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Quiet acceptance vs. the 'polder model': stakeholder involvement in strategic urban mobility plans

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ABSTRACT

Cities in EU-member states increasingly involve governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in developing strategic urban mobility plans to increase the legitimacy of policies. The question is, to what extent urban transport experts and other stakeholders acknowledge the added value of the involvement of stakeholders in a sectoral policy field as urban mobility planning? This article analyses governmental and non-governmental involvement practices of the cities of Malmö (Sweden) and Utrecht (the Netherlands) using the New Institutional Approach. Both countries strive to a large extent for more stakeholder involvement. However, urban transport professionals in both countries also explicitly emphasize the disadvantages of stakeholder involvement in urban mobility planning. According to them, non-governmental stakeholders are not able to think on the needed strategic level, groups are biased, and many other stakeholders do not feel the need to get involved in the policy process. As a consequence, policy processes often result in delays. This study shows that participation of stakeholders in the strategic urban mobility policy process is, according to professionals working in the field, not always the panacea that many scholars expect.

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1. Introduction

Over the past three decades, planners in European countries gradually transitioned from conventional transport planning methods to the 'new sustainability mobility paradigm' (Banister, 2008; Creswell, 2010; Loukopoulos & Scholz, 2004; Silva, 2013; Thomsen, Nielsen, & Gudmundsson, 2005). The sustainable mobility paradigm tries to fully embrace the notion that transportation planning processes do not take place in a vacuum, but instead is affected by developments in society as has been discussed in scientific transportation planning debates in the past decades (Wilson, 2001). The paradigm put people explicitly central in order to change current congestion and pollutions as a result of car-oriented planning in cities (Banister, 2008; Silva, 2013).

The European Union increasingly pays attention to the need to create more sustainable urban mobility systems of their member states (Pflieger, 2014). Organizations such as

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Civitas and Eltis, funded and initiated by the European Union, focus on creating a network of cities and facilitating exchange of information and knowledge in the field of sustainable urban mobility in Europe. The EU has actively worked on policy guidelines to achieve this: the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) guidelines. These guidelines are actively supported (financially and organizationally) by the EU and provide advice on how to make a strategic urban mobility plan to achieve a better and more sustainable mobility system. Two main elements of these guidelines include the (a) participatory approach: during the entire policy process of developing strategic urban mobility plans, municipalities must involve external stakeholders and (b) policy integration: policies should be horizontally and vertically integrated in order to achieve a more sustainable mobility system. It is important to bear in mind that these guidelines are currently non-statutory (CEC DG TREN, 2014, 2019).

These two elements implicitly make clear that governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement in strategic urban mobility plans is important. The added value of public participation and stakeholder involvement from a theoretical perspective have been claimed by several scholars, because it results in inclusive policy processes, i.e. the involvement of disadvantaged groups in society (see Allmendinger, 2017; Forester, 1989; Healey, 1997, 2003). At the same time though, reality sometimes seems to be different, as has been discussed by different scholars. According to Flyvbjerg (1998), the concept of collaborative planning ignores actual power relations in society. Furthermore, Hillier (2000) stresses the naïve belief in a perfect dialogue. Next to that Woltjer (e.g. 1997) emphasizes the drawbacks of collaborative planning processes. He states for example that collaborative planning leads to selective participation, because only interested stakeholders will participate. Moreover, it turns out that planners working for cities in the European Union face difficulties and challenges in how to involve stakeholders in urban mobility planning (Böhler-Baedeker & Lindenau, 2014).

Professionals, experts and politicians working on strategic urban mobility planning face these challenges. They struggle with finding the right balance of involving different actors with the possibility of overrepresentation of certain actors and underrepresentation of others. This potentially risks into giving certain groups within society too large of a podium, which may subsequently result in unwanted political and policy outcomes for the majority in society. These aforementioned EU-guidelines regarding sustainable urban mobility planning therefore fit in contemporary urban transport planning debates and try to reflect the theoretical paradigm shift into the sustainable mobility paradigm that took place in the past decades (Banister, 2008; Thomsen et al., 2005). Nevertheless, only a few European cities have succeeded to fully incorporate the concept of sustainable mobility in their policy making.

It is important to keep in mind the cultural embeddedness of planning. All EU-member states have different backgrounds in terms of institutional, cultural and social contexts. Because of different backgrounds, policy packages developed by the EU, may have different effects locally (see for example Booth, 2011; Öthengrafen & Reimer, 2013).

The recognition of the importance of stakeholder involvement in strategic urban mobility plans has become more evident (Böhler-Baedeker & Lindenau, 2014; Le Pira et al., 2016; May, 2015). However, it is also recognized that professionals in cities face difficulties with involving these stakeholders (Valero-Gil, Allué-Poc, Ortego, Tomasi, & Scarpellini, 2018). Urban transport planners struggle to embrace this new paradigm. A major

extent of urban mobility policies should be based on technical-rational knowledge – it is important that this is in balance with the involvement of stakeholders. This study analyses this dilemma and therefore compares examples of stakeholder involvement practices in urban transport planning in two EU-member states with a different institutional, social and cultural context. It will do so by using the New Institutional Theory. The new Institutional Theory or Approach focuses on the political organizations, laws and rules that are central to every system and therefore shape possible policies. Although the traditional Institutional Theory mainly focuses on 'hard' institutions, such as laws and rules, the New Institutional Approach nowadays also focuses on 'soft' institutions, such as social relations and cultural norms. This approach makes it possible to analyse which institutions (both formal and informal) play a role in current stakeholder involvement practices in cases with a different institutional context (Stead et al., 2015; Taylor, 2013). The research question is formulated as:

> What is the added value of governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement during the realization of strategic urban mobility plans be characterized from the perspective of transport planning experts and stakeholders with a New Institutional Approach?

