021; Leader A, 2021). When asked about collaboration with other parties Leader B (2021) stated: *'I attach value to the fact that everyone is on good terms with one another. Which is something I believe is going well (in collaboration with other parties)'*. Leader C also mentioned the importance of motivating other parties: *'I ensure that everyone is keeping warm, sharp and that we are able to make progress'*. These statements, confirms to some degree that place leaders can keep parties involved in the coalitions involved. Nonetheless, the different ways in which interpretive power was thought to contribute to coalition building, like creating a shared language, have not been observed. What has contributed to coalition building is the creating of shared goals. However, not all parties had the same goal of becoming more sustainable. In multiple interviews other goals also came forward, such as: profit, creating a more favourable image for the region/municipality or getting a larger share in the energy production (Leader A, 2021; Leader E, 2021; Leader C, 2021). This difference in goals can make collaborations more difficult as was previously mentioned in the 'Collaborations within coalitions' section.

#### 4.4. Capacity building

As was mentioned in the literature study capacity building is analysed through four levels: enabling environment, multi sector collaboration, organisational development and individual (Bolger & Consultant, 2000).

#### 4.4.1. Dealing with the environment

As was established in the literature review, LEI's often have to deal with a lot of barriers, such as laws, regulations, tax regimes, infrastructures etc. (Hisschemoller, 2012). Matters of energy transition are operating in a political field in which place leaders need to know their way around and it requires the ability to deal with different policies and different interests (GrEK, 2021). Leader F (2021) also confirmed that operating within the energy transition sector requires dealing with a plurality of regulations and different parties. This can be tiresome and requires a great deal of persistence (Leader F, 2021). Establishing and operationalizing a LEI thus requires the ability to operate within this political playing field of laws and regulations. In the interviews with both the place leaders as well as the initiatives, almost all mentioned the importance of either knowledge of policy or the ability to work together with relevant parties involved in policy. *That really is a skill, that you have policy knowledge*' (Leader E, 2021). Leader B stated: *'I know my way pretty well around all sorts of laws'* (Leader B, 2021).

Other respondents placed emphasis on being able to collaborate with relevant institutions. Leader D (2021) stressed being able to work together with governmental agencies and having experience with institutions: *'Being able to work together with governmental agencies and getting them along for a start subsidy, that sort of things. So experience with all sorts of institutions.'* And as was mentioned earlier, Leader A (2021) stressed the importance of working together with the municipality in particular: *'You need to be able to collaborate, collaboration with the municipality, is crucial'*. Besides the place leaders themselves, also the umbrella organisations both highlighted the importance of knowing your way around laws, regulations governmental policies supporting the energy transitions and having experience within the political playing field (GrEK, 2021; Us Kooperaasje, 2021). Examples of relevant laws, regulations and policies are: Programma Aardgasvrije Wijken, Energiewet, Warmtewet and the provincial and municipal sustainable energy policies specific for each of the LEI's. Individuals who have manifested themselves as leaders of an LEI, are frequently people who have experience in these matters (GrEK, 2021). Both knowledge of policy and the ability to collaborate with relevant institutions can be considered an important part in the enabling environment capacity.

#### 4.4.2. Multi-sector collaboration

By increasing collaboration with other sectors and organisations a LEI can exchange ideas, gets access to resources and can address shared issues (Chandler & Kennedy, 2015). Although creating inclusion of different sectors was not mentioned explicitly as a competence by any of the respondents, multiple respondents talked about the importance creating collaboration and alignment of different parties. Different respondents mentioned various organisations and sectors with whom they established collaborations with, further enhancing the LEI's capacity in the process. Some examples: Leader B established collaboration between the LEI and the energy supplier responsible for the energy network of the LEI. That was done by actively searching for a project manager who would be able to help him with the establishment of the LEI, because the initial project manager did not prove a good match with the LEI. In doing so creating better a better collaboration between the different organisations that *'made day and night difference'* (Leader B, 2021). By searching for the right person within the organisations of the energy suppliers and creating better collaboration, Leader B increased the capacity of the LEI. It should be worth noting, that Leader B stressed the human aspect of creating this inclusion: *'It really is about the people, it is more about people than it is about institutions, you need to be able to find the right people'* (A. Maarten, 2021). Leader F (2021) is currently working on creating a collaboration between a supplier of electrolysers (a combination of water and electricity which can be used to power vehicles), a large factory near his village and the LEI he is involved with. The collaboration of these parties involves using a combination of hydrogen by

the electrolyser supplier and the solar panels of the LEI, in order to fuel the trucks of the factory. Here we can clearly observe how a place leader has created a collaboration between different organisations. These serve as an example how place leaders contribute to creating shared strategies between different organisations, increasing their respective LEI's scope and capacity. Other examples where such a shared strategy was created between the LEI parties include a sports facility, the NAM, energy suppliers, local interest groups, nature organisations and more. Which place leaders have done by finding a common interest and by using all levels of the networking competence: bridging, bonding and linking. (Leader B, 2021; Leader F, 2021; Leader A, 2021). By creating collaborations between their LEI's and a plurality of organisations, both within the energy sector and other sectors, place leaders have helped to increase their organisations capacity.

