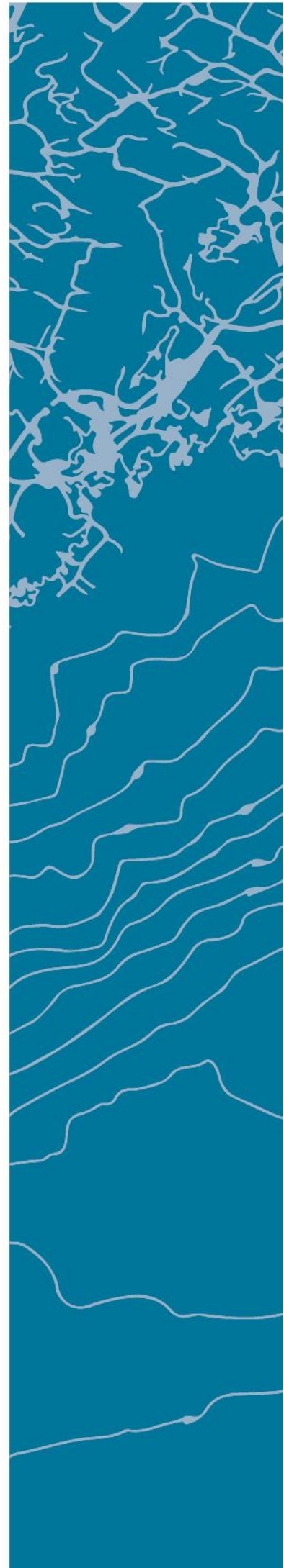# UNIVERSITETET I AGDER

Rethinking spaces for participation in urban planning and development

A case study of the Bus Way process in Nord-Jæren

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SUPERVISOR
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Preface

The present master thesis "Rethinking spaces for participation in urban planning and development" is the result of a five-month research project revolving a case study and thematic analysis concerning participation processes in sustainable development projects. It completes the graduation requirements of the master programme in Global development and planning at the University of Agder (UiA) and was carried out from January to June 2019.

I want to thank Multiconsult and Espen Eek for introducing me to the project and problematics that proved to inspire the present research and choice of case. Without my engagement in Multiconsult over the summer of 2018, the present thesis would never have been conceived.

I also want to thank Camilla Natalie Bjørnsen for accommodating me during my travels to Stavanger, where I held several interviews. Not only was her hospitality crucial for me being financially able to go through with the research process, but her uplifting character and discussions made the process all the more enjoyable.

To my always optimistic supervisor Mikaela Vasstrøm: Thank you for your excellent guidance and for challenging and inspiring me throughout the course of this thesis. Our meetings exceeded all my expectations, and your encouragement and honest feedback leave me forever grateful. Hands down the best supervisor around.

Annika Olsen

Kristiansand, June 2nd 2019

Abstract

This paper seeks to explore, explain and challenge existing and emerging spaces for participation in urban planning and development. It is based on a case study of the project, *the Bus Way,* in Rogaland county, where a multi-level commitment to bus rapid transit has fostered conflict based on the project's financing model, extensive property intervention and a reduction in traffic lanes for cars. The thesis problematises the re-politicising of democratic development and questions the sufficiency of prevalent spaces for participation in urban development projects. Based on literature by Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa, a consideration of participation practice through the concept of *space* is adopted. A qualitative approach to the subject matter was assumed, where data was collected through semi-structured interviews and supported by directed content search. A theoretical inductive thematic analysis was applied to the collected data, where six themes were identified. The results signify an inadequacy in current spaces for participation, and urges a rethinking of participation practice where alternative interfaces in the new public sphere are exploited to integrate solutions for more inclusive, democratic and responsive processes in sustainable urban development.

Sammendrag

Denne oppgaven tar sikte på å utforske, belyse og utfordre eksisterende og fremvoksende deltakelsesrom i byplanleggingen og -utviklingen. Den er basert på en case-studie av prosjektet *Bussveien* i Rogaland, hvor satsingen på utbygging av bussvei har resultert i en konfliktfylt prosess som følger av en tilsynelatende upopulær finansieringsmodell, inngrep i eiendom og reduksjon i kjørebaner for personbiler. Oppgaven problematiserer repolitiseringen i demokratisk utvikling og stiller spørsmål omkring tilstrekkeligheten av anvendte deltakelsesrom i byutviklingsprosjekter. Basert på litteratur av Andrea Cornwall og John Gaventa er det tilegnet en betraktning av medvirkningsprosesser gjennom konseptet *rom*. En kvalitativ tilnærming til problematikken ble valgt, hvor datainnsamling foregikk gjennom semistrukturerte intervjuer og videre underbygget ved directed content search. Innsamlet data ble analysert gjennom en teoretisk induktiv tematisk analyse, hvor seks ulike tema ble identifisert. Resultatene viser til en insuffisiens i eksisterende og anvendte deltakelsesrom, og fremmer en revurdering av dagens medvirkningspraksis hvor alternative interfaces i den nye offentlige sfæren utnyttes for å integrere løsninger for mer inkluderende, demokratiske og mottakelige prosesser i bærekraftig byutvikling.

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1. Introduction

Urban projections in the age of sustainability

The world's urban population has increased at high speed from 751 million people in 1950, to 4,2 billion people in 2018 (United Nations DESA, 2018). Today, more than half of the world's population live in urban areas, and the proportion is expected to continue to rise, from 55 % in 2018 to 68 % by 2050 (United Nations DESA, 2018). Combining the rapid urbanisation with world population growth, an addition of 2,5 billion urban people is estimated before reaching 2050 (United Nations DESA, 2018).

The world's cities account for more than 70 % of global greenhouse gas emissions and consume nearly 2/3 of the world's energy (World Bank, 2018). Urban residents are dependent on the productive capacity of ecosystems reaching far beyond their city's borders to produce the energy flow, goods and services that uphold high life quality and urban well-being, leaving ecological footprints tens to hundreds of times the size of the city (Grimm et al., 2008, p. 756). Urban land use has a major impact in landscapes' ecological characteristics – for example the Western beef demand having transformed tropical rainforests in the Americas into extensive cow fields in recent years (Grimm et al., 2008). Cities' high concentration of industry and transportation make them the point source of pollution and responsible for biodiversity, hydrosystems and biogeochemical cycle changes (Grimm et al., 2008).

Cities with <1 million inhabitants make up some of the fastest growing agglomerations (United Nations DESA, 2018), and therefore present an important topic of study as the world continues to urbanise in a time where sustainability transitions are required in order to meet the challenges of resource scarcity, energy systems, transportation, infrastructure and environmental decline.

While cities present a range of challenges for sustainable development, they are also believed to present the offset for sustainable solutions (Grimm et al., 2008). Comprising open, dynamic and complex systems, and forming globally reaching agglomerations of economic activity, infrastructure and concentrations of people (Bai et al., 2018; New Climate Economy, 2018),

cities are forces for sustainability transformation and can actively steer urban development paths and exploit trends to find innovative solutions to deliver greater prosperity, tackle climate change and reduce poverty (John, Keeler, Wiek & Lang, 2015; New Climate Economy, 2018). In the age of sustainability - which has been compared to breakthroughs such as the Industrial revolution and invention of electricity (Midttun & Witoszek, 2015, p. 6) - urban planning is an essential tool in the facing of sustainability challenges (John et al., 2015).

Planning for urban growth and sustainable development

According to New Climate Economy (2018), the urgency of climate change makes decisions in the upcoming 2-3 years crucial. The world has an expected infrastructure investment of about 90 trillion US$ in the period up to 2030, much of which will be programmed within the next couple of years. The age of sustainability is here defined as our 'use it or lose it moment', where the trillions invested can either build infrastructure for a new era filled with innovation and ways of battling climate change, or fail and lead the world into an unproductive, high-polluting and socially unequal future (New Climate Economy, 2018). In order to succeed, smarter urban planning and development is needed.

Governance for sustainable development is defined as 'reforming practices of socio-political governance to encourage shifts toward a more environmentally sustainable and equitable pattern of development' (Meadowcroft, 2009, p. 323) – a necessary step if we are to undergo the transformation of socio-technical systems that is needed for bringing back our earthly behaviours to within ecological boundaries. While Meadowcroft (2009) accepts a degree of societal steering in exchange for a collective discovery of desired pathways for social development, Swyngedouw criticises what he refers to as a post-political frame and cites Rancière in an almost sarcastic exclaim about the post-politicising ways of contemporary neo-liberal good governance:

> *"Maximising the enjoyment of people can only be achieved by declaring the inability or incapacity of the people (as a political name) to arrange or manage themselves the conditions of this maximisation. The power of post-democracy resides, in other words, 'in the declaration of the people's impotence to act politically' (Rancière, 1998, p. 113)"* (Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 125)

A central issue then, is how at the heart of sustainable development lie politics and democracy. The current paper notes how political processes are typically dominated by short-term agendas and action plans, whereas a sustainability transformation would include major structural changes in dominant societal rules and systems, and require political dedication for 25-50 years (Rotmans, Kemp & Van Asselt, 2001). In Meadowcroft's view, democratic institutions have the opportunity to create solutions to larger environmental- and societal problems; solutions that in time can lead to a fulfilment of greater collective aspirations. For example, integrated national urban policy frameworks that involve expansions of public transport networks can guide sustainable urban development in a direction of more connected and liveable future cities (New Climate Economy, 2018).

Evoking conflict and resistance

New technology and continually evolving policy regulations are developing and adapting for much-needed sustainability transformations. These measures and developments are however, largely met with resistance both nationally and internationally. In France, an increase in petrol tax with 7 eurocents per litre has resulted in a new movement, *Mouvement des gilets jaunes* (Yellow vests movement), and nation-wide demonstrations against 'the elite'. In Norway, an increase in road tolls has been met with protests and heavy resistance.

Figure 1   Mouvement des gilets jaunes (Loic Venance, AFP, 2019)

Mouvement des gilets jaunes

The name *Yellow vests movement* was birthed on November 17th, 2018, when more than 100.000 protestors demonstrated in more than one hundred places across France (NRK, 2018, December 1st). The protestors closed down roads whilst wearing yellow high-visibility vests. The demonstrations started as a counter-reaction to the increased petrol taxes but has evolved to become a movement about generally high costs of living in France (NRK, 2018, December 1st). The demonstrations have continued into 2019, and violent riots have been reported as the causal factor for ten deaths since the beginning in November 2018 (BBC, 2019, January 18th). In January 2019, a counter-movement called foulards rouges (the red scarves) arose, claiming to be defending the democracy and opposing violence (BBC, 2019, January 27th).

Bompengeopprør på Nord-Jæren (Toll rebellion in Nord-Jæren)

New toll stations and a rise in congestion charge were implemented as an urban environment measure and financing model for *the Bus Way project* on October 1st, 2018, in the south-western region of Nord-Jæren in Norway. In the days before and around October 1st, several of the new toll stations were subject to vandalism and extra security personnel was assigned to the stations (NRK, 2019, September 30th, October 1st). The new measures resulted in an immediate 17 % increase in bus passengers in the following days (NRK, 2018, October 4th), and a 65 % increase in bicyclists compared to the previous year (NRK, 2018, November 14th).

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Figure 2   Protestors in Nord-Jæren (Stella Marie Brevik, 2018)

Within a week of implementation, protestors put up demonstrations against the increased toll fees in the region, and vandalism continued (NRK, 2018, October 6th, 9th). On October 29th, a city council meeting was interrupted by protestors (NRK, 2018, October 29th), and there was a prominent media coverage regarding the police's reaction towards the offence. The group 'Toll free Jæren - enough is enough' has more than 56.000 members on Facebook, and in January 2019, the local protestors have formed the nation-wide organisation Toll free Norway – enough is enough (NRK, 2019, January 28th).

Re-politicising citizens

The common conception of citizen participation changes over the time, and the abovementioned conflicts may be viewed as unconventional forms of participation resulting from a growing need of spaces for participation. Innovative forms of participation such as these are motivated by the difficulties in traditional and formal arenas for participation (Nyseth, Ringholm & Agger, 2019), and illustrate a need for deeper democracy. Rather than being based on expert knowledge, the fate of development programmes are now largely decided by which party carries the most powerful interpretation (Flyvbjerg, 2002), and hence these new forms of participation can be viewed as a re-politicising in which new knowledge is recognised and emphasised. Indeed, Flyvbjerg notes how in reality, "power often ignores or designs knowledge at its convenience" (2002, p. 355). Interestingly, while improvised forms of citizen participation are seen as protecting and strengthening existing democratic standards, they are also recognised as a risk to democracy in that they do not necessarily follow the democratic principles of accountability, transparency and inclusion (Nyseth, Ringholm & Agger, 2019). Another consideration of importance is how participation channels such as social movements can provide pathways to radicalism (Snow & Cross, 2011). Radicalisation take place when high-risk forms of activism are embraced as a solution to the scepticism toward the effectiveness of traditional protesting (Snow & Cross, 2011), and although much is still unknown about the dynamics of radicalisation, there are reasons for wanting to minimise the extent of certain innovative forms of citizen participation.

Aim of the present study

The problematics concerning how cities and states can exert governance for sustainable development and facilitate transformation for a liveable and sustainable future, all whilst securing broad and inclusive citizen involvement, are countless. This paper seeks to explore and ex-

plain existing and emerging participation dynamics in megaprojects aimed at sustainable urban transformation, and attempts at making clear how planning practice must actually consider the re-politicising of democratic development by integrating new and evolved forms of citizen participation. In doing so, this study aims at answering the following research question:

How sufficient are existing spaces for participation in ensuring democratic legitimacy and inclusive processes, and are there ways to improve current practice?

The main research question is supported by the following two sub-questions:

- *How are spaces for participation understood and practiced in planning processes?*
- *How is predominant participation practice challenged and countered in the chosen context?*

By looking at the Bus Way project as a conflicting planning process in Nord-Jæren and Rogaland county (see chapter 3), this thesis aspire to generate new knowledge about the dynamics at play in the relationship between participation spaces and urban development project processes, as well as providing a useful account of how emerging spaces for participation can be understood. It should be read as an examination of the field where debates about citizen participation intersects with concerns about urban infrastructure and how this can be planned for in a sustainable manner. The thesis aims at providing a meaningful contribution to current knowledge about citizen participation in a Norwegian context, and hopes to inspire to novel ways of thinking about participation in planning and development practice.

Outline

The thesis is structured so that necessary background information forms the groundwork for the rest of the paper. First, relevant literature and knowledge is presented in chapter 2, followed by a context description in chapter 3. Chapter 4 covers the research method chosen for this study, including method design, participant description, data collection and data analysis. The results from this chapter are then presented in chapter 5, before chapter 6 provides an elaborate discussion about the findings and their implications. The thesis is then finalised through the concluding chapter 7, where the research question is revisited and significant reasoning and discoveries are summarised.

2. Theoretical framework

Chapter overview

This chapter attempts at providing the reader with a systematic and useful account of existing literature and knowledge in relation to the research topic. It starts off by pointing to how planning theory is increasingly emphasising the complexity in development contexts, especially where goals of sustainability are involved. The chapter continues to review the legal framework in question as well as established rationales for participation, before participation is viewed through different theoretical lenses. Based on literature by Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa, the current study's conceptualisation of participation practice is presented, and social- and mass-media are suggested as emerging forms of spaces for participation. The chapter finishes off by highlighting the role of power in any discussion about participation spaces and developmental influence.

Acknowledging complexity in planning

Challenges related to accelerating urbanisation, social exclusion and climate change has in the 21st century led to an increased focus on urban management and development strategies that can accommodate the complexity of the future (Brorström, 2015; Kalliomäki, 2014). In this context, several concepts have seen a rise in popularity within the planning field, including the concept of sustainability; the importance of community participation; an integration of diverse values and conflicting realities, and; conceptions of urban life with a focus on inclusion and the relation between humans and nature (Healy, 2010, p. 16). Despite its political popularity, clear and agreed upon definitions of the sustainability concept is lacking, although it is typically thought of as comprising three distinct dimensions that are all essential for harmonic urban development (see figure 3). The economic dimension is concerned with economic growth, attracting capital, and making places more competitive (Brorström, 2015; Healy, 2010). The ecological dimension relates to environmental aspects and the damage that human behaviour causes to the nature on the planet we live and depend on (Healy, 2010). And lastly, the social dimension is about social justice and reducing social inequalities, with a focus on making political communities more cohesive (Healy, 2010).

Like sustainability, planning practices can be understood within a similar triangular framework, as is illustrated in figure 4. Healy (1997) argues that planning practices must be understood as interrelated with social- and business life, as well as part of different levels of governance relations. These interrelations occur through framing social networks that provide political, social and intellectual capital – all which can act both encouraging and limiting for spatial and environmental planning action (Healy, 1997, p. 84). In adopting Healy's understanding of planning systems and practices follows an acceptance of planning practice as a deeply political, power-expressing and value-laden activity.

