

# CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR THE HAGUE

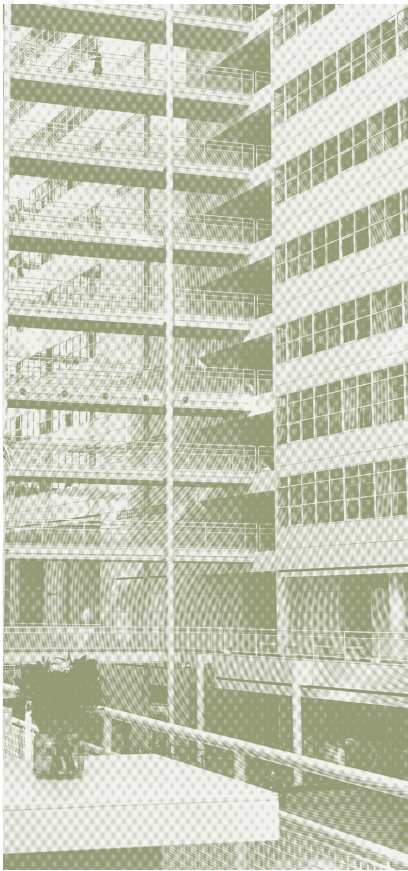
A MANIFESTO

FULL REPORT



JULY 2025





## FOREWORD

We are proud to present this Manifesto that is created by a group of eight students from Leiden, Delft and Erasmus universities. They worked together in a thesis lab about Climate Justice in The Hague. With different disciplinary backgrounds, they developed their own individual thesis on this topic that served as an input for this jointly crafted Manifesto.

The Municipality of The Hague and the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Centre for Sustainability collaborated in this thesis lab from February until July 2025. Together, we organised eleven interactive lecture and workshop sessions, thereby merging and bringing in diverse perspectives. We, Shivant Jhagroe (University of Leiden), Saskia Ruijsink (Delft University of Technology) coordinated this process. Anne Koster (Municipality of The Hague) established connections with her colleagues and assured that the students research was directly linked to actual climate justice challenges in the City of The Hague.

We believe that this manifesto is an important milestone for the City of The Hague, showing how and why the climate crisis is not just an ecological, technological or economic crisis, it is also very much a social crisis. We hope you enjoy reading this manifesto and it serves as inspiration for a more sustainable and just future.

Saskia Ruijsink and Shivant Jhagroe

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Hague's obligation to become a liveable and future-proof city, being the reason for this city signing The Climate Pact, with an ambition to become a climate-neutral city by 2030. To make it happen, The Hague focuses on four main pillars that ensure equity in its implementation: energy transition, circularity, mobility & transport, and sustainable built environment.

The Hague's status as an international city of peace and justice adds to the complexity of the city's strategy to pursue its ambitions while ensuring justice for all its inhabitants.

The research projects outlined in this document will examine climate transition practices in The Hague. Has the justice been incorporated? What should the government of The Hague do to improve its efforts?

## Defining Climate Justice

We are discussing climate justice, a concept that not everyone is familiar with. While there is no specific definition of climate justice used by The Hague in terms of climate transition implementation, we refer to the definition from the Center for Climate Justice, University of California

*Climate Justice recognises the disproportionate impacts of climate change on low-income communities and communities of colour around the world, the people and places least responsible for the problem.*

From the definition, it is evident that climate justice builds upon the ideas of social justice. Thus, projects on this manifesto focus on three aspects of social justice: distributional, procedural, and recognition.



**Distributional justice** demands a fair distribution of (dis)advantages among all members of society

**Procedural Justice** demands fair processes that involve all stakeholders

**Recognition Justice** demands proper representation, protection from physical harm and full political rights for individuals as citizens of the Hague and beyond

## Just Transition

A just transition means building a society and economy without sacrificing workers' rights, community health, or local livelihoods. Those most impacted by pollution—like frontline workers and nearby residents—should lead the way in shaping fair solutions, and any losses must be properly compensated.

# DATA COLLECTION METHODS



Across **8** research projects, climate justice was explored in relation to heat, health, housing, mobility, participation, language, equity, and international responsibility. From local neighborhoods like the Schilderswijk to global supply chains powering the energy transition, students studied how justice is understood, governed, and practiced in The Hague.