#### 4.4.3. Organisational development

##### 4.4.3.1. Initial phase

As for any other organisations, how well an organisation is able to fulfil its mission, is related to the organisational structure and how well this functions. The organisational level of capacity includes organisational structures, resources and management. One of the main issues encountered by LEI's in initial phases of their initiative, was getting sufficient community members enthusiastic to join the LEI. Leaders mentioned during multiple interviews, that people are often reserved and are not always enthusiastic about new developments (Leader B, 2021; Leader F, 2021; Leader D, 2021; Leader A, 2021). In the interviews with the umbrella organisations, both confirmed that gaining local support for the initiative has often been a stumbling block for LEI in their initial phases (GrEK, 2021; Us Kooperasje, 2021). Place leaders tried to gain local support by a variety of ways: organizing information evenings for inhabitants, visiting them personally but also by giving participation right in the initiative. How well this worked, varied per initiative. But for the large part, respondents agreed that gaining support from the community is a slow process, which cannot be easily accelerated (Leader B, 2021; Leader D, 2021). One aspect that helped to forward the process of gaining local support and participation, was rootedness within the local community. Place leaders who were already established members of their community, enjoyed a degree of trust, which helped in gaining the support and trust of community members (Leader D, 2021; Leader A, 2021). In an interview with Leader A (2021) this was nicely illustrated: *'Because I am in the middle of this community, people will get behind it (the initiative). If you are an outsider, then people will say: What do you have to gain, you must be making money from this'*. Place leaders who were not rooted within the community themselves as well as the umbrella organisations, saw the benefits of getting someone who is rooted within the community to become sort an ambassador for the LEI's. This will be further elaborated on in the 'place attachment' section.

##### 4.4.3.2. Exploitation phase

When LEI's have become operational, this often involves professionalizing the LEI. As LEI's are often voluntarily based, members of the initiative don't always have the amount of time that is necessary. And as the LEI's size and customer base increase, certain tasks need to be outsourced: *'Yeah, at a certain point you need to let certain things get done professionally by other people, because it cannot all be done by volunteers. Which is the ideal situation, creating a company that is financially stable'* (Leader D, 2021). Leader B also mentioned outsourcing: *'Because we are becoming a club. We are gearing up a heat company, and bills have to be paid, and the phone needs to be answered. And how is this organised? That has been mostly outsourced'* (Leader B, 2021). Professionalization also occurred when the organisation interests grew larger: *'We hired a firm to represent us, who is going to represent us to Vattenfall. We want to make it (maintaining contacts with Vattenfall) a direction function. Because otherwise we remain responsible ourselves. Which gives you a less strong standing position.'* (Leader C, 2021). At a given point, some LEI need to professionalize in order to keep their

operations going, in order to maintain or increase the organisations capacity. By professionalizing their LEI's place leaders have increased organisational capacity. However, this professionalization is done primarily via outsourcing of tasks, not by the place leaders themselves. Meaning in the exploitation phase of the LEI, the organisational development competence is not a competence of place leaders.

#### 4.4.4. Individual

In the interviews none of the respondents explicitly mentioned actively engaging other members of the organisation in any sort of training or schooling to increase their individual capacity or knowledge. Mentions were made of how place leaders and their LEI's gained new knowledge: via other LEI's, or knowledge organisations for LEI's such as the Energiewerkplaats (Leader A, 2021; Leader E, 2021). However none of the place leaders explicitly mentioned building and strengthening individuals skills via training to contribute to the achievement of objectives themselves. Instead competences were developed by ability to learn along the way of establishing and operationalizing LEI's.

An explanation for this can be found in the fact that most of the skills required for the formation and organisation of the LEI, were found by finding people with relevant knowledge. Therefore there is less need to increase individuals skills within the organisations itself. As was already mentioned in the networking section, numerous respondents increased their organisations knowledge and skills by way of using their network: *'I very knowingly searched different types of people for the LEI'* (Leader E, 2021). The use of the network to build capacity of the organisation was also mentioned by Leader A (2021): *'We needed more competences. So then we started looking: we need someone with a legal background. We also increased competences by searching for someone with financial experience, so we were able to form our organisation'*.