Places are profoundly shaped by the local governance capacities and the contextual dynamics in economic and political forces, as well as cultural and societal attitudes. They consist of citizens with habits and desires, and their everyday life makes up an important component to what defines the place. In the age of sustainability, places are constantly facing challenges that call for an efficient and adaptive planning strategy able to evolve together with new knowledge and changing conditions. Complex contexts are unlikely to display development problems that call for uniform answers, creating situations that can seem unsolvable when questions about who is to blame or who is in charge give rise to a range of opinions and perceived realities. When megaprojects face uncertain and complex situations, current planning practice often adopt an ap-
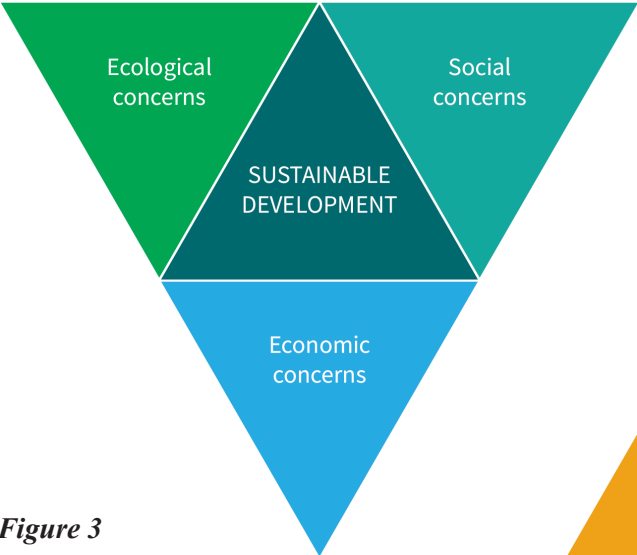
Figure 3

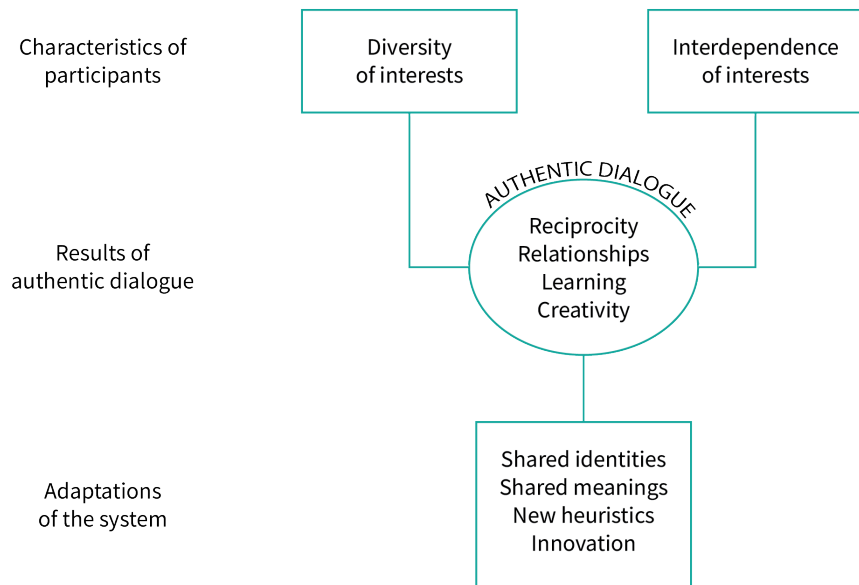The three dimensions of balanced sustainable development. Based on Healy (2010)
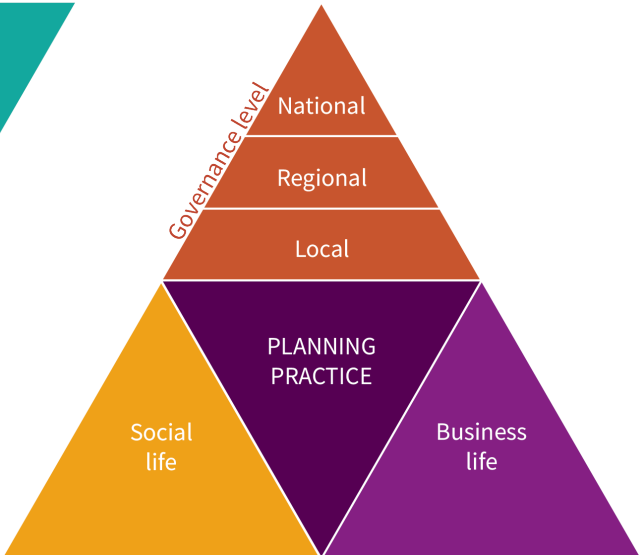
Figure 4

The interrelations of spatial and environmental planning practice. Based on Healy (1997)

proach aiming to simplify the issue by reducing complexity (Giezen, Salet & Bertolini, 2015). This approach seeks to narrow objectives by 'predict and control' measures; compartmentalising knowledge and positions; reducing actor constellations into core stakeholder groups; and rationalising decision making to reduce time and cost (Giezen, Salet & Bertolini, 2015). This is what is in the planning literature referred to as *taming a wicked problem* - treating a complex case as something simple, by for example ignoring the many perspectives on an issue and replacing it by an over-simplified definition of the problem, or by channelling all attention toward one focus area where there really are many (Cruickshank, 2014). Traditional planning has a pragmatic style about it in that it is reactive to immediate events and initiatives as they unfold, but typically results in a somewhat arbitrary project based development. Shaped by neoliberal political and economic processes, an entrepreneurial way of thinking is often adopted in order to ensure local and regional competitiveness in our global way of living (Albrechts, 2015), and albeit pragmatic and solution-oriented, this is an approach that oftentimes does not support the values of sustainability and liveability. The reactive manner of doing planning typically becomes more about 'getting back on track', rather than it being about making way for innovative future opportunities (Healy, 2010).

Plan-makers who ignore the *wickedness* in problems often over-estimate their power to control different dynamics and future demands in a place (Healy, 2010) and their offered solutions to tame problems prove too simple to deal with reality's complexity. When this happens, the plan no longer relates to place realities, and city development eventually outruns the plan-maker and finds its own path irrelated to the original plans. Where complexity is acknowledged however, the searching for answers is likely to include multiple approaches on how to overcome the obstacle in a best possible manner.

The collaborative paradigm in planning theory (see for example Bäcklund & Mäntysalo, 2010; Innes & Booher, 2010) highlights co-production of city images, collective action in implementation, and a holistically sensitive approach to place. The collaborative process embraces complexity, negotiates meaning, encourages democracy and strengthens the connection between actors and the development orientation. Innes and Booher (2010) have developed a theory and model of the collaborative rational process and the features needed for it to take place (figure 5) – the DIAD theory - including three critical conditions for collaborative rationality, valuable outcomes and contextual adaptiveness: diversity of interests among participants; interdependence of the participant interests; and an authentic dialogue with face to face engagement. Innes

Figure 5

The DIAD model.
Reproduced from
Innes and Booher
(2010)

Characteristics of participants

Diversity of interests

Interdependence of interests

Results of authentic dialogue

AUTHENTIC DIALOGUE

Reciprocity
Relationships
Learning
Creativity

Adaptations of the system

Shared identities
Shared meanings
New heuristics
Innovation

and Booher hold that where these conditions are met and participants collaborate around a meaningful shared issue, the outcome can provide innovations and adaptive policy systems in an uncertain and complex context (2010, p. 36). The DIAD model can therefore be seen as an aiding tool when dealing with complexity in planning practice, and provide a useful framework when studying citizen participation and dominant praxes.

Rationales for participation and Norwegian law

In the past few decades, the role of expert knowledge in planning processes has been gradually downplayed by a rising influence of participatory alternatives (Cornwall, 2002a). The increased efforts across governments, NGOs and other development actors in involving the citizens more directly in development processes are inspired by the belief that better involvement leads to better decisions, better government and better citizens (Mansbridge, 1999 in Cornwall, 2002a; Bohmann and Rehg, 1997, in Cornwall, 2002a). An enhancing of public participation is thus expected to increase the legitimacy and quality of democratic decision-making (Cornwall, 2002b).

In the age of sustainability, expert knowledge is needed more than ever to understand, manage and overcome environmental, economic and social challenges. Rather than 'speaking truth to power' however, expert knowledge now holds restricted power in its more informative role in societal debates (Welp, Kasemir & Jaeger, 2009) and the needs and wishes of the public

community plays a more influential part in planning and development decisions. Public participation is widely seen as critically important, both as an intrinsic good of a well-functioning democracy and as a necessity towards reaching a sustainable end (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2019). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underlines the need for participation in decisions regarding global, glocal and local sustainability questions, and Sustainable development goal 16 (SDG 16) explicitly calls for an ensuring of 'responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels' (United Nations General Assembly, 2015, p. 28). The Norwegian Planning and Building Act (PBA) has since 1985 enshrined early participation in planning processes, and in 2008 this requirement was strengthened even further (Hanssen, 2013; Knudtzon, 2015; as cited in Ringholm, Nyseth & Hanssen, 2018). A translated version of the requirement is available from the Norwegian government's website:

> *§5.1*
>
> *Anyone who presents a planning proposal shall facilitate public participation. The municipality shall make sure that this requirement is met in planning processes carried out by other public bodies or private bodies.*
>
> *The municipality has a special responsibility for ensuring the active participation of groups who require special facilitation, including children and youth. Groups and interests who are not capable of participating directly shall be ensured good opportunities of participating in another way.* (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2008)

Within the Norwegian context then, participation is emphasised and ensured by the PBA. There is a requirement for advertising the establishment of the planning process and for consultation and public scrutiny, and there are requirements for transparency in the legal preparation regarding the evaluation and weighting of public comments in hearings (Ringholm, Nyseth & Hanssen, 2018). However, Ringholm, Nyseth and Hanssen (2018) characterise the PBA requirements as 'information' and 'consultation' and hold that this is not enough to ensure meaningful influence by local actors in planning processes. Figure 6 presents a reproduced model of Ringholm, Nyseth and Hanssen's (2018) modified version of Arnstein's ladder of participation. The model shows different levels of participation in planning processes and indicates where on the ladder the requirements in the Norwegian PBA can be placed.

Figure 6

A modified version of Arnstein's ladder of participation indicating the requirements in PBA. Reproduced from Ringholm, Nyseth and Hanssen (2018)

Co-management	Not mandatory
Agenda setting	Not mandatory
Dialogue	Not mandatory
Consultation	Hearings, public scrutiny
Information	Announcement of planning process
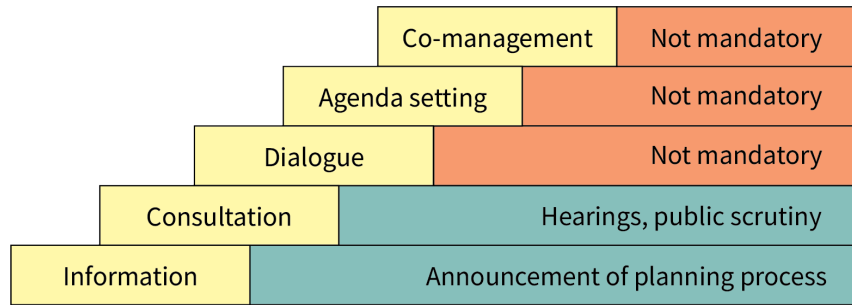
The demand for more consultation, transparency and accountability in decision-making has resulted in a variety of public participation forms in which participation may assist decision-makers by identifying public interests and help integrating different considerations into the decisions (Richardson & Razzaque, 2006). In environmental decisions, greater citizen input can enhance the accountability and acceptability of what would otherwise be unpopular choices, which in turn may lead to a generally better implementation of commitments (Richardson & Razzaque, 2006). Indeed: the way policy decisions are made has important implications for the outcomes of those decisions (Tribe, 1972, as cited in Richardson & Razzaque, 2006, p. 166).

According to Richardson and Razzaque (2006, p. 166), the increase in participatory processes in sustainable decision-making can be explained by four interrelated factors: 1) increased public concern and awareness of the relationship between ecology and well-being; 2) heightened expectations of public participation as a consequence of the extension in legal and political human rights; 3) increased interest in participatory mechanisms as a means for 'good governance'; and 4) distrust in governments and state level legitimacy issues have charged demands for more direct involvement and grassroot movements. But unequivocal beneficial public participation is not simple, and for the practice to deserve the pedestal position that has been offered, crucial challenges must be overcome. For instance, participation must be inclusive in order to improve democratic practice (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2019). Further, enhancing the quality of decisions can only be achieved as long as the right people are present and participating, and in the cases where official decision-makers take the input into account (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2019). Finally, the public must regard the participation and decision-making process as fair and just, otherwise the whole concept of public participation can breed conflict and distrust (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2019).

Contemporary environmental problems resulting from growths in traffic volume and infrastructure installations emerge as complex and conflicting situations of decision-making, and planners are faced with the difficulties of guaranteeing broad participation and at the same time ensure satisfactory quality and sustainable outcomes (Woltjer, 2009). The presented rationales and legal framework represent a contextual starting point from where to meaningfully understand and discuss citizen participation. Together with the next section about theoretical approaches, this starting point is forming the very basis for the current study, and providing a defining foundation (or frameweork if you will) for further examination and dissection.

Theoretical approaches to participation

Environmental decision-making is prominent in the age of sustainability. The complex, normative, multi-faceted and political nature of sustainability and environmental decisions make it near impossible to hold all knowledge and expertise necessary for making righteous and proficient decisions, and wider participation and public involvement is therefore required in various stages and levels of environmental decision-making (Richardson & Razzaque, 2006). In order to understand the various perspectives that participation can be viewed from and conceptualised, the theoretical framework of Richardson and Razzaque (2006) is deemed useful.

First, participation can be justified from two main perspectives; the *process* position and the *substantive* position. The process position is based on beliefs about the strengthening of democratic legitimacy, and the substantive position is founded on arguments that participation improves the quality of the outcome. From these perspectives, three main approaches to participation have emerged. Under follows a short description of how these three approaches are portrayed by Richardson and Razzaque, supplemented by literature by Innes and Booher (2010), Cornwall (2002a) and Petts and Brooks (2006). An adequate understanding of the disparate approaches is necessary when wanting to understand and challenge the different dynamics in existing and emerging forms of citizen partipation, and although no approach is higlighted as the preferred outlook, some of the perspectives are easily recognised from current planning practice.

Rational elitism

The rational elitism approach sees environmental decision-making as being largely reserved for technical and administrative expertise. Wider public participation should only be engaged

when the public hold information that may supplement expert knowledge. According to rational elitism, science is apolitical and objective, and public participation is a means of fostering a new climate of ethics in environmental responsibility. *Corporatism* is a strand of rational elitism where functional representation is offered to significant strategic groups. Corporatist ways of participation have been widely adopted in official economic negotiations in Scandinavia and Germany, as well as in Australia and Canada. The rational approach is grounded in positivist epistemology and studies reality through measurable data, law relating variables and linear additive causal relations (Innes and Booher, 2010). It holds that decision-making should be based on logical deductive analysis and holds a dominant position in public decision-making, in spite of its interference with ideas of collaborative decision-making (Innes and Booher, 2010).

Liberal democracy

The liberal democratic approach emphasises procedural rights in decision-making, which in administrative and legislative decision-making often happens through supplemental information processes and public consultation. By identifying and contemplating relevant considerations raised by the public, the acceptability and legitimacy of policy decisions is reinforced, and significant outcomes can be shaped. Most efforts to create more accountable and inclusive democratic institutions fall within this liberal democracy category (Cornwall, 2002a). Public participation is here believed to facilitate cooperation in implementation as the weight of ownership and responsibility is shifted to the community. In terms of environmentally friendly outcomes, this sense of ownership will encourage a more thoughtful and conscious environmental behaviour. However, the liberal democratic approach does not provide methods for active citizen involvement or ethical transformation, and does not challenge existing power structures in that the elites still hold governing power.

Deliberative democracy

Seeking to reorient processes of decision-making to intrinsic social and ethical values, the deliberative democratic approach pursues citizen empowerment in the actual decision-making. In this approach, the experts and the public co-generate knowledge that is relevant for the decision-making, and public input is integrated with the decision process (Petts & Brooks, 2006). Here, public knowledge broadens the decision process by posing alternative questions and solutions, by aiding interpretation and evaluation and by considering ignored concerns

(Petts & Brooks, 2006). The approach does not guarantee sustainable development but facilitate exchange and cultivation of environmental values. For participation to be deliberative, all community sectors must be represented to ensure social equity in responsibility for environmental policy decisions. The difficulties with reaching consensus when it comes to environmental and economic values however, has made commentators argue for an agreed upon institutional process as the best possible outcome for deliberate policy.

Richardson and Razzaque (2006) are careful to note that regardless of how proficient the different participatory reforms have been in bolstering the quality of environmental decisions, there has been no major shift in paradigm toward a successful ecologically sustainable development; suggesting that there is no one superior institutional framework for participation. Not completely unrelated, but still independent from the identified approaches to participation, there exists a range of participation practices. These practices, along with the varying features and properties of participation, can be viewed and considered through the concept of *space*. Albeit a relatively new and arguably daring way of conceptualising participation practice, the present study sees the value in using space as a means of making the abstract notion relatable to praxis and ongoing debates of inclusion. Discussing the concept in understandable and relatable terms is indeed what makes the topic interesting when speaking of ways to improve project processes as well as making the present study possible.