This research gives an assessment of the current trend towards more public participation and policy integration in strategic urban mobility planning from the perspective of transportation planners. It will do so by first setting out the theoretical and methodological approach. It then describes the results in two sections (policy context and empirical results). The last section gives the conclusion and discussion on the outcomes.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. New institutional theory in comparative analysis

Much research on collaborative planning practices in (transport) planning uses the concept of 'planning culture' to analyse differences in comparative (international) studies (e.g. Getimis, 2012; Healey & Upton, 2010; Larsson, 2006; Öthengrafen & Reimer, 2013). Scholars who find differences in planning practices between countries in these studies often take 'culture' as the basis for explanation, however according to Taylor (2013), these explanations often remain vague and unfocused. According to Taylor, and also stated by Alexander (2005), Dale (2002) and Raito (2012) planners should use the perspective of New Institutionalism in comparative studies instead:

> A focus on the legal and organizational dimensions of the planning system – such as statutes and regulations, professional organizations and schools and bureaucratic organizations – reveals the mechanisms by which broader societal norms and power relations are produced and reproduced. It avoids the positioning of societal culture as a fixed and all-determining independent variable that is prior to all other social phenomena. (Taylor, 2013, p. 690)

Scholar Giddens developed a theory on the creation and reproduction of social systems. Central in Gidden's formulation are the active agents who interact with constraining structural dynamics. The structuration theory of Giddens analyses the interaction between micro- and macro elements of society or in other words, he uses the terms structure (i.e. society, the macro element) and agents (i.e. the individual, the micro level) and analyses their mutual interaction. The theory states that there is no distinction between structure and actors; there is always a duality in social relationships. He explains how

agents form so called 'structures', which he then defines as 'structuring properties allowing the "binding" of time–space in social systems' (Giddens, 1984). He continues with the hypothesis that the most deeply embedded structural properties can be named as 'structural principles' and concluded that when these principles have a big time–space extension, these principles can be called 'institutions'. These conceptual thoughts of Giddens obtained a central place in the new institutional approach: institutions function as causal variables that determine what possibilities, opportunities and constraints actors have and therefore explain outcomes or patterns and therefore function as a lens to analyse transport planning practices. In urban planning, scholars such as Healey (1998, 2003), Taylor (2013) and Polk (2011) use the concept of 'institutional capacity building' in relation to stakeholder involvement in planning: Institutional capacity building relates to the capability to make relational connections, across different cultural and organizational contexts, taking into account different distributions of power (Healey, 1997; Polk, 2011).

This paper uses the conceptual framework on institutions from Scott (2001) for the empirical research because it functions as a lens to systematically analyse formal and informal institutions in cases in different countries. Scott (2001, p. 49) defines institutions as: 'multifaceted, durable social structures, made up of symbolic elements, social activities, and material resources'. He distinguishes three different forms of institutions, namely the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive types (Table 1) (Scott, 2001).

Regulative institutions exist in laws, rules and protocols. These regulative institutions determine whether or not developments are allowed. This means that an actor can command other actors to undertake actions (Scott, 2001). Examples of these regulative institutions in an urban transport planning context are, for example, the obligations to make regional and municipal mobility plans by higher governments or the EU.

The second form of institutions is the normative one. This form of an institution represents the norms and (social) values of the environment (Scott, 2001). Norms specify in what way things should be carried out; they justify means to pursue ends. Values represent what is considered as desirable, whereas norms specify how things should be carried out. This is expressed in the way departments function, how hierarchy is organized, and which approaches are used in policy making. Normative institutions can be categorized as informal institutions; institutions that are not tangible. Examples in the context of mobility plans include the importance attached to planning for bicycle infrastructure and the opinion of citizens.

The third form is the cultural-cognitive institution: this form of institutions consists of internalized symbolic images of the world. Cultural-cognitive institutions are ideas, meanings and interpretations that actors form about their world (Scott, 2001). All these

Table 1. Typology of institutions.

Form of institution	Content	Function
• Regulative	• Rules, laws and sanctioning systems	• Indicate whether or not things are allowed, setting rules and rewards and punishments.
• Normative	• Norms, values and social attitudes	• Indicate what is desirable, appropriate and correct.
• Cultural-cognitive	• Symbolic images, ideas, interpretations and common beliefs	• Indicate who we are, what has utility and what the conventional way of doing things is.

Source: Scott (2001, p. 52).

interpretations are shared with others and determine the social identity of persons and groups. These cognitive images shape how information is received, interpreted and remembered by an actor whereas, at the same time, the perception of actors is influenced. Important elements of the cultural-cognitive element are the habits and social roles; these determine the general perceptions and patterns of thinking in an organization. Examples in the context of this article include what the conventional way of thinking is about stakeholder involvement in urban mobility plans, and what good practices are considered to be in ways how to carry that out.

Scott (2001, p. 51) describes this typology as a conceptual framework for institutional analysis on the basis of new institutionalism. This article uses this framework for identifying the institutions in the empirical part of the research and uses this typology as a lens to analyse stakeholder involvement practices. Table 1 gives an overview of the typology of institutions.

2.2. Comparative analysis: choice for Sweden and the Netherlands

According to Walter & Scholz (2006) and Gissendanner (2003) the focus in current governance related studies is too much on narrative studies instead of comparative (international) studies. Comparative evaluative research can offer the necessary critical distance in comparison with focusing on one specific case. Moreover, it allows for more inductive conclusions on the general level next to the specific aspects of the cases.

This study compares therefore two EU-member states with a different institutional, cultural and social context by utilizing stakeholder involvement practices in Malmö (Sweden) and Utrecht (the Netherlands). The two cases should be perceived as exemplifying cases of both countries where thoughts and believes have been collected on questions regarding stakeholder involvement. They do not function as conventional case studies, but instead as stakeholder involvement practices being put into a local context to understand the framework. The choice for these two cities in these countries is made because of the similarity of both political systems in terms of the large influence of social-democratic parties since World War II, whereas this institutionally is performed in a different way (municipalities in Sweden have much more autonomy than those in the Netherlands) (Busck et al., 2008). More specifically on stakeholder involvement, the Netherlands is known for its integrative character of planning in which all interests from different governmental departments, both horizontally and vertically, come together. In contrast, Sweden mainly uses sector plans for implementing spatial policies, for example in infrastructure or housing. This is especially the case on higher governmental levels (Busck et al., 2008). On the other hand, Sweden is known for its pioneering in urban sustainability, more specifically in the aspect of governance and participatory planning (Granberg & Elander, 2007; Smedby & Neij, 2013). The similarities in these countries on the one hand, but institutional differences on the other hand, offer insights in practices in stakeholder involvement in urban transport planning in both countries.