Respondents themselves have strengthened their own abilities along the way of establishing and operationalizing the LEI. Multiple respondents mentioned, they initially didn't know a lot about the field they were operating in (Leader B; Leader C, 2021). They increased their knowledge by reading, contacting relevant organisations, or by simple learning during the process. What contributed to this, was that place leaders enjoyed learning new skills and found it interesting to learn more about matters of energy transition (Leader B, 2021; Leader F, 2021; Leader C). This interest and enjoyment of learning about LEI's, was also mentioned as a characteristic of place leaders by respondents: *'interest to learn new things, I started with, I was interested in how this happened (setting up an LEI)* (Leader F, 2021). Actually enjoying the process of setting up and establishing an LEI can thus also be a competence worth mentioning. As by enjoying the process, place leaders are willing to actively engage in increasing their own knowledge and skills.

#### 4.5 Place attachment

All but one of the respondents mentioned feeling a connection to the place in which the LEI was located. Most respondents who experienced place attachment also lived within the same place the LEI. Respondents experienced that place attachment occurred for a variety of reasons: Living there, growing up in the place, or their kids have done so, actively engagement in other local initiatives, . enjoying the ambience of the community or enjoying the scenery (Leader B, 2021; Leader F, 2021; Leader D, 2021; Leader A, 2021; Leader E, 2021). *'I enjoy it there (the place), there are certain things which enjoy there, how people do things around there. It is a certain ambience I really like.* (Leader B, 2021). Respondents have derived attachment to place from both the physical and social attributes (Devine-Wright, 2009; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001)

#### 4.5.1. Place attachment as a motivator

Living in the same place as where the initiative is located, increased place attachment. This generally meant more chances for active engagement in other local initiatives. Which were previously given as reasons for experiencing place attachment. Living in the same place as where the initiative is located, increases place leaders rootedness within the local communities. By being rooted within the community, respondents were more aware of what is going on within the community, as well as having a local network. The one respondent who was not living in the same place as the location of the initiative, still experienced a strong attachment to the place where the initiative was located, in the interview recalling childhood memories within the place (Leader B, 2021). Experiencing this place attachment has contributed to place leaders motivation to set up an LEI. Leader E (2021) mentioned this by stating: *'I lived in a lot of places, but when I moved here I thought for the first time: This is where I want to live. And that is when you start setting such a thing (an LEI)'*. The umbrella organisations also mentioned how experiencing place attachment played a role in this regard. Stating the people who are first to take up initiative have often been people who moved to this village on a later age (GrEK, 2021). They moved because they felt connected to the place, for example because of the scenery or the ambiance of the village, and decided to settle there. And in settling there, they also wanted to do something to improve the place, like setting up an LEI.

However, place attachment doesn't seem to have influence on the actions taking within the initiative or specific to the place. These activities also don't seem to be place-specific. Because respondents stated that LEI's such as theirs, would be able to be set up in any place, as long as: *'The time is ripe and the people or willing'*. However, being rooted within the community made it easier to set up an initiative such as an LEI, numerous respondents mentioned. By being rooted within the community, respondents were more aware of what is going on within the community, as well as having a local network.

#### 4.5.2. Understanding communities

Understanding of local sentiment was expected to help place leaders in establishing their LEI's. This has been observed to some degree. Leader E (2021) mentioned awareness of intercultural differences within the different villages that were included in the initiative. When asked how this helped, Leader E answered: *'You know what to put your effort in, you put you energy where there is energy.'* By being aware of the local cultures and how they differed, Leader E was able to take targeted action within the community and find the people who wanted to cooperate and help. Another case where understanding of communities contributed to the formation of an LEI, was the case of Leader A, which was already discussed in the *'interpretive power'* section. Here by understanding the importance community members hold to certain values, such as self-reliance and participation helped Leader A gained acceptance of the community (Leader A, 2021). By emphasizing these values, community members were more prone to accept this new development in the form of an LEI. By being aware of local values, Leader A has been better able to establish the LEI.

#### 4.5.3. Rootedness within the community

Although not mentioned in the literature review, a key aspect of place attachment that helped place leaders to gain support from community members, has been rootedness within the community. Almost all but one place leaders saw the benefits of having someone who is rooted in the community and enjoys trust within this community. One respondent, who lived in the community his whole life, acknowledged this was a big part of the success of the initiative. Stating that: *'Had I not? (been a local), than this initiative would not have worked. That is something I can say with certainty.'* (Leader A, 2021). Being rooted within the community, can even be seen as a condition for the success of the LEI, in this case. Another respondent also stressed the benefits of being rooted within the

community: *'It (being rooted within the community) makes it easier, because people know you, and will be quicker to trust you'* (Leader D, 2021). Although this Leader D did not see rootedness within the community as condition for the success of the LEI, it was acknowledged it made realizing the LEI easier. The difficulty in such cases, is to determine when someone is rooted or is considered rooted by others within his or her community. Both place leaders and respondents stated that it can often take over decades for someone to not be considered *'import'*, as multiple respondents put it. In one interview, a respondent even stated this process can take multiple generations.