Spaces for participation

Participation discourse is marked by spatial metaphors (Cornwall, 2002b). This is evident in the ways we speak of making *room* for different opinions, creating new *spaces* for inclusion, the *broadening* of opportunities and the granting of *access* to previously unavailable political arenas (Cornwall, 2002b). Spaces are in this context defined as "opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests" (Kumburu & Pande, 2018, p. 139). Taking globalisation, urbanisation and digitalisation into account, spaces are now including a range of actor- and political configurations, and a mapping of the distinct ways in which spaces for participation can take form is a complex and extensive task.

Cornwall (2002b) has developed a distinction between different spaces for participation by employing a temporal dimension and a dimension for location of impetus. By pointing to Arn-

stein's ladder of participation, Cornwall shows how induced participation for example can stand in contrast to 'sites of radical possibility', and emphasises the importance of situating participation in time and space. By distinguishing between invited participation, where external agents provide a framework for participation, and organically emerged participation, where the spaces come to be as a result of common concerns and popular mobilisation, Cornwall makes a distinction between participation spaces constituted by the participants *themselves* and spaces constituted by *others* – that being authorities, government, NGOs, global agencies or other resource bearing agents. This distinction is therefore here referred to as the dimension for location of impetus. The second distinction Cornwall makes concerns the *relative durability of spaces for participation*, and distinguishes between *transient spaces* and *time bound events in public space* (2002b, p. 17). Together these dimensions form four clusters of spaces for participation: regularised relations, alternative interfaces, fleeting formations and movements & moments. Table 1 shows a conceptualising of how Cornwall's two dimensional framework can be understood.

Regularised relations involve regularised institutions with an intermediary function between authorities and people. These institutions are generally created *by* the state *for* the state, aiming at enhancing accountability, equity and democracy by including citizens as part of the governmental machinery (Cornwall, 2002b). Fleeting formations include public consultation meetings, workshops, deliberative polling and participatory appraisals, and make up a more transient institution. These spaces open for specific purposes or particular moments and are liminal spaces in that their fleeting, conditional, transitional essence makes them 'sites of radical possibility' (Cornwall, 2002b). The third cluster, alternative interfaces, is about citizen action independent of the state in relatively institutionalised and durable spaces. Rather than being offered, these spaces are mostly *chosen*, which make self-actualisation possible and give the spaces a dura-

Table 1

Cornwall's two-dimensional framework of spaces for participation

		CONSTITUTED BY	
		Others	*Self*
DURABILITY	*Time bound*	Regularised relations	Alternative interfaces
	Transient	Fleeting formations	Movements & moments

bility contingent on people's willingness to participate. These spaces typically take form as an organised association or organisation and entail an act of identifying with common interests (Cornwall, 2002b). The fourth cluster involve a sense of *impermanence* and forms leverage by providing arenas for popular resistance and protest. According to Cornwall herself, out of the four, this cluster is the one most difficult to define. These spaces rely on *oppositional processes of identity formation* and provide *temporary visibility to identities, issues and interests* (Cornwall, 2002b). Hence, it is within this fourth cluster that we find the social movements which were earlier presented as possible sites of radicalisation. While being important sites for exercising and realising rights, these channels face de-legitimisation by development organisations and governments, who prefer formally constituted channels for participation.

Gaventa (2006) suggests a continuum of spaces as a way of understanding the creation, interests and engagement in various spaces for participation. This continuum stretches from *closed spaces* in one end to *claimed spaces* in the other, with *invited spaces* laying somewhere in the middle. While emphasising how engagement will vary with different contexts and how there thus are numerous suitable terminologies to apply within the continuum, he presents the three abovementioned forms of spaces as an appropriate categorisation to understand and explore the dynamics in spaces for participation.

Closed spaces are where decisions are made without wider citizen involvement or consultation. Within the state these spaces are often conceived of as serving the people through elites' decisions to improve and provide public services. Today, much focus is placed on opening up such spaces and create possibilities for citizen participation through strengthened transparency, involvement and accountability (Gaventa, 2006). Efforts to open up closed spaces often lead to what can be referred to as invited spaces, where interest groups and citizens are invited to

| Closed spaces | Invited spaces | Claimed spaces |

Figure 7   Gaventa's continuum of spaces for participation

participate in decision-making processes by authorities and resource bearing agents. As participatory governance gains popularity, these invited spaces are visible as both regularised and institutionalised and more momentary and short-lived endeavours in local, national and global levels (Gaventa, 2006). Claimed spaces refer to Cornwall's dimension of when people themselves are the location of impetus for participation. These spaces emerge when people reject hegemonic space and create new, more identifiable spaces around common concerns and issues. Because these spaces come to life through less powerful actors outside of institutionalised policy arenas, they are referred to as both claimed (Gaventa, 2006) and organic (Cornwall, 2002b). Claimed spaces extend from natural discussions and debates to community associations and social movements (Gaventa, 2006), and provide arenas where the public can communicate resistance, protest and support.

Emerging claimed spaces

Claimed spaces can be considered within the understanding of a new public sphere, originally formulated by Habermas (1989, as cited in Lindgren, 2017). The concept of a public sphere refers to a social arena where private conversations, ideas and views can form a public opinion. Lindgren (2017) asserts that *instead of having digital things in society, we increasingly have digital society* (p. 3), where digital media are seated mid-centre in an ongoing social transformation process. In this context, Castells (2008) claims that the public sphere - historically revolving territorially fixed societies and national institutions – has seen a shift toward a *new global public sphere*, organised around media systems and mass self-communication networks. These networks are multimodal and relate *many-to-many*, which enable them to convey powerful messages and create transnational debates and events. This form of communication is both local and global and although not independent of state regulations, it can oftentimes escape government control (Castells, 2008). Indeed, Castells claims that through these media systems and horizontal communication networks, non-state actors can rally and initiate greater transformations by fostering social change. As these transformations have consequences for voting patterns and political decision-making, it is vital that governmental institutions and state actors relate to the stirrings and debates in the new public sphere. The regarded multimodal communication space can be viewed as a site for claimed participation, where the space is organically created, made and shaped by people for themselves (Cornwall, 2002b). As Lindgren (2017) and Castells (2008) recounts; these media structures bear the potential to challenge and provoke prevailing power structures:

To harness the power of the world's public opinion through global media and internet networks is the most effective form of broadening political participation on a global scale, by inducing a fruitful, synergistic connection between the government-based international institutions and the global civil society. (Castells, 2008, p. 90)

Multimodal communication networks here provide a platform where citizens are moved to the forefront of developmental and policy debates, and where community values and interests are articulated despite institutional ambitions and concerns. Thus, according to the understanding adopted in the present study, social- and mass media present a new form of public sphere where social coherence can create a strong public opinion that can ultimately change society.

Power in participation and decision-making

"Any act of space-making is an act of power"

(Cornwall, 2002a, p. unnumbered)

In his power analysis of spaces for participation, Gaventa (2006) questions the new emerging spaces for citizen engagement and asks: "Does this new terrain represent a real shift in power?" (p. 23). By *new emerging spaces* he is referring to the promoting of increased citizen participation in policy processes through legal frameworks and policy instruments, as well as the broad acceptance of such efforts. By starting off this section with a quote by Cornwall, this paper means to assume a view where the role of power in spaces for participation is unquestionable.

Understandings of what power is and means are diverse, and vary from a 'zero-sum' consideration where power is a finite concept in which one has to give up power for another to gain some, to an infinite and accumulative concept, where power can be created and shared within and across networks of actors (Gaventa, 2006). Power can also be seen as an expression of positive agency and capacity, or opposite, as a negative trait with which people exercise dominance over others (Gaventa, 2006). Gaventa (2006) has developed a tool and approach which makes the somewhat unclear power perspective explicit at the same time as aiding examinations of different power expressions and forms in various spaces. This tool is deemed useful for understanding the different interrelations and dimensions of power in spaces for participation, and

here forms the basis for understandings of power as well as for the current paper's perspective on the concept. It provides an interesting point of reference in any discussion about different participation spaces' power to influence urban development, and is here used as a palpable expression of prominent dynamics when attempting to conceive of possible strategies for improved citizen participation.

The framework has been labelled *the power cube* for its three interlinked dimensions that can be presented visually as a cube or a die (figure 8). The first dimension is based on Steven Lukes' (1974, as cited in Gaventa, 2006) three forms of power: visible power, hidden power and invisible power. Visible power includes the formal and definable structures, rules and procedures of political power in decision-making. This level is often targeted for improving accountability and the democratic practice in policy-making. Hidden power involves influential operations by powerful actors to control agenda settings and decision-making. Such dynamics exist on many levels and bear the capacity to undermine and exclude concerns of less powerful actors. The
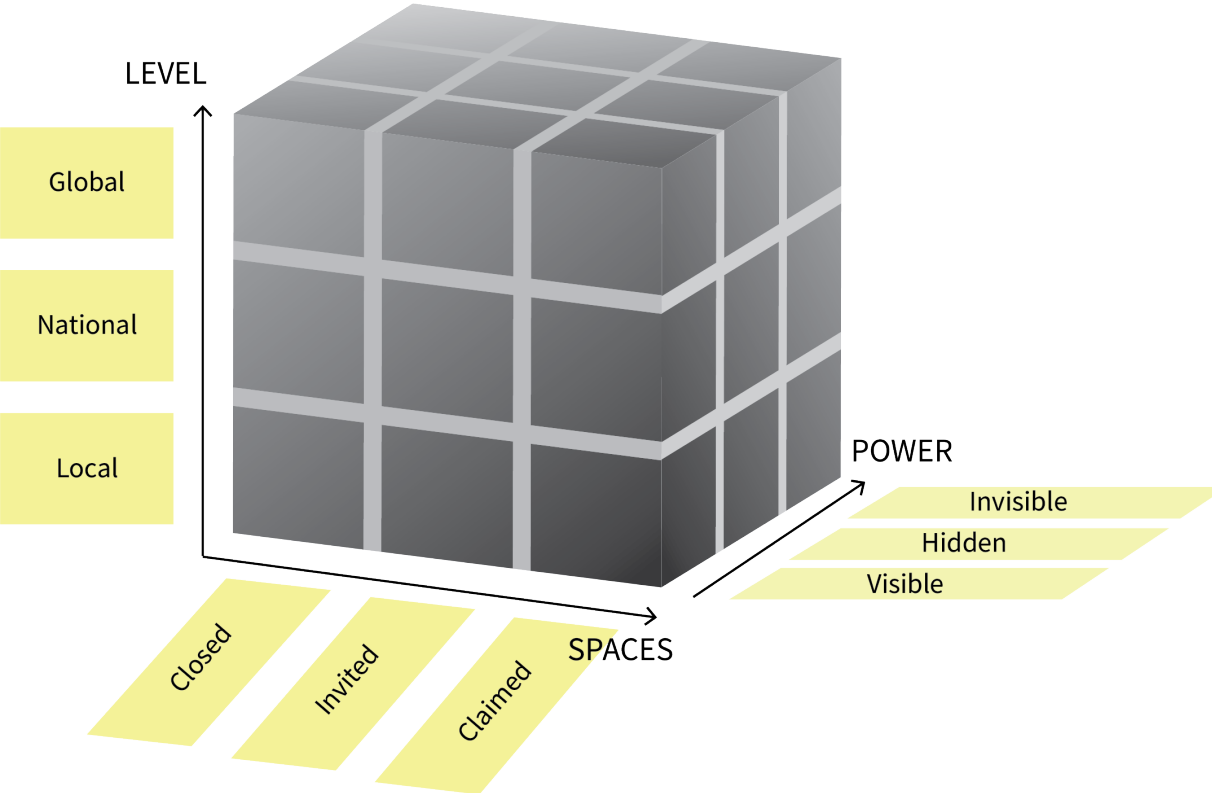
Figure 8   The power cube. Reproduced from Gaventa (2006)

most subtle, and perhaps cunning, form of power is invisible power. Invisible power can shape people's values, beliefs and acceptance or disapproval of the status quo, and keep important matters and issues hidden from official decision-makers and affected people and actors. Invisible power can shape the ideological and psychological boundaries of participation and induce a sense of inferiority or superiority in people as well as re-defining the legitimacy of different participants. This form of power can as such be seen as a cultural issue, where definitions of what is acceptable and normal have major impacts for how decision-making comes about.

The second and vertical dimension concerns social, economic and political places and levels for participation indicating the contest between global, national and local locations of power (Gaventa, 2006). The different categories of levels for participation should, according to Gaventa, be considered a flexible continuum rather than fixed and strictly defined boxes, as he notes how the three levels are becoming increasingly interrelated through their close relationships with each other. There are disagreements as to where participation should be initiated and focused on in relation to the different levels. Many argue for more localised empowerment to ensure participation in issues regarding people's everyday lives and see communities as key locations for development decisions, while others argue that globalisation has caused a shift in power to more global actors and institutions, and that participation should consequently shift thereafter (Gaventa, 2006). In-betweeners focus on the nation state as a power mediator and how local places are dependent on national legitimacy (Gaventa, 2006). These issues are discussed vastly in debates about decentralisation and within-state power dynamics. Gaventa underlines how localities cannot escape the forces of global actors, and how they therefore are being shaped in relation to the global level. Similarly, global power is not unaffected by local actors and without meaningful connections to the local level, global power is more or less worthless, which illustrates the earlier proposed interrelatedness.

Spaces for participation are presented as the third dimension in the power cube (Gaventa, 2006). This dimension comprises the continuum of spaces for participation that was described and explained earlier in this chapter, stretching from closed spaces to claimed spaces, with invited spaces floating somewhere in between. Gaventa (2006) ends his report by arguing that any efforts or strategies to initiate transformative power change must concern themselves with the full three-dimensional spectrum in order to achieve effective and sustaining results. This claim is highly relevant for the current study, where strategies to ensure and enable spaces for participa-

tion are of considerable interest, and where questions regarding the effectiveness of such efforts are at the forefront. In the event that current participation practice were to significantly change, Gaventa's power cube could be utilised as an approach to discover critical distortions in power, and therefore identify where change is most needed.

Chapter summary

Chapter 2 has presented the reader with an extensive account of the existing theories and frameworks that form the groundwork for the present study. It has suggested that the acknowledged complexity in development situations should be met with collaborative and rational processes in order to enhance implementation of developmental commitments and ensure sustainable outcomes. Existing legal frameworks for participation were considered insufficient in securing adequate participation processes, and multiple rationales and contributing factors for the increased interest in enhanced citizen participation has been introduced. A conceptualisation of participation practice through space was promoted, where spaces for participation were defined as "opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests". Finally, the role of power in participation and democratic decision-making was underlined, where the power cube was presented as a useful tool when attempting to understand the interrelations and power dynamics at play in spaces for participation.

3. Context

Global trends: Sustainable transport and Bus Rapid Transit

As the urban population is growing it can be argued that the importance of the car is decreasing. Based on her findings of a declining proportion of Norwegian licence holders, Hjorthol (2016) suggests that young generations are now setting a new trend where living independently of the car and having an urban lifestyle is seen as attractive. Similarly, Speranza (2018) asserts how young people tend to make use of new and trendy mobility options, and as a result delay their car purchase. Bus rapid transit (BRT) has emerged as an attractive answer to questions about the most efficient type of public transport (Hensher & Golob, 2008), and in the latest decades the implementation of BRT has been a growing trend as a sustainable transportation system (Tao, Corcoran, Mateo-Babiano and Rohde, 2014). BRT is now an integral part of urban public transport services in more than 40 cities worldwide, and findings show that compared to more traditional bus transit, BRT is a cost-effective, more efficient transportation system that can provide the users with enhanced services (Tao et al., 2014).

Case: The Bus Way

The Bus Way (Norwegian: *Bussveien*) is a BRT system presently under construction in Nord-Jæren in Rogaland county, where at the time of writing, seven out of 23 sub-sections have been completed. Upon completion, the Bus Way will be the longest of its sort in all of Europe with a length of 50 kilometres, and with connections between the three municipalities Stavanger, Sandnes and Sola (Rogaland County Council, 2019). It will consist of separate lanes for buses, bikes, pedestrians and cars, and make up a high capacity core network in the region. The Bus Way is not surprisingly predicted to become a regional hallmark.

Nord-Jæren and Stavanger metropolitan is chosen as a case for understanding the wider system dynamics and responses to change, and as representing a microcosm of the global changes that are currently happening in the age of sustainability (Grimm et al., 2008). As an influential megaproject, the Bus Way engages the public and is subject to a range of expressed views and opinions, especially in local media. The Bus Way as a project and case is viewed as a national

sustainable infrastructure investment, and as representing a multi-level governmental commitment to finding solutions to the urban sustainability crisis.

Background and objectives

Integrated national urban policy frameworks that involve expansions of public transport networks can guide sustainable urban development in a direction of more connected and liveable future cities (New Climate Economy, 2018), and according to National Transport Plan 2018-2029, the Norwegian Government will allocate more than 66 billion NOK to urban growth agreements, urban environment agreements and the reward scheme for public transport (Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications, 2016). These are collaborations between state and urban regions to ensure coordination between investments in transport systems and land use, and include a 50 % state funding of local urban transport projects. National reward schemes such as this are emerging in an attempt to solve the new challenges faced by infrastructure and transportation systems and can be viewed as a way to seize an opportunity to steer urban development in a greener direction. At a national level, the Norwegian government has further proclaimed an overarching goal of zero growth in car-traffic (Ministry of Transport, 2019). The main objective for the Bus Way is thus to achieve zero growth in car-traffic, while improving sustainable mobility options for all traffic groups (Rogaland County Council, 2019).