There are three reasons for the choice of Malmö in Sweden and Utrecht in the Netherlands. First, both municipalities were, at moment of analysis, occupied with (the implementation of) strategic urban mobility plans. This ensures that respondents are aware of the stakeholder involvement in the current process. Secondly, both cities serve as an exemplifying case: the cases serve as examples of municipalities with more than

100,000 inhabitants in both countries which face the same transport and mobility challenges (CEC DG TREN, 2014). Thirdly, both cities have a corresponding context. Malmö and Utrecht have approximately the same number of inhabitants (both around 350,000) and both cities fulfil a central position in their countries' transport system. The comparative cross-national case-study design of this study results in an in-depth analysis of both Malmö and Utrecht. As a result, it is important to think about the consequences for the generalization of the outcomes to the rest of Sweden, the Netherlands and Europe. This study, therefore, uses (international) expert interviews and additional interviews with other municipalities in both countries to tackle this. Furthermore, Sweden and the Netherlands can both be seen as frontrunners in urban mobility policies (Granberg & Elander, 2007).

2.3. Stakeholder involvement: as a goal or as a means?

The process of stakeholder involvement can be seen as either a goal or as a means (Brookfield, 2016). When using the perspective of process as a goal, stakeholder involvement is used as a way to empower stakeholders. This relates to the relational aspect of planning: relationships and mutual trust have the possibility to enable discussions between stakeholders with different interests and have a big potential to contribute positively in the current and later processes (Polk, 2011). Stakeholder involvement then explicitly is a goal in itself in order to increase trust, legitimacy and consensus. Table 2 mentions the added value of both governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement belonging to process as a goal or as a means.

When using the perspective of using the process as a means, stakeholder involvement is used as a way to enrich assessment by using the stakeholders since they may have other valid, scientific, contextual or tacit knowledge of the area. This refers to the concept of multiple knowledge claims. Furthermore, knowledge resources refer to the different frames of references on which stakeholders base their knowledge, i.e. there is a big subjective sense in planning practices (Polk, 2011). Involving stakeholders in this case is a means: it adds content to the process.

Table 2. Added values 'process as a goal' and 'process as a means'.

Governmental stakeholder involvement 'process as a goal'	Non-governmental stakeholder involvement 'process as a goal'
• Relationships and trust between governmental sectors (horizontally and vertically) lead to a better coordination of policies.	• It increases empowerment of citizens and other stakeholders. • It increases possibilities to reach consensus. • It increases the legitimacy of policy measures.
Governmental stakeholder involvement 'process as a means'	**Non-governmental stakeholder involvement 'process as a means'**
• It promotes synergies (i.e. win-win situations) between policy sectors and between different levels of government. • It promotes consistency and reduce duplication and repetitions in policy-making processes, both horizontally and vertically. • It gives focus to the achievement of government's overall goals: it creates opportunities for cross-sectoral issues.	• It increases innovativeness. • It increases public acceptability and promotes behavioural change. • It increases the visibility of societal needs.

Source: Own work, based on Polk (2011).

3. Methodology

This study is carried out by using a qualitative research strategy with a multiple-case design and semi-structured interviews to gather the data. Semi-structured interviews are used (for the topic list, see supplemental data), in which respondents amongst others were asked when in the process, which stakeholders, in what way were involved and what their level of involvement was. Furthermore, interviewees were asked to what extent they agree on statements (scale 1–5) and subsequently discuss why they gave a certain grade. The topics and statements are based on the claimed added values of stakeholder involvement and the framework of Scott.

Interviewees are mainly professionals who work in the traffic department of either Malmö or Utrecht and who were involved in the process of developing the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan of both cities, since they have an overview of what is going on in terms of stakeholder involvement in urban mobility planning. Next to that, people from other governments, departments or non-governmental organizations are interviewed to hear their outside perspectives for the whole country. Next to participants connected to the cities, (international) experts on urban mobility planning are also interviewed to make some generalization to the rest of the country and the EU possible. In total 21 people were interviewed. The data is analysed by using a two-step method through schemes of analysis based on the theoretical insights on governmental and non-governmental and the theoretical framework of Scott (for this scheme of analysis, see supplemental data): in the first step, the context of developing the urban mobility plan and the level of involvement of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders for both Malmö and Utrecht are examined by asking the interview their perspective of the level of involvement of each actor (see appendix).

Step two then uses the above dichotomy in process as a goals or as a means, together with the framework of Scott, to recognize different forms of institutions and what influence they have on governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement in developing urban mobility plans. Interviewees ranked the statements (Table 2) on a scale from 1 to 5. The results of this ranking of all interviewees gave an overview of what they perceived important in governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement. The statements formed mostly a starting point for a discussion, in which the lens of the 'new institutional perspective' was used to analyse stakeholder involvement practices in both countries. The framework of Scott (2001) was used in order to recognize the different forms of institutions and what influences they have on governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement in developing urban mobility plans. The below discusses the results of the research carried out in both Malmö and Utrecht.

4. Stakeholder involvement practices in Sweden and the Netherlands

4.1. Regulative institutions and policy context of Sweden and the Netherlands

This section discusses the legal framework of both countries and is therefore mainly focusing on regulative institutions. The Swedish spatial planning system is, to a large part, decentralized: there is no integrative spatial planning on a national or regional level (i.e. on a national level there are only sectoral policies whereas the region does not have any

influence on planning) (Busck et al., 2008; Larsson & Bäck, 2008). This is in contrast with the Dutch planning system: the Dutch system consists of a three-tiered system in which every layer needs to develop a spatial plan (Spit & Zoete, 2016). In accordance with the Swedish spatial planning system, there are also no laws concerning the obligation to make traffic and transport plans at the three layers of government in Sweden. However, when it comes to transport planning, Trafikverket, the Swedish executive agency of infrastructure (roads, railways and waterways), develops policies on mobility and transport. This is, again, in contrast with the Netherlands, where Dutch law makes it compulsory to create a traffic and transport plan on all three governmental levels (national, regional and local). Part of this law is also to coordinate municipal transport policies with other policy areas (horizontally) and higher governments (vertically).