When respondents did not enjoy this rootedness within the community, they often searched for someone to join the initiative who did. By searching for someone who was rooted within the community, and getting them to join the initiative, gaining the acceptance of the community. Mentioned in multiple interviews, by respondents who did not have rootedness within the community: *'You need that local input of others' 'She (the person who is rooted within the community) really is rooted within the community'* (Leader B, 2021; Leader E, 2021). This was especially of importance of the initial phases of initiatives. By having a person who is rooted within the community, to carry out a new development such as an LEI, community members were less sceptical. Both the umbrella organisations also recognized that having someone who is rooted within the community to carry out the initiative, to become sort of an ambassador. Seeing this as one of the key figures in ensuring the success of initiatives.

However, it should also be noted, that some place leaders preferred keeping a distance to the community in which they operated. Leader B (2021) stated that: *'I don't live here and I don't want to. I think that is one the reasons I am able to keep this work up for over 8 years'*. Being rooted within the community does not always have to be considered as a benefit. Nonetheless also this respondents saw the benefits of having someone within the initiative, who was rooted within the community.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Overview of the results

An overview of the results has been provided in the form of a table (see table 2) stating the most important aspects of each of the competences, their relation to one another and how they play a role within the LEI and in coalition building. Following the table, results have been related to previous studies regarding leadership, LEI's and coalitions, how these studies overlap and what this study adds on the scientific debate regarding competences of place leadership in LEI's.

Competence	Role in LEI	Role in coalition building
Networking	<i>Bonding</i> , by using their own local network or that of others within the LEI's, place leaders obtained both the necessary people and knowledge required for the establishment of the LEI's. The <i>bonding</i> competence can therefore also be seen as adding to the <i>capacity building</i> competence. Furthermore <i>rootedness within the community</i> by either the place leader themselves or by someone else within the LEI, has added to place leaders ability to use the local networks present as well as the importance of the informal network	-
	<i>Bridging</i> , by using their local and formal network place leaders have worked across different organisations to find the necessary people to establish the LEI's	<i>Bridging</i> , by using their own and their formal network, place leaders helped to finding both the people and organisations to form coalitions with.
	-	<i>Linking</i> , establishing connections across different power relations with other organisations.
Collaboration	<i>Steering development</i> , the ability of place leaders to guide development. Based upon place leaders their ability to take the informal lead, not from top-down hierarchical relations.	-
	<i>Shaping opinions</i> , by listening to the whole of the community and taking the different opinions into account when making a decision. In doing so	<i>Shaping opinions</i> , by listening to all parties involved and taking the different opinions into account when making a decision.

	place leaders gave everyone the ability to participate and in doing so possible reduced acts of protest from the community	
Interpretive power	<i>Framing of technical issues</i> , framing of technical issues of the LEI into matters understandable for the community.	
Capacity building	<i>Dealing with the environment</i> , having relevant policy knowledge and the ability work collaborate with relevant institutions. This is complemented by the <i>bridging</i> ability, since some place leaders were already embedded formally within network of relevant institution. Furthermore <i>individual capacity building</i> also contributed. Since place leaders their ability to learn along the way of establishing and operationalizing LEI's helped them to obtain the necessary policy knowledge.	-
	-	<i>Multi sector collaboration</i> , creating collaboration and alignment of different parties. Done so by finding common interests. Supported by using all the levels of the networking competence: <i>bridging, bonding and linking</i> .
	<i>Organisational development</i> , getting community members enthusiastic about the initiative in the initial phase of the LEI.	
	<i>Individual</i> place leaders increased their own capacity by learning along the way of establishing and operationalizing the LEI. Contributed to this, was place leaders enjoyment of learning new skills and finding the energy transition interesting	

Place attachment	<i>Rootedness within the community.</i> Has place leaders with other competences mentioned previously such as: the <i>organisational development, bonding competence, shaping of opinion.</i> <i>Rootedness within the community</i> either by the place leaders themselves or by someone else within the initiative helped in gaining the trust of the community and as a consequence gain acceptance.	
	<i>Place attachment as a motivator,</i> because place leaders experienced place attachment they felt motivated to contribute to the place. Done by establishing an LEI.	

table 2- Overview of competences of place leaders and the role of these competences within LEI's and coalition building.

Networking has been one of the most prevalent competences within this research. Since this has been well highlighted in previous research, this was to be expected. Both Beer et al. (2018) and Sotarauta (2016) confirmed that place leaders are individuals who are able to network, stressing both the ability to act inside one's own network as well as establish new connections. A necessity for LEI's, but also for the coalitions that need to be formed in order to operationalize the LEI's. This research has added on this the importance of rootedness within the community. By being rooted within the community, place leaders have a vast informal local network, in which they enjoy more trust.