Rogaland County Council is in charge of the Bus Way project, which makes up one of the local urban transport projects that receives 50 % state funding from the Norwegian Government for its sustainable infrastructure and transport commitment. At a regional level, the regional Transport strategy for Rogaland 2018-2029 states that it "aims at developing a well-coordinated, effective and environmentally friendly transport system that ensures good availability in all of Rogaland" (own translation, Rogaland fylkeskommune, 2017, p. 50). At a local level, all three municipalities (Stavanger, Sandnes and Sola) have in their municipality plans integrated various objectives and strategies aiming at sustainable local development (Sandnes kommune, 2019; Sola kommune, 2015; Stavanger kommune, 2015). More specifically, Stavanger and Sandnes are displaying
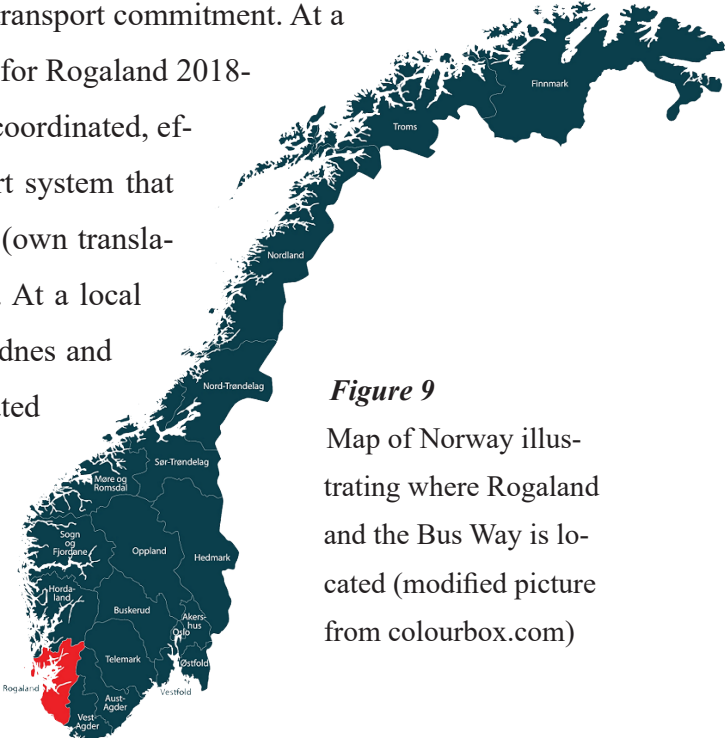
Figure 9

Map of Norway illustrating where Rogaland and the Bus Way is located (modified picture from colourbox.com)

strategies to increase the use of walking, bicycling and collective transport in people's everyday mobility, with Stavanger explicitly including a strategy to down-prioritise car-traffic (Sandnes kommune, 2019; Stavanger kommune, 2015). Thus, the Bus Way is subject to three different levels of governance and premeditated aims and objectives. At the local level, there are also three different municipalities involved, and while Rogaland County Council is in charge of the project, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration is responsible for the planning and building of the Bus Way (Rogaland County Council, 2019).

Place and current situation

The Bus Way is located south-west in Norway, in Nord-Jæren, Rogaland county (see figure 9). It extends three different municipalities where the car is an important part of local identity and living. The financing of the project has received much attention - as was depicted in the introduction section about the toll rebellion in Nord-Jæren - based on the fact that 50 % of the project's funding comes from new toll stations and a rise in congestion charges. Further, the building of the project means extensive property intervention and in some places a reduction in traffic lanes for cars. The people rooting for the project are flagging the importance of sustainable urban development, while opposing communities claim to be experiencing the Bus Way as an elitist project being forced onto the people without their involvement and approval, highlighting the importance of the research question: *How sufficient are existing spaces for participation in ensuring democratic legitimacy and inclusive processes, and are there ways to improve current practice?*
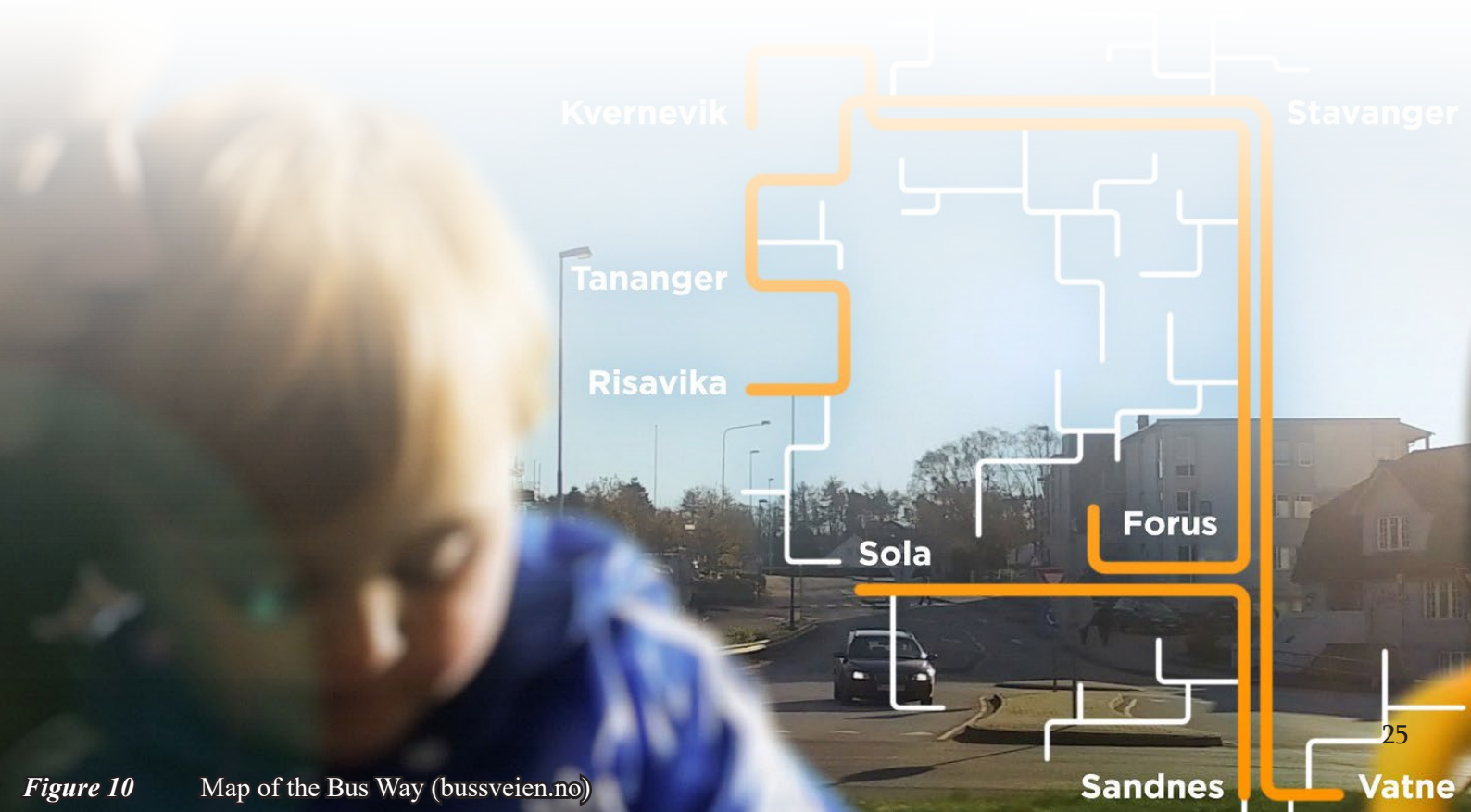

Figure 10   Map of the Bus Way (bussveien.no)

4. Method

Design

To meaningfully be able to provide an answer to the research question, a qualitative approach to studying the problem was assumed. Semi-structured interviewing was quickly chosen as the desired and most purposeful way of collecting data, knowing that there would be a number of people holding a great deal of knowledge about the topic at hand. While understanding that a more in-depth insight to the issue was necessary, the amount of information available from various media sources was also acknowledged. An approach supported by directed content search was therefore assumed. The directed content search was inspired by Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) account of the directed content analysis, in which data collection is directed, or guided, by existing theory and knowledge; in this case the theory provided in chapter 2 and the contextual knowledge presented in chapter 3. A directed approach was deemed most constructive when the content's purpose was to be of a supplemental, strengthening and complementing style in the research process. The goal of the content search was to aid the research process in its different phases. Prior to sampling and interview guide construction, a directed content search based on the research question was carried out to guide the interview preparations. After data collection, the aim of the directed content search was to conceptually verify and exemplify data produced by the participants. Figure 11 illustrates the course of the research and method adopted.
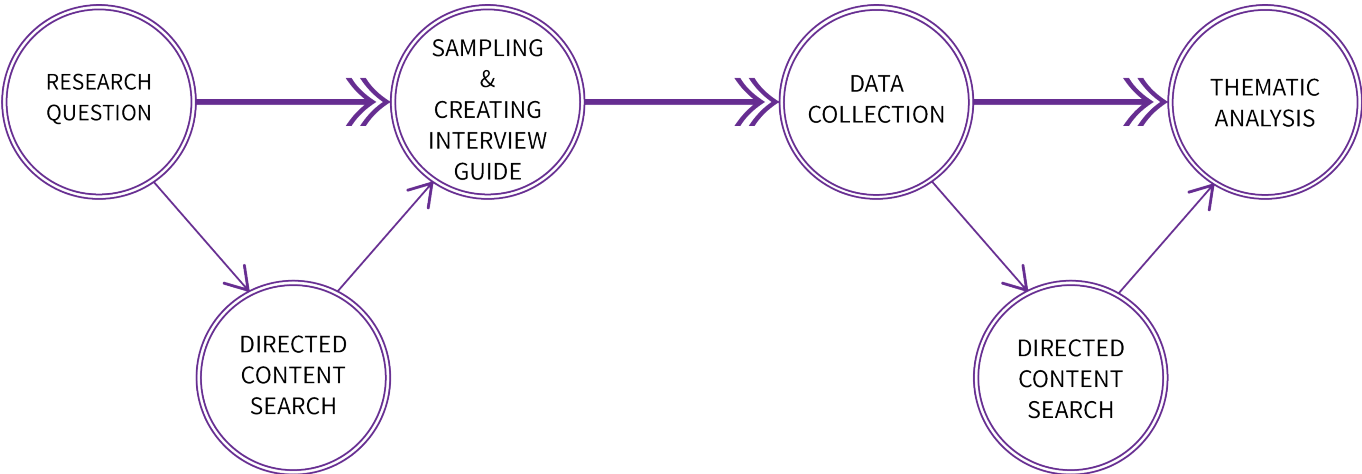
Figure 11   Method design illustrated

In the directed content search, media content was gathered through the media archive ATEKST and through comment sections in online newspapers. Some information was also retrieved from so-called *groups* in the social media platform Facebook. This was the case where it seemed especially relevant to be familiar with for example the substantiality of a formed group and its member size.

The research strategy was based on the ontological assumption of cautious realist and episte-mological stance of conventionalism, as described and understood by Blaikie (2010). These assumptions entail a critical attitude in social observations of an independently existing reality (Blaikie, 2010, p. 93) and a recognition of social theories being scientist creations, in which the quality of theory is a matter of judgement rather than proof (Blaikie, 2010, p. 95).

A theoretical inductive thematic analysis was applied to analyse the collected data. The clas-sification of the analysis as both inductive and theoretical might generate some degree of cog-nitive conflict in the reader – however, as will be shown in the data analysis, the claim will be justified and hopefully reveal an extraction of the best from both worlds. The thematic analysis was inductive in that the emerging themes were strongly linked to the data and did not neces-sarily bear much relation to the interview questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It was theoretical in that it was driven by a theoretical interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and the themes were rec-ognised by an analyst whose awareness was inspired by held theoretical knowledge. Themes were identified at a semantic level, meaning that they emerged from the data through explicit or surface denotations (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, the analytical process proceeded from a describing summary of data; to theme identification; to interpretation of the findings. A theme is here defined in Bryman's (2016) terms by adopting his four answers to 'What is a theme?':

- A category identified by the analyst through her data;
- that relates to her research focus;
- that builds on codes identified in transcripts;
- and that provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus (Bryman, 2016, p. 584)

The thematic analysis applied in this study draws on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach to thematic analysis and presents an analytical structuring of ten steps with emphasis on graphic mapping and accuracy in visual representation.

Participants

For the sake of the purpose of the study, participants were chosen through expert sampling. Expert sampling is a purposive sampling technique involving a selection of people that are well-informed about the topic of interest (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Expert sampling entails – as the name indicates – a recruiting of experts in a particular field, which is useful in areas where there is lacking a proficient amount of observational evidence (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016).

Six persons were recruited as participants. The participants were approached through e-mail, where they received an invitation to participate in the present study. One of the participants did not respond to the invitation and was approached by phone four days after the e-mail invitation was sent out. The participants were recruited based on their involvement in and expert knowledge about the challenges regarding the Bus Way process. In order to minimise bias and achieve a holistic image of the situation, participants from various backgrounds and stances in the problematic was desired. All six, although some humbled by their *expert* status, were positive toward the topic of study and participation in the project. All quotes presented in this paper were read and approved by the respective participants. The recruited participants are presented in the next page:

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews

To ensure a moderate degree of flexibility whilst keeping a clear focus throughout the collection of data from participants, the semi-structured interview (SSI) was chosen as the preferred method. SSIs utilise a blend of open- and closed-ended questions and allows for accompanied *why* and *how* questions throughout the interview (Adams, 2015). The design steers the conversation and ensures it to meander around desired topics, while the relaxed and engaging form still permits the dialogue to delve into unforeseen subjects (Adams, 2015).

Prior to the interviews, an initial content search was carried out. The content search was directed, or guided, by the research question and topic of interest, and allowed for a thorough familiarising with the topics that were predicted raised in the interviews. Mass-media and virtual

Vegard Thise

Project leader, Rogaland county council

Thise worked as project leader for the Bus Way in the Public Roads Administration from 2015-2018, and has from 2018 been in a position as *project owner,* as project leader in Rogaland county council.

Ellen Figved Thoresen

Project coordinator, Stavanger municipality

Thoresen has worked with the Bus Way's zoning plans, and has held the role of project coordinator for the municipality's Transport department. After an internal reorganisation, Thoresen is now functional coordinator.

Jan Ove Sikveland

Press spokesperson, Toll free Norway - ENOUGH is ENOUGH

Sikveland is deputy leader and press spokesperson for the resistance organisation 'Toll free Norway - ENOUGH is ENOUGH' (NOK er NOK), which has been repeatedly demonstrating against the financing of the Bus Way.

Matthew Millington

Project coordinator, Public Roads Administration

Millington has been involved in the Bus Way since 2008, and has followed the process from various professional stances. At the time of the interview he was project coordinator for the Public Roads Administration.

Stein Halvor Jupskås

Journalist, Stavanger Aftenblad

Jupskås has followed the Bus Way project as a journalist over a longer period of time, and was recruited based on his knowledge about media representation and public reactions in media platforms.

Espen Eek

Consultant & project leader, Multiconsult

Eek has since 2015 been the project leader for various sub-projects in the Bus Way, and is through Multiconsult hired as a consultant by the Public Roads Administration. The sub-projects have all concerned urban areas.

documents content was collected through the media archive ATEKST and through comment sections in online newspapers. The content search focused on the three largest local newspapers in Nord-Jæren - Stavanger Aftenblad, Rogalands Avis, and Sandnesposten – and search words were picked in accordance with the topic of interest. Thus, search words included concepts such as 'participation', 'engagement' and 'protest'. 'Cost' was added as a search word when the other search words did not yield a great number of results, and was based on an awareness that the cost of the project had been largely debated in the region. The directed content search in ATEKST made up a structured process, and table 2 shows how many successful matches were found from each of the listed newspapers for the different search words: Bussvei (Bus Way); engasjement (engagement); protest (protest); deltakelse (participation); medvirkning (participation, involvement), and; kostnad (cost). In the search, the time frame was set from 11.12.12 (the day of the County Council decision to build the Bus Way) to 01.03.19.

Table 2   *Initial directed content search in ATEKST (11.12.12-01.03.19)*

Search word	Stavanger Aftenblad	Rogalands Avis	Sandnesposten	In total
'Bussvei'	621	313	162	1096
'Bussvei' AND 'engasjement'	15	6	8	29
'Bussvei' AND 'protest'	2	4	0	6
'Bussvei' AND 'deltakelse'	4	1	0	5
'Bussvei' AND 'medvirkning'	2	0	0	2
'Bussvei' AND 'kostnad'	33	7	2	42

Prior to interview conducting, most of the preambles resulting from the content search were skimmed, and roughly 150 articles were printed and read carefully. The carefully read articles were chosen based on their guesstimated relevance in relation to the interviews and topic of interest, and were used to broaden the knowledge about the context at hand. The results from the directed content search were not analysed any further.