The Dutch regional level is more influential in transport and mobility planning than the Swedish level. The Swedish regional level does not have any legal influence on transport planning (except for public transport), whereas in the Netherlands the national road authority (*Rijkswaterstaat*), but also the regional level, have the possibility to put a 'reactive indication' into practice and can therefore overrule a municipality (Spit & Zoete, 2016). Consequently, the Swedish regional authorities do not have a mandate to enforce policy measures for municipalities. On a municipal level, one can state that the regulative institutions of both the Swedish and Dutch regulative framework do not differ, except for one important element: Dutch municipalities have the obligation to develop a Traffic and Transport plan whereas Swedish municipalities can decide this on their own. The above is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Synopsis policy context strategic urban mobility planning Sweden and The Netherlands.

	Swedish regulative institutions	Dutch regulative institutions
Spatial planning framework	• No national and regional spatial planning • Compulsory strategic planning document 'översiktsplan' • Compulsory local land use plan per area 'detaljplanner'	• Compulsory national and regional strategic spatial planning • Compulsory strategic planning document 'structuurvisie' • Compulsory local land use plan per area 'bestemmingsplan'
Transport planning framework	• National level: Transport plan Trafikverket • Regional level: No regional transport planning, except public transport • Local level: No obligatory transport plans, but in practice many municipalities make Transport and Mobility Plans ('TROMP')	• Compulsory national and regional strategic traffic and transport plans • Province or urban region is responsible for public transport • Local level: Obligation to make traffic and transport plans ('GVVP')
Attention to sustainability	• National and regional level: Recognition of importance to sustainable mobility in transport and traffic plan	• Both national level and regional level: Recognition of importance to sustainable mobility in national transport and traffic plan
Guidelines on urban mobility plans	• Guidelines from Trafikverket and Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting (SKL)[a] on 'Transport for an Attractive City' with attention for: ◦ governmental stakeholder involvement ◦ non-governmental stakeholder involvement	• Laws and guidelines Rijkswaterstaat and Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten[b] urban mobility planning with attention for: ◦ governmental stakeholder involvement ◦ non-governmental stakeholder involvement

Source: Busck et al., 2008; Larsson and Bäck, 2008.
[a]Translates into: Organization for Swedish Municipalities and Provinces.
[b]Translates into: Organization for Dutch Municipalities.

4.2. Stakeholder involvement in Sweden: empirical results

Malmö is located in the southwest of Sweden and has around 330,000 inhabitants. In the past three decades, the city has undergone a transition from an industrial city in decay into a flourishing city with a large service sector with an increasing population. The transport system of Malmö has a central place in the Swedish transport network. The municipality of Malmö started working on their strategic urban mobility plan 'Trafik- och Mobilitetsplan' (TROMP) in the autumn of 2012 and is finally published in 2016. Malmö won the SUMP award in 2017, awarded by the European Commission. The process started with only involving governmental stakeholders. The Traffic department took the lead in developing the plan. In terms of horizontal coordination, other experts from departments such as urban design, environmental and social services department were involved by developing the TROMP in order to make an integrated policy plan. In terms of vertical coordination, the national government body working on traffic and transport, regional governmental bodies and surrounding municipalities were involved in developing the TROMP. There was only involvement of non-governmental stakeholders in the later phases of the plan. The civil servants within the municipality first wanted to agree internally (i.e. agree with the relevant governmental stakeholders). Non-governmental stakeholders include different expert groups, such as universities, environmental groups, business associations and the public transport company.

4.2.1. Context of strategic urban mobility planning in Sweden

It is important to first emphasize that developing urban mobility plans in Malmö mainly results from normative institutions. Strategic urban mobility plans are initiated because of a combination of the following three reasons: (a) the civil servants themselves feel the need to develop an urban mobility plan, (b) the city council asks for it or (c) it is a much-debated topic in society. From a regulative perspective, only indicative guidelines exist while no formal plan obligation does. Furthermore, from a cultural-cognitive perspective, the development of urban mobility plans in Sweden is quite new. Malmö, in comparison to the rest of the county, is a frontrunner in developing an urban mobility plan. In the rest of Sweden developing these plans is not yet a routine or conventional way of acting.

Swedish urban mobility plans give in general considerable attention to sustainable mobility. Important reasons for this are, first of all, that the national government and the Swedish organization of municipalities and provinces recognize the importance of sustainable mobility and providing guidelines. Secondly, normative institutions play an important role: municipalities pay considerate attention to sustainable mobility in the broadest sense of the word. Next to the ecological aspects, economic and social reasons play an important role: urban mobility policies should reduce socioeconomic and gender contradictions. Lastly, the historical connection of Swedish people with nature is important from a cultural-cognitive institutional perspective; sustainability is perceived as important since this is part of their culture. The above is summarized in Table 4.

4.2.2. Governmental stakeholder involvement practices in Sweden

It is common in Sweden that policy processes start with discussions within municipality departments, bringing in other stakeholders (higher governments and external stakeholders) later. This means that during the process of a strategic urban mobility plan,

Table 4. Synopsis context urban mobility plans in Sweden: institutions.