The importance of collaboration has already been established by Hambleton (2015) and Sotarauta (2016). Looking at the results from own research, this is confirmed. Within this study the ability to steer development within collaboration has also been identified as an important competence. This has been established in previous studies by Hambleton (2015) and Sotarauta (2015), stating that place leaders are individuals with the ability to steer development, instead of designing an optimal strategy.

The ability to steer development is not derived from their hierarchical position. Instead their leadership role is more informal and derived from the ability to steer development. Done by listening to everyone involved, both within the LEI and in coalitions place leaders take all opinions into account when making a decision. Within this research an important characteristic of shaping opinions within collaboration was giving everyone involved the ability to voice their concerns and opinions. Both within the LEI and within coalition building. Although it could be argued that by given everyone the ability to participate, opinions are also shaped, since feelings of NIMBY are often founded upon a lack of participation (Walsh, 2020). In doing so steering development makes it possible to get a solution beneficial for all. This aligns with Horlings et al. (2018), who stated that

place leaders help to guide transformations by, by stimulating imagination and the (re)framing of issues.

The (re)framing of issues which Horlings et al, (2018) mentioned, was used by place leaders within LEI's, emphasizing the framing of technical issues surrounding LEI's. Interpretive power was used to create a better understanding of the technical aspects of the energy transition. By making this understandable and emphasizing how community members can gain benefit from the energy transition, gain acceptance of the community and helped to shape opinions of the community. Within coalitions the use of interpretive power was limited. The ability of place leaders to create a shared language, understanding or shared goals between the different organisations involved did not play an important role, not aligning with Sotarauta (2019). An explanation could be that creating a collective understanding within coalitions is less necessary within coalitions. Since they mostly consisted out of professional organisations which already possess the necessary knowledge and understanding, therefore making interpretive power less necessary in coalitions. Interpretive power has thus been more prevalent in the establishment of the LEI's then within coalition building.

Capacity building can be seen as an important competence for place leaders. Helping them to deal with relevant policies, rules and institutions: the dealing with the environment. But also in creating multi-sector collaboration between different organisations. Organizational development was important in the initial phases of the LEI. Which, as can be seen in the table, has been linked to the competence of place attachment, specifically rootedness within the community. Rooted within the community themselves, either by place leader or someone else within the initiative has helped to gain acceptance of the community. Finally individual capacity building was linked to the ability of place leaders themselves to learn along the way of establishing the LEI, instead of training others as was originally thought. What added on this, was the enjoyment of the place leaders in learning new things.

The dealing with the environment for example, can be linked to the study of Hisschemoller (2012) who mentioned energy transition initiatives often have to deal with a lot of laws and regulations and that this can be seen as a constraining factor. Therefore findings in this research showed that the ability to deal with environment can be seen as an important competence of place leaders. Furthermore creating multi-sector collaboration has also been important. Creating collaboration and networking with different parties was already established as being important by Scholten & Meijerink (2015). No previous studies have been found to highlight the importance of having someone within an initiative who is rooted within the community, in relation to organisational capacity building. Therefore adding on the scientific debate on LEI's. Another aspect which has not been highlighted in previous studies is the ability to learn along the way of establishing an LEI. Finally, adding to this, is the importance of place leaders enjoyment of learning new skills and finding the energy transition interesting.

The importance of place attachment and how this contributes to the competence of place leaders within LEI's is something not researched before . Specifically rootedness within the community, either by the place leader themselves, or someone else within the LEI. The competences mentioned previously, networking, collaboration, interpretive power and capacity building have all been researched in previous studies. However, the way in which rootedness within the community strengthens these competences, is something that adds to the scientific debate. Made evident in this research, rootedness within the community adds upon other necessary competences of place leaders discussed in this research (networking, capacity building and collaboration). Rootedness is important as it means enjoying a level of trust and familiarity within the community. Something that is, as we now know, important in establishing LEI's.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1. Main research question

Going back to the main research question: *'What are competences of leaders in Local Energy Initiatives'*, different competences have had an influence upon different aspects of LEI's and are interlinked.

Networking is an important competence of place leaders, also within LEIs. With bonding and bridging ability used for establishment of LEI's and the bridging and linking ability used in the establishment of coalitions. The networking ability has also been strengthened by rootedness within the community. Either rootedness of place leaders themselves, or by someone else within the initiative. As being rooted within the community allowed for a larger network within the community and created more trust within that network.

The ability to collaborate, both within the LEI and within coalitions, was highlighted by almost all the respondents as being a key component for a leader within an LEI. This meant having a collaborative mindset and listening to all parties involved which helped to steer development, both within the LEI and in coalitions.

Interpretive power, has been of less importance than was initially expected. The original hypothesis that interpretive power contributes to creating a shared language among different actors based. An explanation of the less importance than expected is that coalitions often consist of professional organisations, which already possess the necessary knowledge and understanding of other organisations. Furthermore within LEI's it was expected that leaders frame issues in way that reduce feelings of protest of community members. This has not been confirmed. Instead, interpretive power was applied to frame technical issues in a way in understandable and relatable for community members. But this aspect has also not been as evident as the other competences.