Considering how the six participants were holding very different types of expert knowledge, it was necessary to create different interview guides for the different interviews. In total, four different interview guides were created. Interview guide no. 1 was common for participants Thise, Thoresen and Millington, whereas interview guide no. 2 was created for Sikveland,

interview guide no. 3 for Jupskås and interview guide no. 4 for Eek. At the time of the study, all participants had residency and their workplace in the Stavanger-region, where five of the six interviews took place. One of the interviews took place in Kristiansand, at a time when the participant was travelling. The interviews were predominantly held in the participant's work office, with one exception. The outlier was an interview that occurred after work hours and was therefore conducted in a café area in a local culture house. All the interviews were conducted in Norwegian.

All participants signed a form where they agreed to being interviewed, recorded, and presented in the study with name and way of involvement in the Bus Way before the interviews were carried out. Further, all participants were informed that they could interrupt the interview and withdraw their consent to participating at any time, without further reason. The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder, and the recordings were later stored exclusively on University of Agder's OneDrive.

Data analysis

Interview audio-recordings varied in duration from 36 mins 57 secs to 70 mins 56 secs, with a mean of 55 mins 59 secs. All recordings were transcribed, and the transcripts were submitted into a theoretical inductive thematic analysis largely drawing on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach to thematic analysis (see table 3). By developing abstract themes, the accounts produced by the participants were integrated and summarised in a lucid and understandable manner.   While the transcripts were in Norwegian, codes and themes were noted in English.

Table 3   *Braun and Clarke's Six phases of thematic analysis*

Phase
1. Familiarising yourself with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

Familiarising and open coding

First, the written accounts of the interviews were read and re-read whilst taking notes of re-oc-curring topics and mentions. The familiarisation made up a time-consuming process as it formed the very foundation on which the thematic analysis is based on. In what follows, a general de-scription and retelling of the substance in the interviews will be presented:

On account of the various stances held by the participants, contradictory answers and narratives were sometimes given. This was perhaps most prominent in how Sikveland - the protestor - portrayed the Bus Way project versus how the other participants portrayed it. Common for most participants were how they viewed the project as an important measure in improving the region's infrastructure and as a way of reaching national, regional and local objectives. Some participants pointed to how the Bus Way will help in changing people's travel habits, and some pointed to a badly needed improvement in mass transit availability. On the other side of the ta-ble, the Bus Way was labelled a prestige project, and as not providing the right solutions to the problems the region is facing.

The car was put forth as an important part of the local culture – the region was by one participant called 'Little America' – and therefore the project was seen as being challenging established norms and widespread conceptions. The complexity and comprehensiveness of the project was repeatedly accounted for and explained by structural challenges (the project is affecting three different municipalities), three different administrative levels (local, regional and national), the size of the project and number of sub-projects, and all the different aspects of the project (bus way, maintaining car traffic along most of the pathway, walkways and bike lanes).

A common perception was how the project is weakly anchored, both political and in the public, and how politicians are not dependable when it comes to what the Bus Way order includes. Talking with politicians was seen as the most effective way of influencing project processes like the Bus Way, and the upcoming election was mentioned as a golden opportunity to have the politicians listen. Participants agreed that the Bus Way has been an engaging project, which has been clear in both public meetings and the media. However, some participants highlighted how easy it is to create an illusion of public engagement, and that the vast extent of it might sometimes be just that - an illusion.

Consequences for the car driver, intervention in property and how the project is paid for stood out as the biggest reasons for why people engage in the project. Four specific topics, or cases, were presented as having been particularly engaging: junction solution in Hillevåg; bridge placement in Gausel; closing off Skippergata for regular traffic, and; financing through toll stations. Sikveland explained this engagement with how politicians make decisions without reviewing it with the people, and how that leads to a feeling of being violated; "people are tired of not being heard", he asserted.

The importance of clear language when communicating a project of this dimension was prominent in the accounts. Understandable dissemination where 'political language' is avoided and visualisation is present was considered valuable in such a mission. It was however clear that the dissemination in the project could have been better, and that reaching a broad range of people is challenging. In the project, planners and authorities have not only formally gone through with the processes they are obliged to according to law, but also held extraordinarily many extra meetings. These meetings were regarded as reactive rather than pro-active.

There seemed to be a general agreement that public engagement is good for society, and that listening politicians are good for democracy. Public knowledge is also valuable for the planners – who plan for the people – but this knowledge must come forth early in the process for it to make a difference. It was a common conception that early participation is beneficial both for the people and for the planners in the project. This was portrayed as somewhat problematic however, as planning holds a big picture perspective and is concerned with the future, which makes it difficult to relate to when you are not professionally invested in it. A concern regarding people's understanding and comprehension of the project, of its impacts, and of what consequences there would have been without it being built was also raised by several participants.

Media was portrayed as an important actor in the Bus Way process, especially when it comes to public engagement. Newspapers set focus, journalism affects the common conception of the project, online comment sections have been partial in changing the debate climate, social media make up new contact platforms and makes it easier to mobilise big groups, media coverage generate engagement and media's visibility make it easier to create an illusion of engagement. Interesting to note however, was how much emphasis was placed on so called click-bate journalism and how no one felt fairly treated by the media.

The participants with a planning or authority point of view underlined how they understand and respect how people are directly affected by the project, particularly property wise, but revealed how individuals' wishes must be weighed against the totality of the project, and how there must be a balance between participation and progress. Notable progress was also deemed important if you wanted people to root for you and the project. Delays in progress were largely explained by demands for additional studies during the project; to some extent caused by public engagement.

Public engagement was somewhat explained by people's fundamental need to be heard. The need to be involved and consulted with was viewed as the opposite of having a project forced onto you. Several accounts addressed an increase in expectation to participation, as well as an increased focus on co-creation in urban development. Involvement was, however, considered demanding from an authority point of view, both in terms of resources, time and priorities. The form of participation was perceived as important for its impact, with formal participation being regarded as more impactful than informal participation. This was also the case from a protestor's point of view, where informal mobilisation was seen as a necessary step toward more formal participation - to which politicians listen.

The Bus Way process and -solutions have been influenced by public participation, and it is the totality of the whole public engagement that has made the greatest difference. An example was how the general focus has changed from being about making the best possible infrastructure for collective transport, to being about cost effectiveness. The new focus was seen as a direct effect of the public engagement around toll stations. Delays in progress as a result of public engagement and demands for additional studies was also pointed out as an example of how the process has been affected. A need for different forms of participation from what is offered now was proclaimed by several participants. This was justified with the benefit of getting people involved early on in the process; with a need for more custom-made participation forms in projects; and with the public need for being heard in projects that affect them.

Directed content search based on the open coding was performed to verify the factual content of the interviews and to extend the understanding of the problematics. Table 4 shows an overview of the results from the content search undertaken in ATEKST to verify the four examples of engaging topics that stood out from the interviews; junction solution in Hillevåg; bridge placement in Gausel; closing off Skippergata for regular traffic; and financing through toll stations. Online comment sections were checked for the most relevant articles that were found using

ATEKST. The same search words as were being used in ATEKST were also applied in the Facebook search field. As is illustrated below, findings from the content search supported the participant claims and provided good examples of how the engagement has taken form.

Table 4 *Directed content search in ATEKST following familiarising and open coding*

Search word	Stavanger Aftenblad	Rogalands Avis	Sandnesposten	In total
'Bussvei' AND 'Hillevåg'	66	41	6	113
'Bussvei' AND 'Gausel'	49	20	3	72
'Bussvei' AND 'Skippergata'	26	1	16	43
'Bussvei' AND 'bompenger'	128	47	12	187

### Structuring themes – developing an analytical framework

The thematic analysis applied in this study is principally based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach to thematic analysis (table 3). The six-phase approach provides a rough framework for which steps to perpetrate and in which order but lacks specificity when it comes to theme recognition and how to identify connections between themes. The current paper presents the development of a ten-step analytical framework to apply in a thematic analysis. This framework was developed in light of the present study and emphasises the use of graphic mapping as a means for achieving a high degree of transparency in qualitative research. In the remaining of this chapter, the logic behind the developed framework will be presented together with the analytical application in the present study. Figure 12 shows the step-wise structuring of the analytical framework. Worth noting is how the developed framework should always be regarded in relation to Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach.

AXIAL CODING. After the familiarising and open coding, potential themes were identified and highlighted by underlining words, sentences and paragraphs in the transcripts with different colours - each colour representing its own potential theme. Themes emerged in an inductive manner, but were spring boarded by the theoretical framework. Based on the axial coding, an initial thematic map was graphically generated (figure 13) to illustrate the themes that had emerged. Theme circle size was based on a combination of three things: 1) frequency of explicit mentioning; 2) frequency of indirect mentioning; and 3) forcefulness in conveyance (participants' placing of emphasis). The larger circles were labelled 'key themes' whereas smaller cir-

cles were labelled 'sub-themes'. Connections between themes were drawn in accordance with how the themes were linked in participant accounts either through transitions, linguistically or through relatedness. After finalising the first thematic map, the transcripts were reviewed to confirm that the mapping was in accordance with the data.
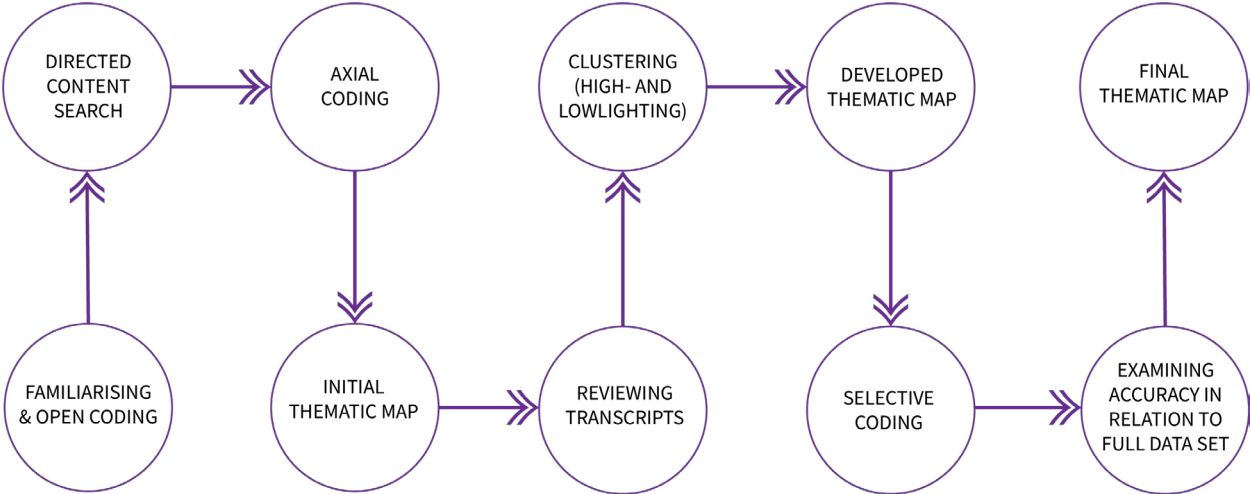

Figure 12   Analytical structuring in the presented framework
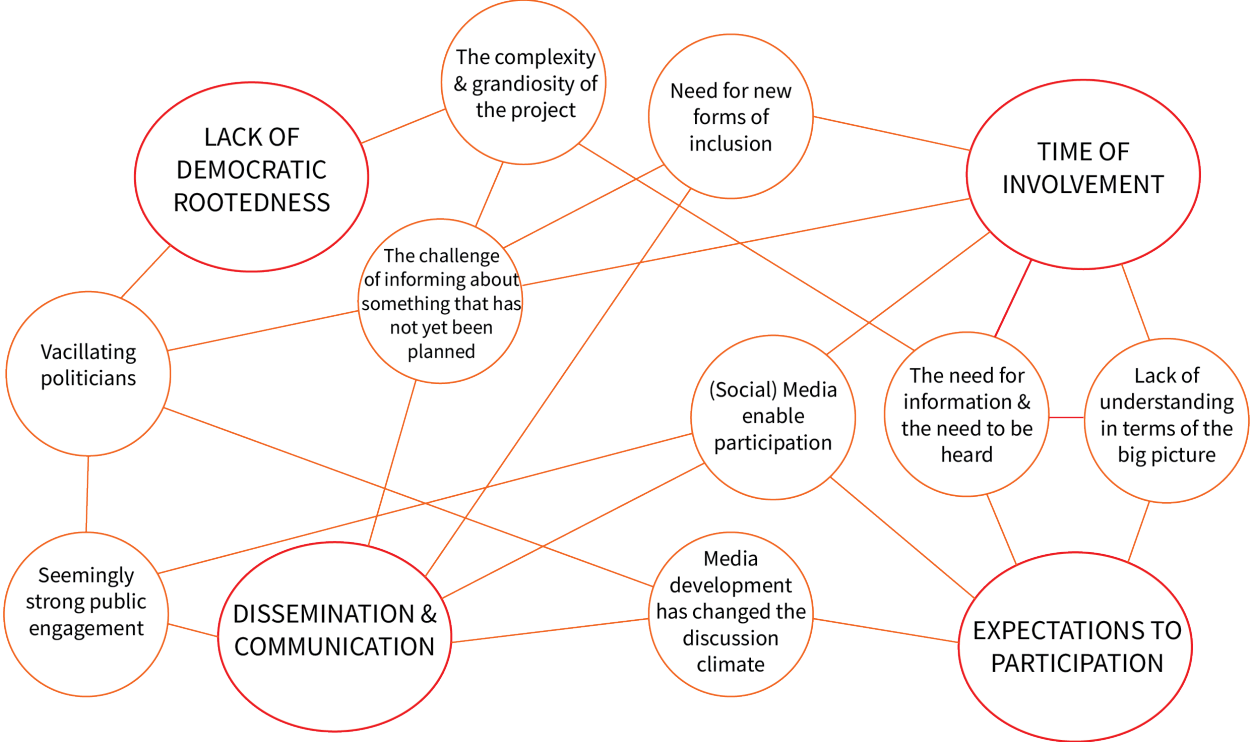
Figure 13   Initial thematic map, showing the interconnectedness between four key themes and nine sub-themes