	Regulative institutions	Normative institutions	Cultural-cognitive institutions
Start and realization of urban mobility plans	• No laws concerning plan obligation urban mobility plans • SKL: indicative guidelines content and process of strategic urban mobility plans	• Strategic urban mobility plans initiated by civil servants because: ◦ own initiative ◦ political attention and pressure on mobility and transport ◦ societal value assigned to sustainable m mobility	• Bigger municipalities develop strategic urban mobility plans, which has become for them conventional way of acting. Not all small municipalities develop them.
Attention to sustainable mobility	• National government recognizes importance for sustainable mobility • SKL: indicative guidelines content strategic urban mobility plans: promoting sustainable mobility	• Sustainable mobility is seen from economic, social and ecological perspective Every aspect needs attention: ◦ ecological: more attractive public space and less pollution ◦ economic and social: reduce - socioeconomic and gender contradictions	• Historically, Swedish people have strong connection with nature. Resulting in importance to sustainable mobility

Source: Interviews.

the traffic department involves other departments in brainstorming sessions at the start of policy processes. The Swedish respondents all see the importance of governmental stakeholder involvement, both in terms of process as a goal (i.e. trust and involvement lead to better outcomes) and process as a means (i.e. use knowledge of other stakeholders to develop better plans). Although respondents graded process as a goal slightly better than process as a means, they are almost similar.

4.2.2.1. Horizontal coordination. Regulative institutions play a limited role in the so well-developed horizontal coordination of transport policies with other policy fields in Sweden. Instead, they are more normative and cultural-cognitive. Within the organization of the municipality, civil servants believe and recognize that it is important to involve other departments at the onset of a policy process to achieve better results. Their norms and values influence what they perceive desirable and correct in terms of governmental stakeholder involvement. Moreover, it becomes clear that most respondents in Malmö have conducted horizontal coordination for a long time. As a result, horizontal policy coordination is part of the conventional way of acting within the municipality.

4.2.2.2. Vertical coordination. Involving higher levels of government, as well as surrounding municipalities, in urban mobility plans in Sweden carry similar institutional patterns as horizontal coordination. However, there are differences. First, it should be mentioned that although benefits of the involvement of higher governments and surrounding municipalities are recognized, respondents also state that it is time consuming. As a result, the need to involve them is not always present. In addition to this, civil servants are not always familiar with ways and methods to coordinate their policies as efficiently as possible, except for formal consultation (Table 5). Furthermore, the weak position of the region on transport planning is worth mentioning: the regional level in Sweden does not have a formal mandate on mobility:

Table 5. Synopsis governmental stakeholder involvement practices in Sweden.

	Regulative institutions	Normative institutions	Cultural-cognitive institutions
Horizontal coordination	• Consulting other departments at end of process is obligatory by law: 'samrådshandling'.	• Brainstorming and consultation at beginning of process: civil servants perceive it important to involve other departments.	• Internal coordination has been done in Malmö for a long time: routine and conventional ways of acting • Integrated policy making not routine yet
Vertical coordination	• Consultation of higher governments at end of process is obligatory by law: 'samrådshandling' • Weak formal mandate for regional governmental body on mobility planning	• Brainstorming and consultation during beginning of process: civil servants perceive it important to involve higher governments. • Vertical coordination takes a lot of time • Shared feeling by civil servants and experts: region should have more coordinating role.	• No routine or conventional way of acting yet, except for formal consultation. • Historically, coordinating regional governments were not needed in Sweden.

Source: Interviews.

> When it comes to planning, we have a deficit in planning on the reginal level. The national level is strong, the local level is strong, but the regional level is grasping for a mandate. That is really how the system works in Sweden now. […] It is a weakness in a way, municipalities have too much of a local perspective. In Skåne the region is increasingly important, with commuting and the polycentric characteristic of the region. (strategic transport planner Malmö)

Nevertheless, Swedish respondents all share the feeling that the region should have a more coordinating role to solve cross-border transport issues, such as changing the modal split on a regional level. Historically, a regional government on transport planning was not needed, since Swedish cities are located far away from each other. However, particularly the south of Sweden can be characterized as a polycentric region in which a formal regional coordinating role would be helpful. The above is summarized in Table 5.

4.2.3. Non-governmental stakeholder involvement practices in Sweden

Transport departments of municipalities first internally agree (with other governmental stakeholders) before they involve external stakeholders. As a result, non-governmental stakeholders are not involved in strategic urban mobility plans except for the formal consultation period. Nevertheless, many municipalities work with internet surveys where citizens are able to provide their opinion. In other words, citizens are not consulted in the form of citizen groups but are involved by sending out a survey in which they could give their opinion about urban mobility planning. Swedish municipalities do this more often in order to get input from their citizens. In the civil servant's opinion, this is more representative than involving different organizations.

Although the respondents from the municipality, in general, see benefits in involvement of non-governmental stakeholders, they also experience difficulties. Next to that, respondents do not always see the necessity of conducting it. This attitude also comes forward from the statements concerning non-governmental stakeholder involvement either as process as a means or process as a goal. The interviewees do agree more on the added value of governmental stakeholder involvement than on non-governmental

stakeholder involvement. These scores are in accordance with above observations. Many respondents are nuancing their positive mindset towards the involvement of non-governmental stakeholders when asked for a motivation:

> Non-governmental stakeholder involvement is a goal of the city, but it is also a great challenge. You also need to take into consideration all the arguments and the opinions you receive. It is also about building an organization that is also prepared to take into account all these opinions and ideas. It is not always that easy. It is kind of a change in the way we work as a municipality. We have to develop this in a balanced way. But we are still seeking methods and ways. (transport planner Malmö)

The experts confirm the observations in Malmö: many municipalities in the rest of Sweden work the same way and have the same approach to non-governmental stakeholder involvement.