The research group collectively engaged various qualitative and spatial data sources to explore the diverse dimensions of climate justice in The Hague:



**The Local faces of the Global Energy Transition** by Wisse Herder

**Governing Justice: Analysing Urban Heat Adaptation and Climate Equity in The Hague** by Tomas Ter Reehorst



**Distributive Justice of Subsidies on Residential Green Stormwater Infrastructure: A Case Study of The Hague** by Diona Shen



**A Just Heat Transition in the Hague** by Achraf Taouil

## Desk Research

Reviewed over **40 policy documents + 8 key reports**, including municipal strategies, subsidy regulations, and national frameworks, allowing for in-depth institutional analysis.

## Indepth-interview

**93 semi-structured interviews** were conducted with policy officials, local residents, experts, and grassroots organizers, offering rich, grounded insights into the governance and lived experiences of climate adaptation, mobility, and energy transitions.

## Survey

With **198 responses** collected, particularly in language access and public engagement studies, surveys highlight the barriers to participation and recognition.

## Visualization

Spatial analysis played a key role in several projects, with more than **15 GIS maps** created to visualize patterns of urban heat, segregation, infrastructure, and vulnerability.



**Social Capital within Segregated Neighborhoods: A Climate Transition in Schilderswijk** by Rizkika Zulhijjani

**Barriers for Undocumented Communities in Accessing Public Healthcare Services: Multiple Stakeholder Perspectives Approach** by Yazhini Sivaram

**Moving with Degrowth: A Just Sustainable Mobility Paradigm for the Hague** by Phone Myant Khant

**The Role of the Foreign Language Effect in Inclusive Climate Communication** by Charlotte Purzel



# WHAT HAS BEEN STUDIED?

## Distribution

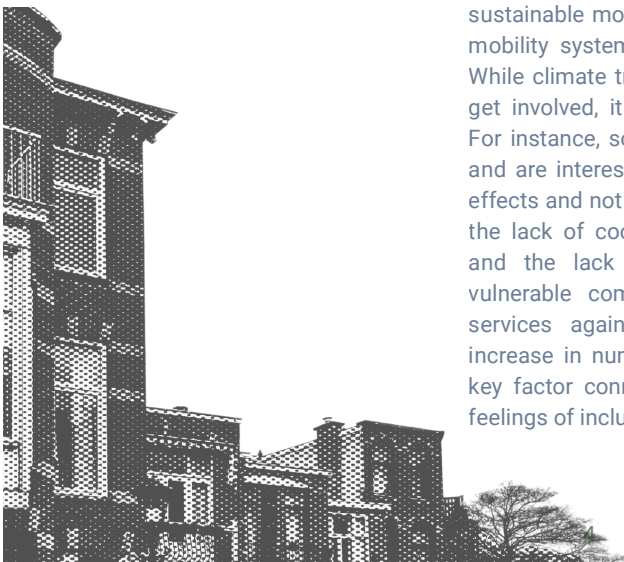
The Hague municipality puts a lot of focus on inclusion of citizens in the decision-making process. However, it fails to acknowledge communities that bear the burden of the energy transitions, as well as failing to understand the local needs for residential green stormwater infrastructure. Overall, there is an extreme lack of transparency in solar panel supply chains, difficulty of putting policy into practice, and strong incentives with complicated process of calculation and application, benefiting the rich.

## Procedural

The governance structure for heat adaptation is structurally fragmented in The Hague, leading to uneven implementation of adaptation measures. Limited interdepartmental coordination, inconsistent practice of participation, and generic or inaccessible tools of participation undermine heat transition in The Hague. While the residents are willing to engage in heat transition, the decision-making process rarely incorporates disaggregated data or lived experiences.

## Recognition

Recognitional justice is on the surface level, where policies are inclusive but the transition to practice is uncertain. The sustainable mobility agenda lacks a deeper questioning of a mobility system just and fair for environment and people. While climate transition in The Hague encourages people to get involved, it doesn't acknowledge the social conditions. For instance, some citizens are skeptical of climate change and are interested in sustainability ideas when it has direct effects and not just long-term benefits. In case of healthcare, the lack of coordination between fragmented stakeholders and the lack of awareness has posed challenges for vulnerable communities to access preventive healthcare services against infectious diseases which are set to increase in number and intensity with climate change. The key factor connecting all these is language, which shapes feelings of inclusion and willingness to act.