Capacity building was of importance in both LEI's as well as in coalitions, instead of merely LEI's, as was the original hypothesis. Since multi-sector collaborations capacity building was more prevalent importance in establishing coalitions, then it has been in establishing and operationalizing LEI's. All the capacity building levels, dealing with environment, multi-sector collaboration, organisational development and on individual level can be seen as important. The individual capacity building level however, has proven more relevant for place leaders for their ability to increase their own knowledge and skills, then that of others within the initiative.

Place attachment has added to the other competences. However not by understanding values or emotions connected to a place as was the original hypothesis. Instead the rootedness of the leader within the community turned out to be of importance. By being rooted within the community, place leaders enjoyed more trust, having a larger network in which they enjoyed more trust and were better able to get community members enthusiastic. When place leaders themselves didn't feel rooted, they saw the benefits of having someone within their LEI who did enjoy this rootedness. The importance of having such a person within the LEI, can thus not be underestimated. Furthermore experiencing place attachment motivated place leaders to contribute to the place, in the form of establishing an LEI.

In short: place leaders of LEI's are people who are able to network and collaborate, are able to build up the capacity of their LEI and are either rooted within the community themselves, or should attract someone to the LEI who is.

## 6.2 Reflection

Reflecting upon this research the most evident constraint has been the number of respondents. This has limited the extent to which findings in this research can be generalized to a larger scale. The limited number of respondents has been due to the fact that many LEI's which were approached did not have the time to provide an interview. Furthermore since the energy transition and all matters related to that are a popular topic of research nowadays, it is also possible LEI's have suffered from research fatigue (Clark, 2008). Because of this, the number of respondents is limited and with that the generalizability of the research. Secondly the generalizability of this research has also been limited due to the geographical boundaries of the research. Limiting research to only the province of Friesland and Groningen has on the one hand made it easier to compare. The institutional context in terms of provincial policy was similar to a certain degree. However this also limits findings in this research to be generalized to the scale of the Netherlands. Because different provinces have different policies regarding LEI's. Furthermore the extent to which LEI's are supported by governmental agencies is also largely determined by the municipality in which LEI's operate and umbrella organisations and what they do to support initiatives. Therefore the institutional setting in which LEI's operate, can contribute to either the success or failure of LEI's. This reduces the generalization of this research to other provinces or municipalities in the Netherlands.

Another point that has limited the strength of this research, has been that within the LEI's, only the place leaders themselves have been interviewed, thus providing only the view of the place leaders. It would have been useful to interview others members of the initiatives. Getting their view upon what they considered important competences of place leaders, and what competences they attributed to the place leaders interviews would have provided a useful secondary view. Unfortunately, lack of time and the difficulty of getting sufficient respondents in the first place has not made this possible.

The final aspect of this research that constrains generalizability, is the fact that the LEI's studied, are located within rural areas. Within such smaller rural villages, it might be easier to call upon one's social capital. As the scale upon which needs to be operated is smaller and community ties are generally stronger in rural areas (Sørensen, 2014). Because of this, benefits of having a local network or the fact that place leaders are rooted within the community, might be less prevalent in cities. This reduces the generalizability of this research to urban areas. Therefore conducting a similar kind of research in urban areas, might cause other competences to be of greater importance than the competencies identified in this research.

## 6.3 Implication for planners

As has been stated before, community based initiatives in general are becoming more recognized as a way in which the energy transition can be stimulated (Soares da Silva & Horlings, 2020). This research has contributed to gaining more insights in how they can be stimulated by way of place leaders. In terms of the competences needed in place leaders, such as collaboration, networking and capacity building.

Lack of policy and institutional knowledge is frequently seen as an obstacle for initiatives who do not have someone within the initiative who has experience in this matters. Thus planners could also pay more attention to facilitate training for people who want to set up an LEI, especially with regards to relevant policy and institutional knowledge. Since this has been indicated as an important competence for place leaders of LEI by almost all the respondents. Therefore planners could help by establishing intermediate organisations that help to facilitate such training or use the existing organisations to do so. Furthermore, by establishing more intermediate organisations, planners can

help to increase knowledge exchanges by different organisations such as EnergieVanOns as well as between different LEI's.

#### 6.4. Future research suggestions

The suggestion for future research stems from one of the limitations of the research: the fact that all cases were located in rural areas. This could have led to social ties within the community being stronger than within urban areas and therefore causing certain competences to be of greater importance than they would have been in urban areas. To get a better comparison between urban and rural areas and to enable generalisation of the research a study within urban areas seems the next step. Therefore future research might investigate the competences of place leaders within urban LEI's. To see if indeed the type of place leaders and his or her competences, differ between rural and urban areas. Expectations are that the Netherlands will become more urbanized in the coming ten years (CBS, 2019). So research on the role of place leaders in urban areas will be relevant for the future of the energy transition.