From a new institutional perspective, different reasons can be appointed to the non-governmental involvement practices of Sweden. First of all, formal consultation or 'samrådshandling' at the end of the policy process is compulsory for all Swedish municipalities. Furthermore, the Swedish organization for provinces and municipalities provides guidelines which states that non-governmental stakeholder involvement is important. Therefore, the former two aspects are regulative institutions (Table 6). Secondly, normative institutions are important, showing that less importance is attached to the input of external stakeholders. Many from the municipalities' respondents state that the strategic level of policy making, when developing a strategic urban mobility plan, is challenging for stakeholders from outside the government – they often give input on a more practical level. Furthermore, non-governmental stakeholders themselves do not ask for involvement, according to the interviewees, as the following quote shows:

> You can see it as a problem that we do not have so much involvement, but you can also see it as 'quiet acceptance'. Surveys show that we have a very good acceptance among people. This maybe has to do with the tradition of a strong government and people, in general, like that system, and overall its working. (transport planner Lund)

As a result, there is no general norm or value to involve the external stakeholders as early as possible. From a cultural-cognitive perspective, the successful Swedish welfare state does play an important role since citizens have, to a large extent, trust in their administration and government system. Furthermore, civil servants in Sweden do not have the knowledge and the methods to involve external stakeholders. Consequently, it is not yet in their routine or conventional way of acting to involve the external stakeholders (Table 6).

Table 6. Synopsis non-governmental stakeholder involvement practices in Sweden.

Regulative institutions	Normative institutions	Cultural-cognitive institutions
• Consultation of external stakeholders at end of process is obligatory by law: samrådshandling. • Formalized citizen surveys	• Awareness to involve stakeholders to some extent. • Limited importance attached to input of non-governmental stakeholders due to: ◦ strategic level of policy-making ◦ external stakeholders do not ask it ◦ Importance attached to representative input from citizens	• Quiet acceptance: Swedish culture • Large amount of trust in government • Non-governmental stakeholder involvement is not conventional way of acting or routine: ◦ limited knowledge and e methods

Source: Interviews.

4.3. Stakeholder involvement in the Netherlands: empirical results

Utrecht is located in the middle of the Netherlands and has approximately 345,000 inhabitants. Besides being near the geographical centre of the Netherlands, Utrecht is an important national hub for both railways and roads. Utrecht Central Station functions as the hub of the railway system of the Netherlands and has the highest number of boarding passengers. Furthermore, the city is located at a crossing point of important national highways.

Utrecht started to work on their strategic urban mobility vision 'Utrecht Aantrekkelijk en Bereikbaar' (UAB) in the beginning of 2010 and was eventually finished in January 2012. It took a few months before it was approved by the city council, which took place in July 2012. This visionary document was the starting point for developing a more detailed and tactical plan for transportation planning for the city. Utrecht was one of the finalists for the SUMP-award in 2017 too. The visionary transportation plan was an initiative from the civil servants of the traffic department of the municipality. One explicit goal was to form a strong collaboration with the urban design department. These two departments together formed a first framework of the new strategic urban mobility plan. After the two departments had developed this framework, internal brainstorming sessions with other departments within the municipality, such as the department of economic affairs and health had taken place. These brainstorm sessions were parallel to the roundtable meetings with non-governmental stakeholders. These non-governmental stakeholders were social groups, business associations, citizen groups, environmental groups, public transport companies and experts.

4.3.1. Context of strategic urban mobility planning in the Netherlands

The requirement to make urban mobility plans play an important role in the Netherlands. Dutch municipalities have the obligation and, consequently, the incentive to develop a traffic and transport plan. Because of the obligation to make these plans, regulative institutions play an important role in strategic urban mobility planning in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, particularly for Utrecht, the strategic urban mobility plan was initiated by the employees of the municipality itself. They felt that there was a need to have a strategic and integrative perspective on urban transport. This also comes forward from the societal value attached to the importance of sustainable mobility. From a cultural-cognitive institution, one can state that making urban mobility plans for Dutch municipalities is a conventional way of acting; Dutch municipalities have already been making urban mobility plans for decades.

The national government, the Dutch organization for municipalities, and knowledge institutions offer guidelines in how municipalities can make their transport system more sustainable. Furthermore, in Dutch municipalities 'ecological sustainability' is used in the broadest meaning of the word. Next to sustainable mobility, many respondents refer to the notion that a city should be attractive and healthy. Additionally, an important social goal is to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to freely move. Therefore, one can conclude from a normative perspective that ecological sustainability is not the only determinant for the sustainability of the plan. The former can also be explained because of cultural-cognitive reasons. Whereas sustainability in Dutch culture and history, have been important, concepts such as 'spatial quality' and 'livability' are also always part when it comes to urban planning. The former sketches out the context in

Table 7. Synopsis context urban mobility plans in The Netherlands: institutions.

	Regulative institutions	Normative institutions	Cultural-cognitive institutions
Start and realization urban mobility plans	• Local level: Obligation making traffic and transport plans ('GVVP') • Rijkswaterstaat, VNG and knowledge institutions: indicative guidelines of urban mobility plans, derived from SUMP-guidelines.	• Strategic urban mobility plans initiated by civil servants because: ◦ Own initiative ◦ Societal value assigned to u sustainable mobility • City council originally was not in favour of plan	• Dutch municipalities have made urban mobility plans for decades already: conventional way of acting
Attention to sustainable mobility	• National government recognizes the importance of sustainable mobility: offer indicative guidelines in terms of content of strategic urban mobility plans: it promotes sustainable mobility	• Sustainable mobility is seen in the broadest meaning of the word: ◦ Attractive and healthy city • Economic and social reasons: everyone should have opportunity to move	• Dutch respondents connect topics such as 'spatial quality' and 'livability' to sustainable mobility

Source: Interviews.

which stakeholder involvement in strategic urban mobility plans in the Netherlands takes place (Table 7).

4.3.2. Governmental stakeholder involvement practices in the Netherlands

The most important finding was that, in the case of the strategic urban mobility plan of Utrecht, there is a strong collaboration between the traffic and urban design departments. Other departments are involved, but to a lesser extent. Higher governments and surrounding municipalities are participating during the roundtable discussions at the beginning of the process; however, they are not involved during the further development of UAB. The respondents from the municipality all see the benefits of governmental stakeholder involvement in urban mobility plans. Interviewees do agree to a large extent on statements for both process as a means and process as a goal.