# WHAT NEXT?

## EMBEDDING CLIMATE JUSTICE THROUGH A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

### **(Re)Distribution**

Fair climate policy begins with fair access to resources. At present, support such as subsidies for solar panels or insulation often only reach residents who own property, are digitally skilled, or already engaged. This excludes many low-income households, informal renters, and residents without the right documents, precisely those most vulnerable to rising energy costs and poor housing conditions. A just transition must therefore ensure equitable access to financial support, through low-barrier applications, outreach in multiple languages, and options for people in shared or informal housing situations.

### **Procedural**

Participation in climate policy must go beyond tokenism. Too often, residents are only involved late in the process, or not at all. This creates a gap between policy and daily reality, especially in communities that already experience distrust or limited access to institutions. To address this, municipalities should promote co-creation processes, where residents are involved early and structurally. This includes hosting in-person forums in community spaces, ensuring language access, and actively involving groups that are usually left out, such as undocumented people or those without digital access.

### **Recognition**

Many residents do not feel seen or addressed by current climate efforts. Language, cultural framing, and imagery in sustainability campaigns often reflect dominant norms and paradigms. This reduces trust and engagement, especially among migrant communities or groups that already feel marginalized. Recognition means acknowledging the diverse identities and experiences of residents. Communicating in native languages, using inclusive visuals, and respecting different values and worldviews helps foster a sense of belonging, something that is essential for long-term behavioral change and community resilience.



# CLIMATE JUSTICE IS ALL ABOUT INCLUSION, ACROSS AND BEYOND ALL DIMENSIONS OF JUSTICE

Climate Justice represents ecological justice, and multifaceted elements of social justice - from feminist, decolonial, and post-growth perspectives. Critical justice questions reveal the need for recognition of social inequalities, the need to adapt our status quo, and structure resilient systems that include and distribute equitably and affirm transparency.

Drawing from these research projects, we articulate eight core statements that constitute our **Climate Justice Manifesto**

Prioritise inclusion by building capacity to recognise and act

Inclusion benefits from reduced segregation - neighbourhoods with low SES do not prioritise the climate transition

Recognise the global supply chains the Hague is dependent on and increase transparency

Broaden concept of inclusivity across social dimensions and prioritising language diversity

Communicate between different social groups, including undocumented communities

A bottom-up adaptation policy needs to recognise and include vulnerability, particularly the elderly and underprivileged

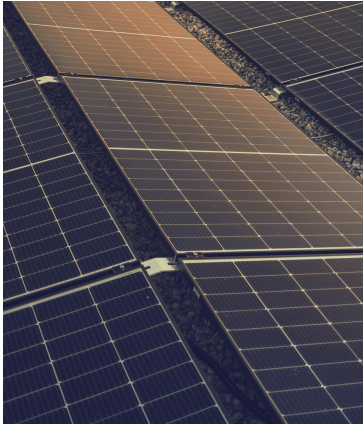
Empower diversity of residents through policies that do not exclude renters, low-income households and informal collectives

Use mobility in the city to inspire a society that prioritises values of care, sharing, and a good life. Question whether economic growth is truly just for everyone?



# THE LOCAL FACES OF THE GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSITION

by Wisse Herder (wisseherder@hotmail.nl)



All over the world, cities are taking the lead in the global energy transition. In The Hague, this shift is presented as both necessary and progressive, with efforts focused on renewable energy, including solar panels. Yet beneath these ambitions lies a complex reality: global supply chains often involve serious human rights violations. Many of The Hague's solar panels are linked to Uyghur forced labour in China. This thesis explores how local climate action can unintentionally rely on unjust systems and asks what role municipalities like The Hague play, and should play, in ensuring global energy justice throughout the solar panel supply chain.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Supply Chain Transparency