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## 8. Appendix

### A. Interview guides

This section of the appendix contains the interview guides for both the interviews with both the place leaders as well as the umbrella organisations. They are formulated in Dutch as the native language of each of the respondents is also Dutch, making it easier to communicate

#### A.1. Interview guide place leaders

1. Kunt u mij kort iets vertellen over hoe u betrokken bent geraakt bij het initiatief
2. Ziet u uzelf wel of niet als iemand die leidinggeeft of heeft gegeven binnen het initiatief?
  - Waarom wel, niet?
  - Wat beschouwt u als belangrijke (3 belangrijkste bij veel) eigenschappen van een leider van een energie initiatief?
3. Wat zijn karakteristieken/eigenschappen/vaardigheden van uzelf die u geholpen hebben tijdens het gehele proces van het opzetten, organiseren van het initiatief en met het aangaan van samenwerkingsverbanden.
  - Wat voor eigenschappen waren er nodig voor het opzetten van het initiatief? en de samenwerking met derden?
  - Waarom juist deze eigenschappen? Hoe zijn deze ingezet, waarvoor?
4. Hoe is de LEI tot stand gekomen?
  - Vanuit wiens behoefte is het ontstaan? (gehele dorp, aantal mensen, 1 iemand)
  - Wat was de aanleiding/reden om een energie initiatief te starten?
  - Wat was uw rol in de opstartfase en de beginfase van de LEI. hier uitleggen wat je met eerste fases bedoeld.
  - Welke zaken gingen bij aanvang makkelijk en waar lagen achteraf gezien punten van verbetering. Ik denk dan bv aan het vinden van de juiste partijen, deskundigheid, subsidie, de samenwerking binnen het dorp, draagvlak etc,
  - Waarom ging dit makkelijk, waarom lag hier verbetering?
5. Hoe was de houding van het dorp/buurt/etc., in deze eerste fases?
  - Hoe reageerden bewoners uit het dorp? Was er bv bereidheid om zelf mee te doen, mee te organiseren.
  - Hoe zou de gewenste energietransitie De LEI gerealiseerd moeten worden volgens u? Zijn er verschillen in opinies binnen het initiatief? Zijn er verschillen in visie tussen de LEI en andere dorpsbewoners
  - Hoe reageerden dorpsbewoners op de start van het initiatief (positief/negatief/waarom?)? Waarom denkt u?
  - Is de mening van anderen over het initiatief eventueel veranderd? In positieve of negatieve zin en waardoor is dat gekomen denkt u? Wat heeft aan de verandering bijgedragen?

- Heeft u, of iemand anders daar een rol in gespeeld? Zo ja wie en hoe heeft u of die ander dat gedaan?
  - Was er wel of niet al kennis aanwezig omtrent LEI's? Waren er bv personen die vanuit hun werk of vrijwilligerswerk/netwerk te maken hadden met een LEI?
  - Zo nee, is hier verandering in gekomen en hoe is dat bewerkstelligd?
  - Welke innovaties zijn door het initiatief ontwikkeld en wat was uw rol daarbij?
6. Hoe worden de dagelijkse werkzaamheden binnen de LEI georganiseerd? Hoe is dit zo gegroeid of hoe is daartoe besloten?.
- Wat is de de onderlinge taakverdeling?
  - Had iedereen de nodige kennis voor zijn of haar taak? Hoe proberen leden of het initiatief als geheel nieuwe kennis te vergaren?
7. Wat zijn punten die goed gaan bij de dagelijkse bezigheden van LEI? En wat kon en kan (eventueel) beter
- Waarom ging dit goed/ waarom kon dit beter in de beginfase?
  - Hoe is dit (eventueel) veranderd in de tijd
  - Heeft u daar wel/niet een rol in gehad?
  - Wat is volgens u van belang geweest achteraf gezien tav het organiseren van dagelijkse bezigheden en het omgaan met eventuele problemen?
8. Voelt u wel of geen verbinding met ... (het dorp buurt etc), waar het initiatief zich bevindt, en in welke mate Waarom? (doorvragen tav fysieke en sociale attachment) (Woont u er al lang, kent u de mensen goed, bent u zich bewust van wat er lokaal speelt, kinderen die hier opgegroeid zijn. Speelt u al een rol in het verenigingsleven in het dorp?
- Zo ja, heeft dit invloed gehad op het opzetten/laten functioneren van de LEI? (Creëren draagvlak, bekend zijn bij de mensen, bewust van wat er lokaal speelt, weten hoe je bepaalde dingen moet brengen; de taal spreken in Friesland!)
  - Zo nee, heeft dit invloed gehad op opzetten/functioneren, draagvlak LEI?
  - In hoeverre sluiten de activiteiten van het initiatief aan bij de kenmerken van de plek? Zou dit initiatief op deze wijze wel of niet elders op dezelfde manier kunnen worden opgezet (place based)?
9. Met welke partij(en) werkt de LEI samen.
- Wat voor soort partijen zijn dit (wat voor soort ondernemingen/sector, privaat/publiek).
  - Hoe bent u met mensen van deze partijen in aanraking gekomen?
  - Merkte u verschillen binnen wijze van opereren tussen de verschillende partijen? Zo ja - wat waren hier de voordelen en/of nadelen van.
  - Wat was de motivatie voor de verschillende partijen om bij elkaar te komen? Wie heeft/wie hebben er voor gezorgd dat de verschillende partijen bij elkaar kwamen
  - Als wat voor type samenwerkingsverband zou u het omschrijven.
    - Collectief, iedereen streeft hetzelfde doel na (gemeenschappelijk)
    - Connectief, samenwerken maar ook proberen eigen ambities te realiseren (individueel). Verschillende partijen