CLUSTERING PROCESS. After having reviewed the transcripts in regard to the rather extensive thematic map of key- and sub-themes, the map became subject to a clustering process. Certain themes were high- and lowlighted in relation to their previous status in the initial map, based on their overall relation and significance to other themes. The themes that were not identified as main themes in the developed version of the thematic map, got clustered together with other coherent themes. None of the initial themes were discarded at this stage. Important to note however, is how several themes seemed to fit into different clusters at the same time. This was true especially for the themes 'seemingly strong public engagement' and 'expectations to participation' (see figure 14). In addition to the *belongingness* in its own cluster, both these themes were also strongly linked to each other's cluster. This challenge underlined the identified interconnectedness in the initial thematic map and raised some questions regarding the number of clusters and validity of cluster themes. In the end, the clusters that made most sense in relation to the overall data, remained.
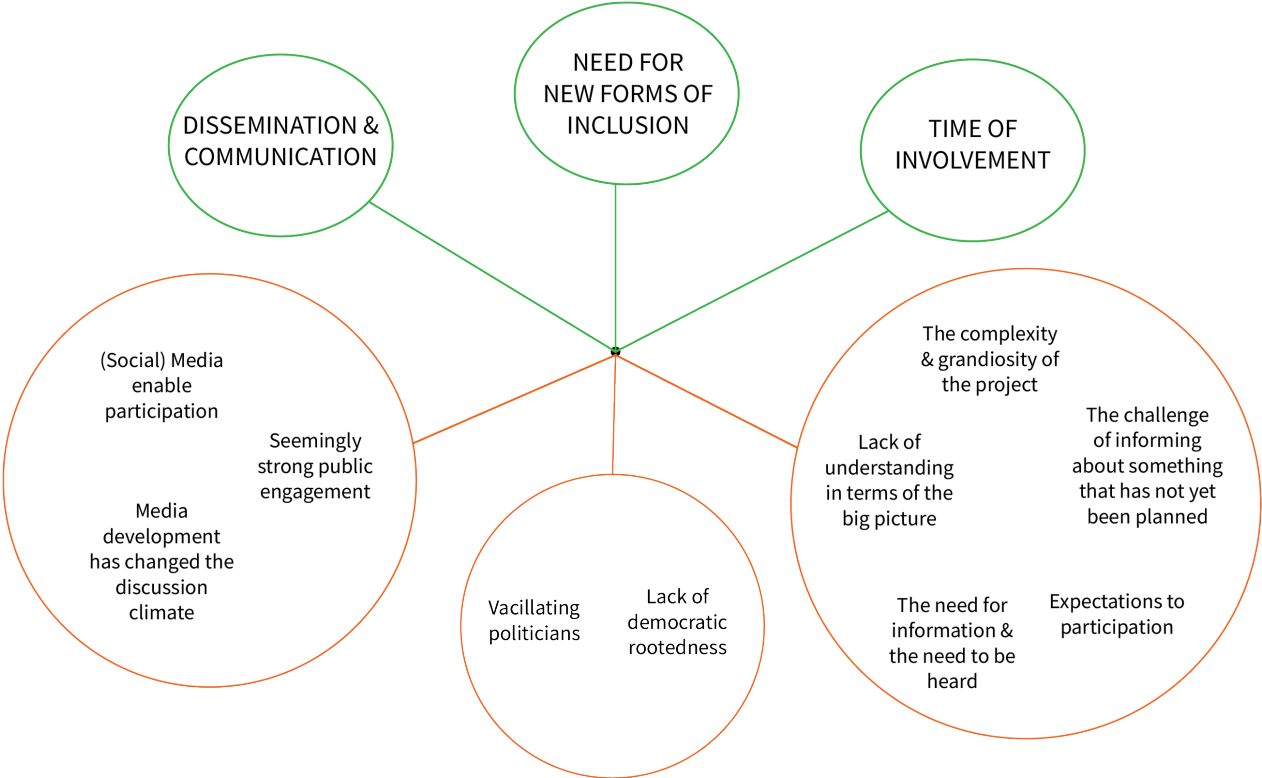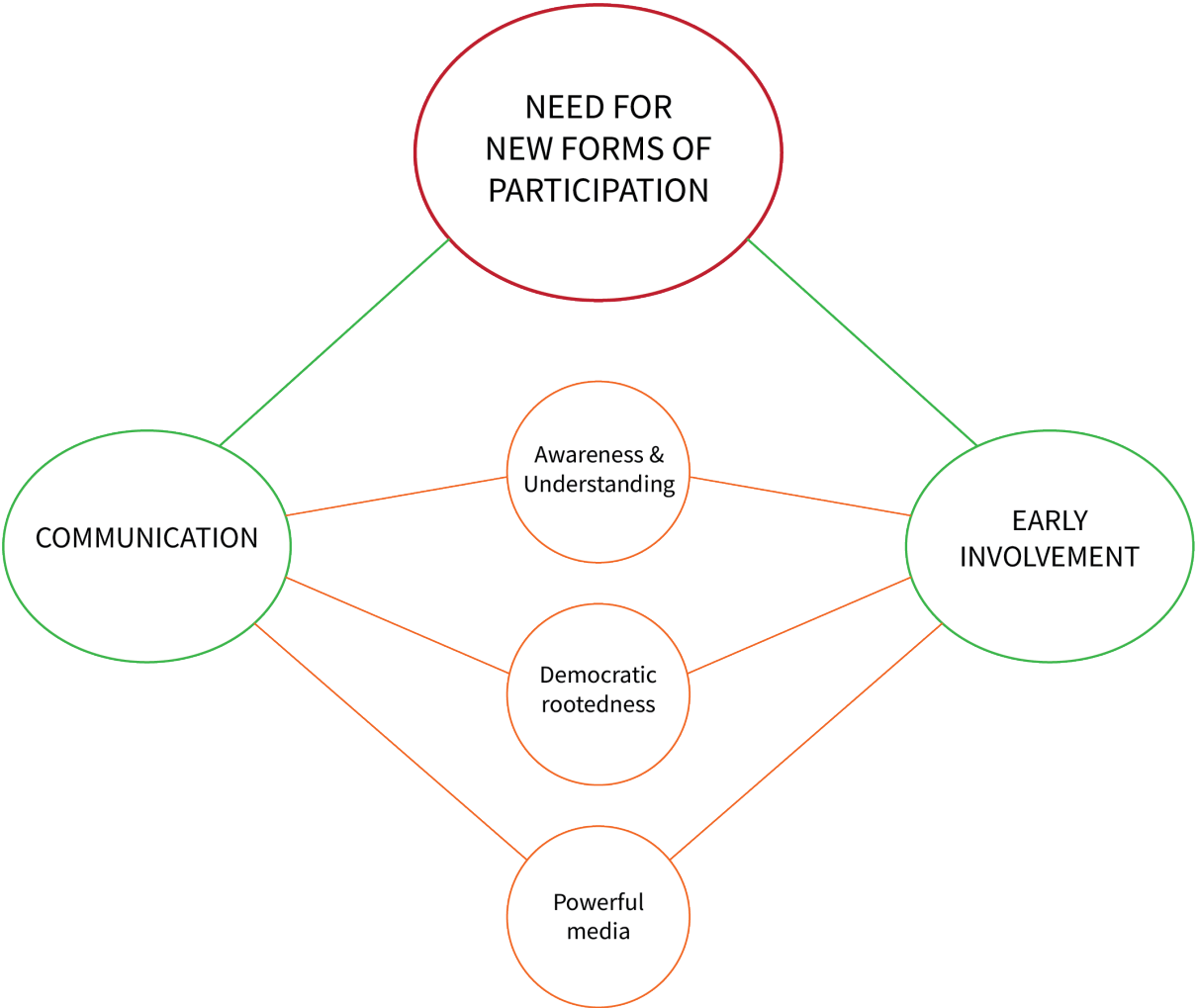

Figure 14   Developed thematic map, showing three new key themes and clusters of sub-themes

SELECTIVE CODING. Finally, selective coding was applied to the developed map to achieve a proficient level of theoretical saturation. In the selective coding stage, the validity of the identified themes was considered in relation to the full data set, and the accuracy of the representations in the thematic map was thoroughly examined. Clustered themes were combined to form three new more comprising themes and the hierarchical structuring underwent some rearranging based on three things: 1) frequency of mentioning; 2) forcefulness in conveyance, and; 3) how the themes associated with each other. Due to the oral nature of participant accounts, exact counting of theme mentioning proved challenging. Sometimes a participant went on for a long time about the same topic and thus explicitly mentioned the same theme numerous times in an account that just as well could be counted as one mentioning all together. Likewise, indirect mentioning is a matter of judgement, and different people will undoubtably see patterns and associations differently.

The hierarchical rearranging lead to the emerging of a new level in theme structuring: the core theme. The core classification entails two things. First, the theme is detectable in all the other presented themes. This means that it is possible to discern the theme as an intrinsic part of the other themes. This feature could be argued as proof of lacking theoretical saturation. However, all the key- and associated themes exist independently of the core theme – the core theme is only detectable as a solution to the raised issue. Second, the theme is recognised as the sum of all the lower levelled themes: if adding the themes together and viewing them as a whole, the core theme is identified as the product. Two key themes from the developed thematic map remained but was slightly renamed to improve accuracy in representation. Both key themes emerged early in the thematic analysis and held their status throughout the analytical steps due to their prominence in participant accounts. Like the name indicates, key themes should be regarded as a key issue. While re-arranging and examining the theme representations in relation to the full data set, the two key themes appeared to be connected through the remaining three newly combined themes. Their connectedness to all other identified themes shows how they indeed are key factors in the recognised problematics and topics. The term 'sub-theme' was discarded at this point and replaced with 'associated theme' to further improve accuracy in representation. The selective coding and final examinations resulted in a final thematic map, illustrating the hierarchical structure and interconnectedness between core theme, key themes and associated themes (figure 15).

The three levels of theme classification both should and should not be considered levels of importance. The core level arose as the main theme in the collected data and is therefore somewhat elevated in status in its representation. The same can be said about the key themes in relation to the associated themes. All the same, the final thematic map should be regarded as a whole – eliminating one theme will subsequently weaken the final result. The selective coding and final thematic map form the basis for the results presented in the next chapter.

Figure 15   Final thematic map, showing three levels of final themes; core- key- and associated themes.

Considering quality criteria

Discussions concerning the relevance of using the conceptualisations of validity and reliability in assessing qualitative research has led to a number of different stances (Bryman, 2016). Albeit important criteria, reliability and validity has been criticised for not representing accurate meanings in relation to qualitative research. As a result, advocates for critical assessments of qualitative research has presented different adaptations of the concepts, where new criteria are believed to improve the accuracy of meaning when evaluating research. The present thesis has adopted Yardley's four criteria as an alternative to the limited concepts of reliability and validity (2000, as cited in Bryman, 2016, p. 387). Yardley proposes the four criteria of: 1) sensitivity to context; 2) commitment and rigour; 3) transparency and coherence; and 4) impact and importance. In the remainder of this chapter, the four quality criteria for qualitative research will be briefly considered in relation to the present study.

Sensitivity to context is concerned with sensitivity to the setting in which the study is conducted, sensitivity to relevant theoretical positions and ethical considerations (Bryman, 2016). The chosen case for this study presents a widely debated issue in the present context. A preservation of the complexity in the context was pursued by choosing participants with different positions in the studied setting, and the theoretical approach to inductive thematic analysis ensured an appropriate sensitivity to established theory in the field. In acknowledging that social research is never conducted in a moral vacuum and that personal values might affect the research process, it is noted that studies like the present are especially liable to be affected by personal values and shaped by the researcher's political stance. It has therefore been critically important to exert reflexivity in relation to possible ethical violations throughout the whole research process. This was especially important when collecting and analysing data regarding a previously known project through an occupational engagement. Here, ethical awareness and reflexivity was necessary in order to avoid bias and inclinations to see and value the process from an earlier employer's viewpoint.

Commitment and rigour has to do with the professionality in attitude and approach, and includes considerations of methodological challenges in the study (Bryman, 2016). While realising that the research was undertaken by a master student and inexperienced researcher, the present study is believed to present an original take on the thematic analysis – a result of a committed attitude

and aspiration to perform as a professional social scientist. By building on established approaches to data collection and analysis, the grounding for the research provided a professional starting point from which the innovative ways of the present study emerged. When conducting and analysing semi-structured interviews, questions concerning accurate interpretation of meaning typically assert themselves, but because the thematic analysis was conducted exclusively at a semantic level, interpretation of meaning was never a notable problem in the present research. Semi-structured interviewing did however proffer other methodological challenges, through their reliance on appropriate and efficient interview guides. Making and structuring questions for the different interviews were found rather challenging, as a certain level of similarity in questions in all interview guides were desired at the same time as the participants' expert status had to be judiciously exploited. Finding a good balance between generality and specificity was therefore crucial in order to secure interesting but somewhat comparable accounts from participants. Further, achieving theoretical saturation in the thematic analysis also proved challenging, as was addressed in the previous sub-section about structuring themes.

Transparency and coherence is covering aspects about clearly communicated research methods and arguments, and the importance of reflexivity in research (Bryman, 2016). The present chapter has attempted at describing the undertaken research method in a straightforward, lucid and transparent manner. Any discovered neglection or ambiguity in this respect were not intended. The theoretical background that informed the thematic analysis has been presented without exception, and the next chapter provides the reader with an account of how the analytical results are interpreted in light of said background knowledge. Theme interpretation is provided in order to ensure transparency and coherence in later arguments presented in the chapter for discussion.

Impact and importance is concerning the significance of the research and considers (potential) impact on theory, practitioners and community (Bryman, 2016). The current project relates to ongoing debates about how to improve participation and democratic legitimacy in sustainable development, and aims at providing useful insights to how citizen participation can be understood and practiced in the most productive and rewarding way. The present research seeks to contribute to planning theory and practice by identifying and understanding problematic aspects with current participation practice, whereon solutions to widespread frustrations can be built. The transferability of the results and conclusions in this study will be discussed more elaborately toward the end of this paper.

5. Results

One core theme, two key themes and three associated themes were developed through the thematic analysis: need for new forms of participation (core), communication and early involvement (key), and awareness & understanding, democratic rootedness, and powerful media (associated) (see figure 15). Themes were organised in a hierarchic and interlinked manner as was shown in the model. The core and overarching theme 'need for new forms of participation' is linked to the associated themes through the two key themes, which are both linked to all three associated themes. Although expressed in highly disparate ways, all identified themes were visible in all participants' accounts.

The present chapter first presents the identified themes in a purely descriptive account, where extracts of data are provided as a means of illustrating the themes and analysis validity. Thereafter the chapter proceeds to embed the themes within a more analytic interpretation, where the account goes beyond the description and sees the results in light of the theoretical framework. In the next chapter, the results will be discussed and related to the current research question.

Themes

Each theme is described below, supported by participants' quotes. To preserve authenticity, the quotes are presented in both its original language and in its translated form. The descriptions proceed from higher (core theme) to lower (associated themes) levels. The interlinked nature of the themes will be apparent through several of the quotes provided, as will be addressed, but no quote will be used more than once.

Need for new forms of participation

The *need for new forms of participation* arose as the core theme in the thematic analysis, meaning that the theme was both detectable in all other themes as well as being recognised as the sum of the other themes seen together. Problems with existing forms of participation were expressed by all participants, and the theme was recognised as a somewhat underlying issue in other

theme accounts. While speaking of participation in urban development in general, the need for new participation methods was expressed rather explicitly by one participant:

«Du må ha ganske tungtveiende argumenter for å komme gjennom. Der er de stort sett avhengige av å få mobilisert en større gruppe for at det skal ha noe å bety. Jeg tror at det må jobbes mer med andre former for medvirkning for at det skal bli reelt – det må inn i en mye tidligere fase» [You must have rather weighty arguments to reach through. They are dependent on larger group mobilisation for it to make a difference. I think different forms of participation need to be worked on for it to become real – it must be implemented at a much earlier stage] (Espen Eek, Multiconsult)

While most participants recognised the efforts that are made to secure a proficient degree of formal participation throughout planning processes, a number of challenges with the existing participation forms were raised. Two main challenges seemed to be the problems concerning communication and early involvement – the two key themes identified in the thematic analysis. The importance of early involvement is evident in Eek's argument for new methods, which provides a good example of how the themes are interlinked. Sikveland also expressed a need for new participation methods, although through a sense of hope for the future:

«Jeg håper og jeg tror at for fremtiden så vil prosjekt av denne typen og andre typer prosjekt gå gjennom en annen måte for presentering enn det som har blitt gjort. For jeg antar at både folk og politikere og myndigheter har lært av det som nå har skjedd, og gjerne involverer folk på en annen måte for å slippe sånt bråk i etterkant» [I hope and I believe that in the future this type of project and other types of projects will be presented in a different way from what has been done. Because I assume that both people, politicians and authorities have learnt from what has happened, and involve people in a different way to avoid this kind of commotion in the aftermath] (Jan Ove Sikveland, Toll free Norway - ENOUGH is ENOUGH)

Both these extracts of transcript illustrate the same overarching subject, but from profoundly different perspectives. Eek is a consultant and a planner for the project, whereas Sikveland is part of the affected society and a protestor against the ways of the project. The recognition of a need for new forms of participation across this wide spectrum of partakers underlines the significance of the issue and expose a noteworthy sense of urgency.

Communication

The importance of communication and dissemination was evident in all participants' accounts. Though the two key themes represent two separate topics, the issues raised here were strongly linked to the theme of early involvement. This is likely to be resulting from the very nature of course of participation: in order to engage in a project, you must have an adequate amount of information and understanding about the process at hand. While expressing concern regarding how the project have been communicated out to the public, Sikveland provided an explanation for the lack of early involvement:

«De har ikke vært klare nok når de har formidlet dette til grunneiere, næringsdrivende og vanlige folk – hva dette egentlig vil bli og hvordan det egentlig vil se ut. Så det har sikkert ikke kommet de sterke innspillene heller, før de begynte å grave og satt i gang og folk så galskapen i hva det dette skulle bli» [They haven't been sufficiently clear when disseminating this to landowners, people in business and regular people – about what it will become and what it will look like. So there probably hasn't been much vigorous input either, before they started digging and people saw the craziness in what was becoming] (Jan Ove Sikveland, Toll free Norway - ENOUGH is ENOUGH)

Thoresen acknowledged the challenge of informing and engaging around something that has yet to happen, and underlined how this is tied to how the planner is concerned with the future rather than the present:

«…samtidig så må vi ha det perspektivet frem i tid. Vi planlegger frem i tid. Vi skal involvere for noe som vil bety noe for deg om ganske mange år – det er utfordringen med det. At du må synliggjøre og engasjere og få folk til å forstå hva dette vil bety, uten at det er håndfast og veldig konkret og fattbart på det tidspunktet hvor vedtak blir fattet eller beslutninger tas» [… at the same time we must keep the future perspective. We plan ahead in time. We are to involve for something that will mean something to you in a fair few years – that is the challenge. That you have to make visible and engage and make people understand what this will mean, without it being tangible and specific and intelligible at the time when decisions are made] (Ellen Figved Thoresen, Stavanger municipality)

Both these articulations illustrate the general value of good communication in planning processes. A more practical account of the importance of communication both prior to and throughout the process was produced by Millington:

> «Det er mange som bor langs Bussveien som har lyst til å selge hus og som ikke kan selge hus fordi de ikke har en vedtatt plan å forholde seg til. Så jo mer informasjon vi kan gi de jo bedre er de i stand til å ta beslutninger. Og det hjelper oss òg, for vi får inn informasjon som vi av og til ikke var klar over» [Many people that live along the Bus Way want to sell their houses, and cannot sell because they don't have an approved plan to relate to. So the more information we can give them, the better equipped they are to make decisions. And it helps us too, because we get information that we sometimes aren't aware of] (Matthew Millington, Public Roads Administration)

Millington's account shows how communication is not only important when it comes from planners and authorities to the population, but also the other way around; planners benefit from knowledge residing in the public. In this sense, participation in itself is a form for communication. Additionally, the grandiosity of the project means that it involves and affects a lot of people, which was used as an argument for well thought-through dissemination. The following quote then seems appropriate as a final note to the theme:

> «Jeg klarer ikke å se hvordan du skal gjøre et prosjekt til 11 milliarder kroner uten å tenke at kommunikasjon er noe av det viktigste du gjør» [I'm not able to see how you could do an 11 billion NOK project without thinking that communication is one of the most important things you do] (Vegard Thise, Rogaland County council)

Early involvement

As has been stated, early involvement is strongly linked to the theme of communication. The theme revolves around the challenges regarding, and the importance of, early involvement in planning processes. Because of the three links that are formed through the associated themes, the thematic map does not show a direct link between the two key themes. However, there should be left no doubt: the key themes are linked in an important and direct manner.