Extreme lack of transparency in solar panel supply chains



#### Human Rights Violations

Solar panel import is strongly connected to human rights violations



#### Inclusion of Justice

Present in public procurement, absent in private procurement



#### Policy into Practice

Difficulty of putting policy on justice into practice



### Recommendations

#### Commission specific Companies

Such as Solar2solar & Solarwatt, who focus on recyclability and human rights



#### Improve inclusion

Such as representatives of the Dutch Uyghur Human Rights Foundation



#### International Social Conditions

Involve the ISC in more commissions with external companies



#### Subsidies and Financial Aid

Use subsidies and financial aid to influence private procurement

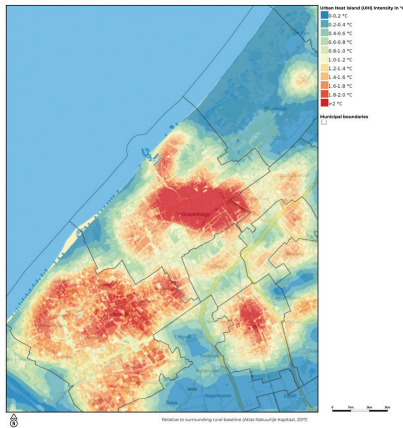


All in all, a multitude of strategies and improvements is required to increase the Hague's capabilities of making solar panel supply chains more just. It is important that these recommendations are employed in unison.



# GOVERNING JUSTICE: ANALYSING URBAN HEAT ADAPTATION AND CLIMATE EQUITY IN THE HAGUE

by Tomas Ter Reehorst



Urban Heat Island (UHI) has an increasingly impact on vulnerable populations in European cities. Climate adaptation governance, spanning multiple layers of institutions and actors, is essential to address these inequalities, yet often fails to include marginalized communities meaningfully. Fragmented responsibilities, insufficient spatial targeting, and weak participatory mechanisms hinder equitable outcomes.

The Hague's climate adaptation agenda aspires to inclusivity, but recognitional, procedural, and distributional injustices persist in practice. Existing frameworks emphasize technical interventions while ignoring power imbalances, local knowledge, and the lived experiences of heat-vulnerable residents.

This study investigates how governance processes shape justice outcomes in UHI adaptation, offering insights and recommendations for a more inclusive, participatory, and effective adaptation strategy that foregrounds climate justice.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Fragmented governance

Misaligned mandates across local, regional, and national actors



#### Unequal spatial distribution

Cooling infrastructure concentrated in affluent areas



#### Limited participation

Tokenistic involvement of residents, lack of co-decision power



#### Lack of recognitional justice

Vulnerable groups not acknowledged in framing or design



### Recommendations

#### Integrated governance platform

Clear role division and cross-sector collaboration



#### Equity mapping tools

Spatial analysis to guide targeted infrastructure and investment



#### Community engagement frameworks

Co-design and capacity-building with heat-vulnerable groups



#### Justice-informed indicators

Embed recognitional, procedural, and distributional justice in evaluation tools



Climate adaptation can only be just if it includes those most affected. Governance must shift from technical fixes to inclusive planning that values lived experiences. In The Hague, a justice-based adaptation approach means not only identifying vulnerable groups but actively involving them in shaping solutions. Effective governance for urban heat must integrate climate data with local knowledge, strengthen collaboration across agencies, and embed justice in all phases, from diagnosis to design to delivery.

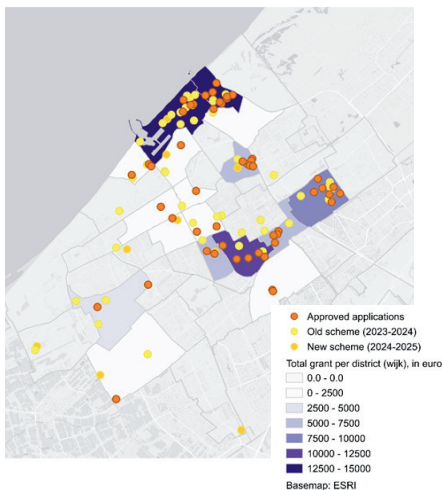




# DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE OF SUBSIDIES ON RESIDENTIAL GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

## A CASE STUDY OF THE HAGUE

by Diona Shen (19981010sdy@gmail.com)



This thesis investigates the distributive justice of The Hague's Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) subsidy program by examining how structural conditions and resident agency interact to shape uptake. Using spatial analysis, policy review, and semi-structured interviews, the study finds that while the scheme formally targets vulnerable areas, institutional, social and environmental structure jointly constrained fair and inclusive participation. At the same time, residents' actions around GSI demonstrate agency in response to and in interaction with structural conditions: they engage creatively through informal networks, reinterpret environmental objectives in locally meaningful ways, and strategically combine different support sources beyond the formal policy scheme. Supported by empirical data, this study highlights key structure and agency elements, which co-produce dynamic interactions behind distributive outcomes. Making climate adaptation more just and effective requires flexible procedures, inclusive language, and better recognition of diverse participation pathways.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Distribution

Subsidy uptake is uneven, with lower participation in disadvantaged neighborhoods.