4.3.2.1. Horizontal coordination. The three different institutions play a role in the horizontal policy coordination practices. From a regulative perspective, the Dutch national law on traffic and transport states that policy coordination is important. Furthermore, Dutch municipalities often in a project-based way in which partitions between departments are taken away. Normatively, employees of municipalities perceive it as important to have coordinated policy making. Respondents say it leads to better outcomes and that it creates synergy between the different policy sectors. From the point of view of cultural-cognitive institutions, it can be concluded that policy coordination is already a routine and part of the culture in Dutch municipalities.

4.3.2.2. Vertical coordination. Involving higher levels of government, as well as surrounding municipalities, in urban mobility plans in the Netherlands carry similar institutional patterns as horizontal coordination. However, there are differences and the positions of some regional government bodies are worth mentioning. Although respondents see the need to involve governmental stakeholders, they also mention that conflicting interests ensure a field of tension. In this, it is important to balance between the amount of involvement and, particularly, what moments to involve them. Furthermore, respondents in

Table 8. Synopsis governmental stakeholder involvement practices in the Netherlands.

	Regulative	Normative	Cultural-cognitive
Horizontal coordination	• Consultation of higher governments at the end of the process is obligatory by law: 'inspraaktraject' • Overturned organization ('kantelorganisatie')	• Brainstorming and consultation by workshops during beginning of the process. Civil servants perceive it important to involve other departments.	• Internal coordination is conventional way of acting • Integrated policy making is not yet routine
Vertical coordination	• Consultation of higher governments at the end of the process is obligatory by law: 'inspraaktraject' • Province has coordinating role: possibility to enforce by indication • BRU: urban region has coordinating role	• Brainstorming and consultation during beginning of the process. Civil servants perceive it important to involve the higher governments • Conflicting interests ensure field of tension whether or not involving governmental stakeholders	• Three-tiered transport planning system is part of mindset of civil servants

Source: Interviews.

Utrecht all refer to the three-tiered system of transport planning in the Netherlands, where every body of government makes their own traffic and transport plan and has their own responsibilities. Because of this, civil servants are aware of when and how higher governments have a stake in urban mobility planning in Utrecht and when they should be involved. Based on this, one can conclude that vertical coordination of policies is at least partly a routine. The position of the urban region is important to mention in this context. As a coordinating governmental body, they are involved in the urban transport planning of Utrecht. In the rest of the Netherlands, bigger cities have similar urban regions. Next to these urban regions, the provinces also have a coordinating role in transport planning in the Netherlands. When needed, it is possible for them to enforce policy measures by 'indication' (Table 8).

4.3.3. Non-governmental stakeholder involvement practices in the Netherlands

Dutch municipalities often make use of stakeholder involvement during the beginning of their strategic urban mobility policy process, as well as the formal consultation at the end of the process. Most respondents from the municipality are, in general, positive about the involvement of non-governmental stakeholders, although respondents also have some critical notes. The positive attitude towards non-governmental stakeholder involvement also comes forward in the statements concerning process as a goal and process as a means. The respondents perceive the involvement of external stakeholders as quite high. Governmental respondents are especially positive about process as a means which means that they do see the involvement of external stakeholders as a way to receive input for their policy making. Process as a goal receives a lower average grade. Respondents are especially critical towards the possibility to strive for consensus and the amount of time non-governmental stakeholder involvement takes.

It states out that different stakeholder groups in the Netherlands have different levels of involvement in strategic urban mobility planning due to, for example, their connection within the city council. Furthermore, Utrecht's municipality is aware that they cannot make urban mobility planning policies on their own. This is exemplified by the fact that the municipality of Utrecht organized two expert roundtable meetings, in which the municipality invited experts from the field of urban transport planning to think

about the future of urban transport in Utrecht; the municipality attaches importance to opinions of these experts.

From an institutional perspective different reasons can be recognized in the stakeholder involvement practices in the Netherlands. First, consultation of external stakeholders at the end of the policy process is obligatory to perform. Furthermore, Utrecht makes use of the 'Participatieladder' (Participation framework) which gives guidelines on what type of involvement is most appropriate in what type of projects. Secondly, there is broad awareness of the need to involve external stakeholders. Employees of the municipality think it is desirable and correct to involve non-governmental stakeholders. Important elements mentioned in interviews include the changing role of the government in which municipalities have to perform their activities with less money. Furthermore, governments cannot solve current difficult issues on their own anymore. Consequently, the government needs to seek the support of external stakeholders. However, Dutch respondents also put forward the problem of the strategic level of policy-making which is a problem for many less professional stakeholders such as citizen groups: 'It is always difficult to get a total image of what stakeholders and inhabitants would like, the non-content people always scream the most. You can therefore ask yourself whether or not non-governmental stakeholder involvement is democratic' (parking specialist Utrecht). Cultural-cognitive institutions also play a role. First, trust of external stakeholders in the governmental system has decreased over the past years. Non-governmental interviewees make clear that they are critical of the government and feel the need to contribute to policymaking. As a result, Dutch municipalities have incentives to use external stakeholders in their policy process. At the same time, Dutch municipalities are struggling with ways to involve stakeholders on such an abstract policy level. Many municipal employees state that there is sometimes limited knowledge and methods of some of their colleagues: 'Not all the time you allocate to involvement and participation, is automatically efficient and effective. This is sometimes frustrating and works contra productive' (urban planner Utrecht). Consequently, project leaders deal differently with the question whether and how to involve external stakeholders in their strategic urban mobility policy processes (Table 9). Another important institution influencing Dutch non-governmental stakeholder involvement practices is the Dutch history of 'polderen'; the Netherlands has a long tradition of consultation and consensus building between governmental bodies and private stakeholders.

Table 9. Synopsis non-governmental stakeholder involvement practices in the Netherlands.

Regulative institutions	Normative institutions	Cultural-cognitive institutions

• Consultation external stakeholders at end of process obligatory by law: 'inspraaktraject'
• VNG/Rijkswaterstaat guidelines: non-governmental stakeholder involvement is important
• 'Participatieladder Utrecht' (Participation framework)
	• The awareness to involve stakeholders is present.
	• Strategic level of policy-making
	• Importance attached to input from non-governmental stakeholders due to:
	  ◦ changing role of government
	  ◦ external stakeholders ask for it (attention in the societal debate)
	• To involve different groups
	• Importance attached to the opinions of experts
		• Decreasing amount of trust in the government: critical stakeholders
		• The Dutch 'poldermodel'
		• Limited knowledge and methods

Source: Interviews.