When speaking of a specific solution for a stretch of the Bus Way project, one participant

recalled how an outside suggestion was incorporated into the plan:

> «Det var et forslag som kom frem i en høringsprosess, om det var i oppstarten eller.. Det må ha kommet tidlig, for hvis ikke det kommer tidlig så er det vanskelig å bake det inn» [It was a suggestion that came through a consultation and public inspection process, if it was in the beginning or.. It must have come early for if not it would have been difficult to bake in] (Matthew Millington, Public Roads Administration)

Further, another quote by Millington links early involvement to the theme of awareness & understanding as well as the core theme of needing new forms of participation:

> «Folk forstår ikke at om du skal påvirke en prosess så må du komme inn tidlig. Folk kan påvirke en plan gjennom hele prosessen, men det er spesielt i de tidlige fasene at påvirkningsmulighetene er størst. I oppstartsfasen, det er der de må henge i. Men det er vanskelig for dem å ha en mening når de ikke har noe å forholde seg til. De formelle prosessene har sine ulemper» [People don't understand that if you are to influence a process then you have to come in early. They can influence a plan throughout the whole process, but the possibilities for real influence are strongest in the early stages. In the start-up phase, that's where they have to make an effort. But it's difficult for them to have an opinion when they don't have anything to relate to. The official processes have their downsides] (Matthew Millington, Public Roads Administration)

Engaging people to get involved early was raised as a major challenge by the planners, because the concept is at this stage perceived as rather ideational and irrelevant by the public:

> «Des mer overordnet planen er, des mer utfordrende er det å få deltakelse og engasjement fordi det blir mer abstrakt, eller det blir veldig langt frem i tid» [The more pervasive the plan is, the more challenging it is to get participation and engagement, because it becomes more abstract, or it becomes faraway in time] (Ellen Figved Thoresen, Stavanger municipality)

From the planners' perspective the difficulty of getting people involved in the process at an early stage was raised as a major challenge in participation practice, whereas from an affected

community perspective the difficulty of knowing how and when to be involved and participating in the process was put forth.

Awareness & Understanding

The challenge of *understanding* - both in terms of language, system and the bigger picture – arose as an important theme in the analysis. Issues of awareness and understanding was raised in relation to the project's rationales, logical realities, messages from authorities, formal systems and technical planning. First of all, a certain degree of awareness and understanding is necessary in order for participation to take place at all:

> «At det er forståelig for de som er der ute, det er alfa omega for at du skal få til noe som helst av medvirkning. At du ikke i etterkant skal bli møtt med 'jamen det kunne ikke vi forstå'» [That it's understandable for the common man is the key factor for achieving any form of participation. That you can't be met with 'but we couldn't understand that' in the aftermath] (Vegard Thise, Rogaland County council)

There seems to be a gap between planners/authorities and 'regular' people when it comes to comprehension of political and/or technical language as well as general understanding of how planning works. This perception is apparent in the following accounts:

> «Vanlige folk forstår ikke alltid politisk språk, og det er jo en utfordring. For politikerne kan jo mene at de har fortalt om dette før, men de har gjort det på en måte som folk gjerne ikke forstår» [Regular people don't always understand political language, and that's a challenge. Because the politicians can say they have informed about this at an earlier stage, but they've done it in a way which people typically don't understand] (Jan Ove Sikveland, Toll free Norway - ENOUGH is ENOUGH)

> «Det er enkelte ting som folk kan påvirke. Andre ting er mer låst; vi har krav og regler vi må forholde oss til òg. Vi kan ikke svinge veien frem og tilbake hver femte meter for å unngå hus – sånne ting kan du ikke gjøre. Og de forstår ikke det. Det er litt lite forståelse for et ganske teknisk fag.» [There are certain things people can influence. Other things are more set; we have orders and rules we have to pertain. We can't turn the road back and forth every five metres to avoid houses – you just can't do that. And they

don't understand that. There's a lack of understanding for a rather technical discipline.] (Matthew Millington, Public Roads Administration)

How a sufficient level of understanding is linked to early involvement was also demonstrated in a rather unambiguous manner:

«Utfordringen er jo at folk flest forstår ikke hva det går ut på. Og de forstår ikke nødvendigvis sin besøkelsestid eller når de skal påvirke prosessene. Det er kanskje et generelt problem i medvirkning… Det er jo selvfølgelig mange som forstår det og som kommer når det er høringer, men mange venter med det til det er for sent. Når planene egentlig er lagt. Og helst når de ser hva som blir bygd, da kommer de» [The challenge is that most people don't understand what it's about. And they don't necessarily understand when to get involved and when to influence the processes. That's perhaps a general problem in participation… Of course, many people understand this and come to hearings, but many wait till it's too late. When the plans are set. Often they come when they can see what's actually being built] (Espen Eek, Multiconsult)

The strong link between awareness and understanding and early involvement is also well illustrated by the following account by Jupskås:

«Media har jo blitt kritisert av bompengemotstanderne for at de mener vi ikke har skrevet om konsekvensene av dette her før det var for sent, før det var vedtatt og alt var spikret. Og det er jo helt feil. Altså den kritikken er vi slett ikke enige i, for vi hatt helside på helside helt siden 2014 om denne saken. Men folk våknet for sent» [Media was criticised by the toll protestors for not writing about its consequences before it was too late, before it was decided and everything was nailed down. And that's utterly wrong. In no way do we agree with that critique, because ever since 2014 we've filled page after page about this case. But people woke up too late] (Stein Halvor Jupskås, Stavanger Aftenblad)

How people understand the project in terms of parts or bigger picture also seems to be related to their personal concerns, which was demonstrated as such:

«Folk flest, når de involverer seg i et prosjekt, så er de ikke opptatt av Bussveien som konsept, de er opptatt av *den* strekningen, *den* eiendommen, og *den* parkeringsplassen»

[Most people, when they get involved in a project, they aren't concerned with the Bus Way as a concept. They are concerned with *that* specific stretch, *that* specific property and *that* particular parking space] (Matthew Millington, Public Roads Administration)

Democratic rootedness

Democratic rootedness involves the acceptance and support, or lack thereof, that a project sustains. A democratically rooted project is here understood as being backed by the voters and politically settled. A poorly rooted project is therefore likely to face political wavering and resistance from the public as the project proceeds. Sufficient *anchoring* of the project arose as an important factor for the planning to run smoothly and without major interferences from the public. Numerous accounts witnessed of a lack of democratic rootedness in the Bus Way, which was experienced as a tiring and difficult aspect to relate to for the people planning the project. Jupskås even expressed surprise about the amount of unravelled uncertainties:

«Man ville jo tro at når et så stort politisk flertall har vedtatt at 'okei, sånn gjør vi det', både med utføring og finansiering og alle greiene, at det skulle være en smal sak, at det skulle gå på skinner å gjennomføre: 'vi er her – vi skal dit – vi gjør det på den måten'. Sånn har det ikke blitt, og jeg mener at det folkelige engasjementet har nok vært en viktig faktor» [One should think that when a large political majority has decided that 'ok, this is what we'll do', both in regards to execution and financing and other things, that it would easy as pie. Or easy as pie… But it should be an easy execution: 'we are here – we're going there – we'll do it this way'. That's not what happened, and I believe that public engagement has been an important contributing factor] (Stein Halvor Jupskås, Stavanger Aftenblad)

Changing politics appeared to have been a major challenge for the Bus Way and several participants provided accounts similar to the following:

«Det som jeg tenker er utfordringen i det her er at mye av den politiske situasjonen har endret seg. Vi opplever at de kanskje ikke er like tro mot sine tidligere vedtak. Og heller ikke nødvendigvis ser på det store bildet, at de tar samfunnsansvar. At de er mer opptatt av hvilken vei vinden blåser der og da, rett og slett» [What I think is the challenge here is that much of the political situation has changed. We experience that they perhaps aren't

as loyal toward their earlier decisions. And they don't necessarily see the bigger picture and take social responsibility. They're more concerned with the way the wind is blowing at a given time] (Espen Eek, Multiconsult)

Political wavering in the project was exemplified through a number of cases, and one of the most prominent ones was the Skippergata case:

«I Sandnes så har et enstemmig bystyre vedtatt i kommunedelplan at Skippergata skal stenges. Og så har et enstemmig bystyre fastsatt planprogram om at den ikke skal stenges – i strid med kommunedelplanen. Og da har jo det (folkelig engasjement) en verdi, ved at politikken snur ved folkeengasjement - at du har politikere som lytter, det har en verdi. Samtidig så har vi fått en bestilling på hva vi skal gjøre. Og at den bestillingen endrer seg hele veien er ganske utfordrende» [In Sandnes, a unanimous City council has in the municipal plan decided that Skippergata is to be closed. And then a unanimous City council has fixed a planning program where it's not to be closed – in conflict with the municipal partial plan. And you could say that that's valuable in that politicians listen to public engagement – having politicians who listen is valuable. But at the same time, we have received an order of what to plan. When that order constantly is changed planning becomes rather challenging] (Vegard Thise, Rogaland County council)

Powerful media

A variety of issues were raised regarding media's role in urban development and how digitalisation has changed how we communicate. Common for the accounts were how media are regarded as resourceful channels. Although the content or ways of engaging are not always appreciated, media's influence was recognised by all actors.

«Det er nok litt 'skrik høyest'. Jeg skal ikke påstå at det er bare det, for alt som kommer inn blir behandlet på samme måte. Men en er ikke upåvirket av debatter i media. Noen aktører har større ressurser og kan kontakte de rette personene» [It's a little 'who screams the loudest'. I can't say that it's only that, because everything that comes in is treated the same way. But you aren't unaffected by media debates. Some actors have bigger resources and can contact the right people] (Ellen Figved Thoresen, Stavanger municipality)

«Sosiale medier har vært utrolig viktig. Jeg tror at politikerne spesielt hører på det som skjer i de ulike sosiale mediene» [Social media have been incredibly important. I believe that politicians especially listen to what's happening in the different social media] (Matthew Millington, Public Roads Administration)

Media's importance for mobilisation was also evident for from a protestor's point of view:

«Da demonstrasjonene var så fikk vi frem sakene gjennom media. Vi har fått ytret oss direkte på TV og i avisen og i radio. Så vi fikk ut budskapet… Vi har jo kommet lengre enn vi hadde hvis ikke vi hadde hatt de. For nå lytter jo hele Norge» [We got our causes out through media while the demonstrations were ongoing. We have been able to express ourselves on direct television and in the newspaper and on the radio. So we got the message out there… We have gotten further than we would've without them. Because now the whole country is listening] (Jan Ove Sikveland, Toll free Norway - ENOUGH is ENOUGH)

Media's power to create an illusion of engagement was also raised as a topic. Illusions of engagement appear where expressed views and opinions seem to be ascribed to a wider population than what is reality. This phenomenon occurs where a specific voice tends to dominate a topic, upon which it creates an apparent dominating attitude in the wider public. Some participants noted how opinions that appear in e.g. online comment sections are not necessarily representative for the public opinion - yet they create an illusion of broad opinion. Following is a rather illustrative account of the phenomenon, addressing activity in newspapers' comment sections:

«Er det egentlig et bredt engasjement dette her, eller er det bare de samme folka som mener noe hele tiden? Vi hadde en opptelling og da fant vi ut at det var 19 stykker som holdt det gående» [Is it really a broad-ranging engagement we're witnessing here, or is it just the same people that have something to say all the time? We had a tally and concluded it was 19 people who kept it going] (Stein Halvor Jupskås, Stavanger Aftenblad)

That media is widely regarded as a powerful channel and tool for information and influence is worth noting in a discussion about spaces for participation. In the next section, powerful media and the other themes are critically considered in relation to the theoretical framework that was presented in chapter 2.

Theme interpretation

In what follows, the recently demonstrated themes will be reviewed in light of the relating literature and issues that were raised in the theoretical chapter. This way of presenting the results – with a descriptive account being followed by an interpretive account – is an attempt of structuring the thesis in an easily comprehendible fashion, where the logic of the analysis and results is evident. The themes will be revisited in the same order as they were described, proceeding from higher to lower levels (core – key – associated). Reviewing the themes in an interpretive manner is thought to make clear how the present paper understands the results in relation to existing knowledge and literature, and as suggesting ways of perceiving the complexities in participation practice.

NEED FOR NEW FORMS OF PARTICIPATION. SDG 16's call for more responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making seems to have gained ground in the current context and is of particularly high relevance in relation to the identified theme 'need for new forms of participation'. Perhaps the most striking similarity between the theme and theoretical report, is how challenges regarding today's participation praxis are acknowledged. Like Ringholm, Nyseth and Hanssen (2018) suggest, the PBA requirements of information and consultation are not enough to ensure meaningful local participation and influence in planning processes. The challenges in participation raised by Stockholm Environment Institute (2019), including the problem of inclusion; of including the right people; of publicly perceived just and fair processes, and; of decision-makers who take public opinion into account, are here apparent. If looking to figure 4 about the interrelations of spatial and environmental planning practice, one could argue that the triangle for planned participation is here out of balance. Further, insufficient accountability in the Bus Way indicate a lack of efficient collaborative processes in the project (cf. Innes & Booher, 2010). The fact that all participants somehow raised the issue of needing new forms of participation, without any of them presenting clear solutions as to how this could be organised, shows how there is no one successful paradigm or approach in ensuring participation (cf. Richardson & Razzaque, 2006), and how the complexity in different contexts create a demand for different and context-sensitive solutions.

The need for new forms of participation can further be considered through Cornwall's concept of space (cf. Cornwall, 2002b; Gaventa, 2006), where the identified need for new forms of par-

ticipation can be viewed as a need for new spaces for participation. Within this understanding, the formal participation processes are spaces constituted and facilitated by external agents (authorities), whereas the protesting communities are forming self-constituted and claimed spaces, where the participants choose their own involvement based on an identification with common interests. Claimed spaces can therefore be seen as a reaction to the limitations of existing spaces for participation. Further, the shortcomings of the current claimed spaces leads to requests for new spaces, where proper facilitation ensures a fair process, wide inclusion and a recognition of different perspectives.

COMMUNICATION. The importance of communication was raised as both an issue in the Bus Way process, and as an area of high priority in urban development processes in general. Arnstein's ladder of participation is again relevant, as the bottom steps of information and consultation does not ensure adequate communication throughout project processes. The third step in the ladder – dialogue – is not mandatory according to the Norwegian PBA, which, if we are to believe the DIAD model (figure 5), could lead to adaptations of the system where shared meanings and identities could potentially be the result. There are two prerequisites for authentic dialogue and system adaptations to take place in a planning process: a diversity of interests and interdependence of interests among participants. In the current context, both prerequisites are easily detected, and according to the DIAD model the communication issue in the Bus Way process is thus the lack of authentic dialogue. The participants in this study raised the issue of communication from various stances and perspectives in the process, suggesting that facilitating authentic dialogue could benefit a range of actors involved in the project process – authorities, planners and affected community alike.

EARLY INVOLVEMENT. Early involvement is seen as a process problem in that current practice does not facilitate processes that make participation comprehendible at an early stage. Thoresen's assertion: "the more pervasive the plan is, the more challenging it is to get participation and engagement because it becomes more abstract, or it becomes faraway in time" indicates a need for different spaces for participation when the plan concerns large-scale projects. Official processes thus need to tailor to various types of development plans, as current practice does not provide participation processes in which 'one size fits all'. Early involvement is here understood as an expression of shaping power through the conceptions of agency and capacity. Facilitating for early involvement and participation can therefore be seen as deliberate sharing

of power in developmental decision-making, wherein a wide range of perspectives are taken into account – not unlike the idea of a collaborative process, where meaning is negotiated and the connection between actors and development orientation is strengthened through co-production and collective action (cf. Innes & Booher, 2010). If official processes are to be tailored to different development plans, it entails a need for new participation spaces, where the spaces are purposively designed according to type of plan and process.

AWARENESS & UNDERSTANDING. The theme of awareness & understanding relates to how different actors hold different conceptual frameworks in development contexts. It is not difficult to comprehend how a government official views urban development plans differently from a person who finds himself living on the property of what has been decided will become big scale infrastructure, but it has proved problematic to align their conceptions and provide solutions that are understandable across the full range of actors. As the theme comprises so many different aspects of awareness and understanding, it is difficult to pin down specific mechanisms at play. Of the topics raised in the participant accounts, several of them involved a perceived lack of public understanding for the project's objectives - zero-growth in car traffic and a bettering of sustainable mobility. The degree (or lack thereof) of public awareness can again be seen as a communication issue, where the project's rationales have not been communicated through the right channels and in understandable terms. As the public struggles to make sense of formal systems and technical language, claimed spaces emerge as a comprehendible and easy form of participation, and as a result of the shortcomings in existing spaces for participation. When the people 'woke up too late', they created their own channel for posing opposition, where there was no deadline for submission and where reactions to the current and observable state of the project were welcome.