- Aansturend, iemand heeft een ambitie uitgesproken en heeft daarbij leidende rol genomen (aansturend)
- zijn er partijen die wel relevant zijn voor energietransitie waarmee u niet samenwerkt? Waarom?

10. Wat zijn punten die goed gaan bij het samenwerken bij andere partijen? En wat kon en kan (eventueel) beter?

- Waarom ging dit goed, waarom kon dit beter
- Is er verandering gekomen in de punten die beter konden?
- Wat was/is volgens u van belang bij het oplossen van deze punten?

## A.2. Interview guide umbrella organisations

1. Wat is uw taak binnen...

- heeft u te maken met LEI's
- Wat is uw rol binnen...
- Hoe verloopt de samenwerking met LEI's? waarom?

2. Met welke personen uit LEI's heeft u vaak te maken?

- Waarom deze personen denkt u?
- Hoe belangrijk is lokaal leiderschap binnen LEI's, waarom?

3. Wat zijn punten die goed gaan bij LEI's en wat kan beter

- Waarom dit?
- Komt hier verandering in? Hoe?

4. Is er sprake van leiderschap binnen LEI's, of is dit afwezig, (uitleggen wat je bedoelt met leiderschap)

- Waarom is dit aanwezig/ afwezig
- Hoe heeft de aanwezigheid/afwezigheid van leiderschap invloed op LEI's?

5. Zijn er binnen de LEI's duidelijk personen die deze leiderschap functie vervullen

- Zo ja/nee waarom?
- Verschilt dit per fase?
- Wat is de rol van deze mensen binnen het initiatief? Waarom deze rol?
- Wat ziet u als persoonlijke kenmerken, vaardigheden, karakters van dergelijke leiders waar u mee te maken heeft
- Waarom deze?
- Hoe worden deze ingezet volgens u, en waarvoor? (aangaan samenwerken, krijgen support gemeenschap, opzetten initiatief, netwerken)

6. Wat zou u zien als belangrijke eigenschappen van lokale leiders van LEI's
  - Waarom deze eigenschappen?
  - Komt dit overeen met de eigenschappen die u observeert bij de lokale leiders waar u mee te maken heeft? Waarom wel of niet?
  - Wat voor eigenschappen missen lokale leiders nu nog volgens u?
  
7. In wat voor mate zijn deze lokale leiders volgens u verbonden met de plek waarin zij opereren? (wonen zij daar, kennen zij daar mensen, actief in dorpsleven etc)
  - Hoe komt deze verbindtenis tot uiting?
  - Hoe heeft dit volgens u invloed op functioneren van deze leiders binnen de LEI? Waarom
  - Zijn lokale leiders die verbintenis met de plek waarin zij opereren hebben naar u mening beter in staat hun leiderschapsfunctie te vervullen? Zo ja/nee waarom?

## B. Consent form

All of the respondents have signed an consent form as mentioned in the 'Ethical issues' section. An example of this consent form is added in this section.

## Instemmingsformulier

- Het is mij medegedeeld waar het onderzoek over gaat en wat er met mijn antwoorden zal worden gedaan. Er werd mij de ruimte gegeven hierover vragen te stellen en eventueel beantwoorde vragen werden voldoende beantwoord. Ik heb genoeg tijd gehad om te bepalen of ik mee wou doen aan dit onderzoek.
- Mijn deelname aan het onderzoek is op vrijwillige basis en ik kan op elk moment beslissen om te stoppen met mijn deelname.
- Ik geef toestemming voor het gebruiken van mijn antwoorden voor de volgende doeleinden: (wetenschappelijk artikel en presentatie).
- Ik ga akkoord met mijn deelname aan dit interview.

*Naam van participant:*

*Datum:*

*Handtekening:*



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