5. Discussion

The empirical results of this article show that there are four main themes which nuance the theoretical insights on stakeholder involvement from the perspective of transportation professionals working for municipalities.

5.1. Participation in urban mobility planning: process as a goal or process as a means?

Scholars such as Healey (1997, 2003) and Rydin (2007) emphasize the importance of participation within the urban planning policy process. These theoretical discussions influence general policy making. Participation, therefore, is currently a widely debated theme by researchers and urban planning professionals. Consequently, municipalities increasingly want to carry out stakeholder involvement when developing their policies, whether or not due to societal pressure. Participation is often seen as a solution for current budget cuts of municipalities and the withdrawing government in general. However, municipalities should first always consider whether the involvement of stakeholders 'actually' results in added value in particular policy making. Although, theoretically, most scholars perceive non-governmental stakeholder involvement positively, this research shows that professionals working in the field sometimes think differently. The involvement of actors can result in large delays of policy processes, whereas, at the same time these actors are not satisfied with how the process has evolved (Lane, 2005).

5.2. Non-governmental stakeholders find strategic thinking challenging

Non-governmental stakeholders, such as citizens or representatives of non-profit organizations, are according to city professionals, sometimes not able to think on the strategic level needed for developing strategic urban mobility plans and instead strive for their own interest. This can be problematic when cities face strategic citywide challenges (high demand in housing and congestion) and, specifically now urban mobility planning is at the cusp of major transitions, namely the emergence of Mobility as a Service, electrification and self-driving cars (Sperling, 2018). Moreover, non-governmental stakeholders sometimes also have difficulties in understanding the main interests of other stakeholders. Consequently, there is a risk that the loudest voice influences the outcome the most.

5.3. The political legitimization of measures vs. urban mobility planning realism

It is an interesting question whether it is necessary to carry out non-governmental stakeholder involvement when a society does not ask for it, as the case in Sweden shows. This question becomes even more striking, if one considers how our current democratic system is organized and functions. The aim of a representative chosen municipal democracy is to control and assess proposals from the civil servants and experts within the municipality (Chambers, 2003). Because citizens vote for city councils, their opinion and interest should be represented by the city council. Quantitative data and scientific knowledge is at the core of strategic urban mobility planning (Wilson, 2001). Therefore, experts should continue to be considered the transport planner who makes proposals based on

quantitative data while, at the same time, considers the interest of different stakeholders in these proposals based on an effective well-prepared stakeholder involvement framework.

5.4. Collaborative planning debates nuanced by stakeholder involvement practices

The theory versus the practice nuances the theoretical added value of stakeholder involvement; in practice it does not always have an added value in strategic urban mobility plans according to professionals working in the field. Or in other words, the supposed added value of participation of stakeholders in the policy process is sometimes not visible in practice, although SUMP-guidelines advocate the opposite.

Although stakeholder involvement can be useful in urban planning policy making, it is important not to overshoot the aim of stakeholder involvement and to strive for participation of stakeholders without any prepared framework. Instead, when municipalities are developing policies, they first should assess whether and when participation is an added value per policy process. If it is an added value, it is important to prepare the process carefully, within a well-functioning framework adapted to the local context. This way, non-governmental stakeholder involvement can offer an added value to strategic urban mobility planning as a process as a means or process as a goal, even when a local context is characterized by 'quiet acceptance', the 'polder model' or another local situation.

6. Conclusion

The theme of this article revolves around non-governmental and governmental stakeholder involvement practices during the realization of strategic urban mobility plans in two EU-member states: Sweden and the Netherlands. The article represents the perspective of transport planning experts and stakeholders in order to give an assessment of the current trend towards greater public participation and policy integration in strategic urban mobility planning. In other words, according to experts and other stakeholders, what is the added value of governmental and non-governmental stakeholder involvement in strategic urban mobility plans?

This study shows that non-governmental stakeholder involvement practices in strategic urban mobility planning differ between Sweden and the Netherlands. Meanwhile, governmental stakeholder involvement practices in strategic urban mobility plans are similar. Since Swedish residents have a relatively large amount of trust in their government (Larsson & Bäck, 2008), non-governmental stakeholders do not need to be involved in strategic urban mobility planning. On the contrary, in the Netherlands, the role of government is changing. As a result, experts and professionals in the Netherlands are more aware of the benefits and, moreover, see a greater need to involve non-governmental stakeholders in strategic urban mobility planning. While most employees within municipalities recognize the added values of stakeholder involvement in strategic urban mobility planning, they also have critical notes. Especially at the strategic level of policy making, the time commitment, as well as a lack of knowledge and methods, are mentioned during the interviews. Consequently, the added values of stakeholder involvement as mentioned in the operationalization (based on scholars such as Asselt & Rijkens-Klomp, 2002; Healey, 1997; Peters, 2005; Stead, 2003) are only partly recognized.

For governmental stakeholder involvement practices, this research shows that employees of municipalities in both countries are aware of the need and, moreover, do involve relevant governmental stakeholders, especially in terms of horizontal coordination. According to the literature (Busck et al., 2008; Spit & Zoete, 2016), the Netherlands is known for its integrative character. Therefore, the findings of this study are in accordance with this for the Netherlands. However, the Swedish situation also shows an integrative character of policy making. Although Busck et al. (2008) state that the Swedish government mainly uses sector policies, which was mainly directed at higher governments, this article analyses municipalities.

The methodological framework of the new institutional approach (Scott, 2001), proves worthwhile. The three different institutions form a well-functioning method to analyse differences and similarities in this research area. All in all, the combination of an analysis of the formal, regulative institutions and the more 'soft', normative and cultural-cognitive institutions produces a good analysis of important elements, factors and causes.

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