Early in the analysis, increased expectations to being heard and involved emerged as an initial theme. The increase in expectations to participation is indeed thought to play a part in how claimed spaces are emerging (cf. Richardson & Razzaque, 2006). The common conception of having a 'right to be heard' is thought to be lowering the bar for participation in creating a frame of reference where all voices are equally important, regardless of held knowledge about the reasons for and facts about the development project. This new frame of reference make visible the shift in power from expert knowledge to community knowledge (cf. Flyvbjerg, 2002; Welp, Kasemir & Jaeger, 2009).

DEMOCRATIC ROOTEDNESS. For successful urban development, democratic legitimacy seems to be an essential precondition. As decision-making is now largely based on powerful interpretations rather than on expert knowledge (cf. Flyvbjerg, 2002), some degree of political change should be expected throughout time-consuming development processes. The re-politicising of citizen participation is thus seen as a cause for political uncertainty. However, existing theory suggests that democratic anchoring can be strengthened through responsive and inclusive participation processes. Claimed spaces for participation typically emerge as a counter-reaction to political action, and by limiting the formations of such spaces, political wavering can be avoided. An absence of satisfactory spaces for participation can therefore be viewed as the explanation for poor democratic legitimacy in the Bus Way project. Hence, by offering and facilitating spaces where participation leads to increased accountability and acceptability in decision-making, unpopular choices may not foster as much resistance and politics may remain more stable.

POWERFUL MEDIA. How media has grown to become a powerful mediator in questions concerning urban development and planning is seen as a function of the notion of the new public sphere (cf. Castells, 2008). Various media platforms are potential sites for claimed participation – an activity which can lead to social change and larger transformations through an altering of common conceptions, voting patterns and decision-making in political processes. Participant accounts support the claim of media systems being influential partakers in developmental debates, and Castells' statement about 'global media and internet networks [being] the most effective form of broadening political participation' (see this paper, p. 19) is of significant relevance in the current case, where media's influence has indeed been given notable credit for how the Bus Way process has progressed. Media's power to create an illusion of broad engagement can be viewed as manifestations of hidden and invisible power (cf. Gaventa, 2006), making it clear how media networks must be considered carefully in order to comprehend the realities of citizen opinion and engagement. Illusions of engagement are holding hidden power through their potential to control agenda settings and support or undermine specific concerns. Media illusions bear invisible power in their potential to shape people's perception of the status quo and hence their acceptance or disapproval of development orientations, which in turn can lead to self-fulfilling prophecies; an arguably undesired outcome for urban development. Thoughts of how media platforms can be thought of differently and perhaps utilised in a beneficial and valuable way as part of participation practice, opens up for a compelling discussion.

6. Discussion

Rethinking spaces for participation

In the Bus Way process, legal requirements and advice concerning participation in project processes were followed and exceeded. Nonetheless, the process has resulted in notable discontent and conflict because of public experiences of top-down decision-making and forceful approaches. The rebellion in Nord-Jæren and Stavanger region is an expression of public dissatisfaction with the participative processes that are facilitated through formal planning systems, and makes a terrific example of new configurations of space in a time where globalisation, digitalisation and urbanisation are important shaping forces. The toll rebellion is a glocal protest, informed and influenced by protesting movements around the world such as the Yellow vests movement in France. The movement's substantial mobilisation would not have been possible without digital media and instant messages (as was noted by the protesting participant in this study), and the problematics and issues at hand would not have arisen had it not been for the ongoing urbanisation and population growth in the Stavanger region, making accommodating infrastructure such as the Bus Way necessary.

Although the rebellion is ultimately glocal in its expression, the present case is concerned with the dynamics at play at the local level. Further, the study is examining spaces for participation across the spectrum from invited to claimed spaces, and results show indications of both hidden and invisible power in emerging spaces for participation. To understand this interrelating complexity, a highlighting of where this discussion is taking place on Gaventa's power cube is deemed helpful. The blue highlights on figure 16 are therefore defining the spaces that are topics of discussion in the present chapter.
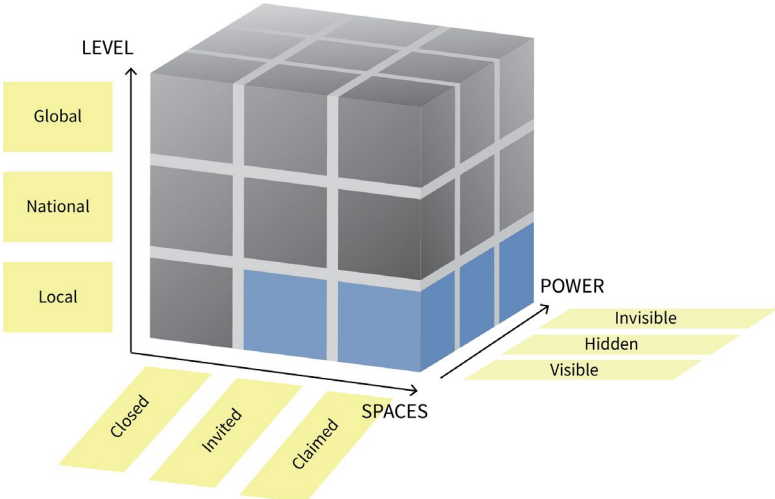
Figure 16
Locating the present discussion on the power cube. Reproduced from Gaventa (2006)

Participation through formal systems and processes is recognised as belonging to the cube for visible and invited spaces. This includes the information and consultation steps in Arnstein's ladder for participation, as is enured through the Norwegian PBA (cf. Ringholm, Nyseth and Hanssen, 2018). As the thematic analysis has shown, there are several challenges and problems tied to these forms of participation, and goals of inclusive, responsive, accountable and democratic participation are not adequately met through existing regulations for participation in relation to urban development projects. The access to acceptable and satisfactory spaces for participation is experienced as restricted and limited, and as a result new forms of engagement come to life – spaces that are created on the participants' own terms. The emergence of these organic and claimed spaces (cf. Cornwall, 2002; Gaventa, 2006) is an expression of a wish to be heard and respected in development events that are affecting oneself, and can be seen as a response to the lack of sufficiency in current participation practice. Richardson and Razzaque (2006) explains this participation through the four factors described on page 12 in this paper, where factor 2, 3 and 4 are of particular relevance in the current context. These include a heightened expectation of public participation, increased interest in participatory mechanisms as a means for good governance, and a distrust in governments and state level legitimacy issues; all of which are recognisable in the present research.

If viewing the studied situation in relation to Cornwall's two-dimensional framework for participation spaces, it can be argued that the formality and ineffectiveness of regularised relations and fleeting formations lead to the emergence of self-constituted movements and moments. It is striking how conflicting the organisation of these spaces for participation are, and how completely absent spaces for alternative interfaces are in the current context. This is an interesting discovery, as alternative interfaces arguably comprise some of the most valued attributes from both ends, and possibly bear a potential to unify the conflicting parties on opposite sides in development practice by creating and offering a form of participation that relates to the full range of actors in an appropriate manner. Access to alternative interfaces is established through an identification with common interests and a willingness to participate, which means that all concerned and affected citizens are invited to participate, given that they are interested. Figure 17 on the next page revisits this thesis' conceptualisation of Cornwall's two-dimensional framework and highlights the position of alternative interfaces. However, if alternative interfaces are to be used as effective channels for participation in developmental questions, a rethinking of how we understand and facilitate participation and democratic anchoring is imperative. I will get back to this issue shortly.

Figure 17

Revisiting and highlighting the position of alternative interfaces. Based on Cornwall (2002)

		CONSTITUTED BY	
		Others	*Self*
DURABILITY	*Time bound*	Regularised relations	Alternative interfaces
	Transient	Fleeting formations	Movements & moments

The results from the present study has left little doubt; there exists a need for new spaces for participation. Current practice is not sufficient in involving the public when it comes to big development decisions, which leads to frustration and antipoles when debating development orientations and political decisions. Digital platforms provide accessible channels, where people engage in topics they care about and mobilise larger groups through activity in the new public sphere (cf. Castells, 2008). This mobilisation in claimed spaces is typically expressed as a counter-reaction to prevailing development (Gaventa, 2006) and is a force to be reckoned with when accepting the transformative potential in media platforms (Castells, 2008). As was noted in this paper's introduction, innovative forms of citizen participation often do not represent democratic principles such as transparency and accountability (Nyseth, Ringholm & Agger, 2019), and as Snow and Cross (2011) argue, members' scepticism toward traditional methods make these spaces feasible sites for high-risk forms of activism and radicalism. The hidden and invisible power held by media systems can be thought to fuel activity in claimed spaces, which fosters a debate where conditions for authentic dialogue and rational collaboration are missing. Thus, whether holding the process perspective or the substantive position in an approach to participation (cf. Richardson & Razzaque, 2006), the current situation where formal spaces for participation are regarded in contrast to organic spaces for participation, is neither beneficial or preferable.

Predominant participation practice is further challenged and countered through the re-politicising of democratic practice, where instead of being based on political values, sustainable development projects are largely decided based on who holds and conveys the most powerful knowledge interpretation (Flyvbjerg, 2002). This shift in power, from established and deep-rooted values to rhetorical skills and individually construed truths, is a major challenge when planning

for participatory processes and democratic decision-making because it creates a setting where all truths are equal and expert knowledge must bow to influential interpretations by charismatic and persuasive actors. If accepting New Climate Economy's definition of the present time as our 'use it or lose it moment', we cannot afford a political environment where powerful interests overrun the knowledge of experts, and where the criticality of sustainability transitions is blinded by oblivion and personal interests. The problem of awareness & understanding is here a huge issue in contemporary planning and development, and future participatory practices must find a way to integrate inclusive and democratic processes with objective truths and necessities for a sustainable and liveable future.

Our frameworks for understanding participation processes has proved persisting, and the increased focus on inclusion and involvement has yet to radically change established participation practice. Re-politicising citizens and the growing expectation to participation shows how times change, and somehow underlines how contemporary participation practice is outdated and unfit for the current context. Planning theory and research findings suggest collaborative participation processes where complexity is acknowledged and rationality prevails through authentic dialogue (Cruickshank, 2014; Giezen, Salet & Bertolini, 2015; Healy, 2010; Innes & Booher, 2010). Further, a certain flexibility in process structure is desired, so that adaptations to different contexts are possible. Existing regulations do not accommodate these recommendations, indicating a need for new ways of understanding processes for participation in planning and development. In sum: not only are new ways of facilitating participation required; our whole outlook on the issue is in dire need of an extreme makeover.

According to this study, new models for participation must facilitate early involvement and should allow multiple perspectives and solutions to posed inquiries. If returning to how alternative interfaces are absent in the current case and context, there may be some undiscovered possibilities in these spaces that can be utilised to meet the troublesome list of demands in participation practice. Alternative interfaces present an organic space for participation, but form a predictable system for other actors to relate to through their organised and time bound structure. The idea of participation can here be reversed from being about citizens acting on the terms of authorities and planners in unfamiliar spaces, to being about authorities and planners consecutively informing and consulting the citizens in their own forums. The new public sphere should be exploited in innovative ways, where expert knowledge should be presented in

a comprehendible manner to ensure an informed foundation on to which citizens can make up relevant arguments and suggestions. By refocusing participation to revolve around the citizens, it is believed that all parties would benefit; where the citizens' need for information and inclusion is met, a decrease in disrupting opposition and an increase in democratic legitimacy and accountability can be expected.

By relating to the citizens through alternative interfaces in user-friendly media platforms, the problematics concerning several of the raised issues in the thematic analysis will be significantly reduced. First, communication will be easier in terms of getting information out to the right people. By taking advantage of media's accessibility and considerable outreach, the problem of reaching people is close to eliminated. Citizen constituted interfaces for information sharing and discussions in relation to development questions may be highly interactive, and features for sorting information from planners and authorities can make navigation in a jungle of considerations easier for the people participating, including separations between knowledge and interpretations by experts from those of commercial or private actors. Engaging to early involvement will be less challenging when relating to citizens in an interactive manner, where for example city models can make abstract ideas more imaginable. Compared to today's practice of announcing planning processes in outdated platforms, alternative interfaces have the advantage of instant communication in enduring spaces, which again makes early ideas more accessible and easier to relate to. The problem of awareness and understanding when it comes to rationales for development orientation, participation processes and messages from authorities, will be reduced where citizens have easy access to information and the opportunity to gradually learn about the project as it unfolds. When relating to citizens in self-constituted spaces for participation, authorities and planners are forced to communicate in clear language and on citizens' terms – avoiding unnecessarily technical language and formal phrasing. When reversing the idea of participation so that citizens are approached by authorities and planners in familiar and self-constituted spaces, a rethinking of how democratic anchoring is understood and practiced will prove necessary. Instead of viewing democratic anchoring as a synonym of political majority, this paper suggests that questions and solutions concerning development directions could benefit from a reorientation toward the citizens. Only then do affected actors and individuals have the opportunity to influence the premise on which rational decision-making processes are based. Where participation practice facilitates inclusive and responsive processes in accessible spaces, democratic anchoring is secured through increased legitimacy of decision-making, and development outcomes will be perceived as more acceptable by the citizens.

The power residing in media is a double-edged sword in terms of outreach and influence. Although media systems and the new public sphere brings with them many advantages when it comes to information sharing and involvement of a wide range of citizens, they also carry perilous power structures that are not yet well understood or governed. Gaventa's conceptualisation of power has in this study proved useful when attempting to grasp the drawbacks of the new and digital public sphere, by offering a framework for how to understand the different levels and forms of power. An interesting finding in this study was how media's ability to create illusions of broad opinion and engagement was put forth as a noteworthy aspect in a discussion of claimed spaces. The present paper sees this observation in relation to the concepts of hidden and invisible power, and highlights the importance of recognising such traits in media systems when democratic sustainable planning and development is on the agenda. Future planning research should focus on how to discover and minimise the effect of misleading portrayals and incorrect representations in media when it comes to developmental consequences.

Different frameworks for understanding spaces for participation has led to a process filled with resistance and conflict. Participation processes in the Bus Way have not succeeded in satisfying the citizens, whom in the lack of sufficient spaces for participation have resorted to self-constituted claimed spaces. Although this paper recognises that all large-scale infrastructure projects can expect to be met with a certain degree of contention from citizens, it is here believed that the Bus Way would have faced a much tidier and predictable process had it involved the citizens differently in the project. Law regulated planning practice does not offer participatory processes that are potent in their mission to legitimise developmental action and decision-making, which is why a rethinking of spaces for participation in formal planning systems is well overdue.

7. Conclusions

If we are to successfully overcome the inevitable upcoming sustainability challenges that stands before the urban human race, it is essential that planning practice acts to incorporate new processes for inclusion and decision-making in urban development. In order to achieve elongated sustainability transformations, planning practice must facilitate participation processes where the accountability and acceptability of development decisions and orientations are enhanced through rational collaboration and democratic legitimacy. Conflicts such as the one in Nord-Jæren are viewed as expressions of public dissatisfaction with regulated participation processes, and show how formal planning systems are insufficient in providing the citizens with adequate participatory spaces. The emerging resistance is considered within Cornwall's spatial conceptualisation of participation practice, where it represents a self-constituted and claimed space in urban development processes. The results in the present study have shown that existing spaces for participation are inadequate in ensuring democratic legitimacy and inclusive processes due to considerable challenges in communicating planning rationales, prospective consequences and building plans. Further, current participation practice fails to involve the citizens at an early enough stage in development projects, resulting in later reactions of people experiencing decisions as being forced upon them by elites without concern for the citizens. When democratic legitimacy was lacking in the present case, the project progress resulted in vacillating political decisions and opposing forces in the public through growing claimed spaces. These spaces are recognised as re-politicising sites, where knowledge is formed through powerful interpretations. This re-politicising trend was disregarded and unplanned for in the current case, where authorities and planners later had to face the disapproval of aggravated citizens. In this meeting, authorities and planners were presented with different conceptual frameworks from their own, where contravening experiences and understandings of the current project were apparent. The present study suggests a rethinking of how we understand and facilitate spaces for participation, where the re-politicising of democratic development is taken into consideration and expert knowledge is properly integrated into decisions about sustainable development. In order to accomplish this, the new public sphere should be exploited in innovative ways so that democratic decisions based on rational collaboration are attainable. Collaboration in the new public sphere can be achieved through a reversing of how we see the roles in participatory processes

by utilising alternative interfaces in planning and development. Here, citizens are allowed to participate in familiar and accessible spaces and are presented with information, questions and suggestions in an understandable and user-friendly manner, making rational and acceptable decisions more feasible.

As the present study is concerned with issues and dynamics that are recognisable in a range of urban contexts, it is believed that the current results and suggestions are transferable to other sustainable urban development processes where the planning of citizen participation is contested. Future research should focus on how democratic legitimacy can be understood differently to enhance participation practice and collective commitments to sustainable development orientations. Further, as the present research has proposed, the inherent possibilities of alternative interfaces should be explored and analysed. It is strongly believed that these spaces contain unfulfilled potential for inclusive and collaborative processes, to which accountable citizens and sustainable outcomes are not so far from reach.

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