#### Structure

Institutional, socio-economic and environmental structures enables / constrains subsidies' uptake.



#### Agency

Residents are not passive; they reinterpret, workaround, or disengage from the structure.



#### Interactions

Distributional outcomes reflect dynamic interplay between rigid structures and everyday agency.



### Recommendations



#### More than money

Expand access through flexible support mechanisms



#### The power of intermediary

Shift from direct subsidies to Intermediated delivery through organizations



#### Recognize indigenous knowledge

Recognize informal pathways and peer learning



#### Speak the right language

Bridge the Gap Between Policy Language and Everyday Practice



# A JUST HEAT TRANSITION IN THE HAGUE

by Achraf Taouil



This research explores citizen participation and interactive governance in the context of the heat transition in The Hague, with a particular focus on how principles of climate justice are reflected in one neighborhood: the Schilderswijk. As a significant portion of Dutch households still depend on natural gas for heating, the transition to sustainable alternatives, commonly referred to as the heat transition, presents a complex and far-reaching challenge. The heat transition is a multifaceted process affecting both new housing developments and existing buildings. It requires close collaboration between local governments, energy providers, and critically citizens.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Importance citizen participation

Citizen participation is critical to the success of the heat transition.



#### Climate justice essential

Climate justice for citizens means being included, heard, and listened to. It emphasizes local impacts, lived experiences, unequal vulnerabilities, and respect for community sovereignty



#### Social acceptance policies

Engaging citizens leads to greater acceptance of renewable energy projects.



### Recommendations



**Invest in tailored approach**



**Use the right language**



**Involve key community figures**



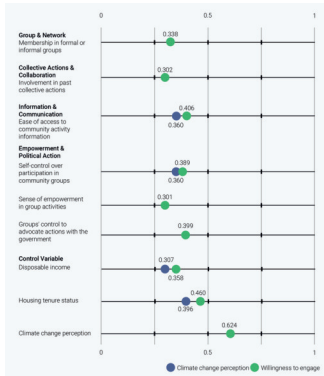
**Communicate policies in a clear and understandable way for citizens**

Investing in a tailored approach is essential for reaching the residents in the Schilderswijk neighborhood. This includes adjusting how the municipality operates and communicates in participation processes to reach a larger portion of the residents. Using the right language is important for a successful participation process; this means taking into account local factors, cultural sensitivities, and circumstances. Involving key figures from the neighborhood can help reach residents and gain trust and support for climate policies. Communicating clearly about the goals and results of policies also helps with gathering support.



# SOCIAL CAPITAL WITHIN SEGREGATED NEIGHBORHOODS: A CLIMATE TRANSITION IN SCHILDERSWIJK

by Rizkika Zuhijjiani (rizkika.zuhijjiani@gmail.com)



As climate change becomes more critical, many efforts and studies have been introduced in terms of addressing climate change. However, most of them only focus on the technical potential of climate transition, not the feasibility of the socio-economic condition of communities. As a city that is committed to becoming climate-neutral by 2030, The Hague is known as one of the most segregated cities in the Netherlands. According to data from 2021, Schilderswijk is a neighborhood with the lowest SES score, and 63% of the residents are low-income. Understanding the specific context of social capital is crucial, particularly in segregated neighborhoods like Schilderswijk, where residents share similar socio-economic conditions.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Social Capital

Substantial dimensions of social capital when it comes to climate change perception and willingness to engage are group & network, collective action & collaboration, and information & communication.



#### Climate Change Perception

Most people are already sceptical of climate change, yet it is an intangible concept.

People are more open to the idea of sustainability and how it has direct benefits, not merely for long-term benefits



#### Engage in Collective Climate Action

People who are part of a community and are more aware of climate change tend to be more willing to engage in collective action.

For the rest, collective action can be triggered by providing something free and gathering people socially.



### Recommendations

#### Recognition beyond Inclusion

Policies that are in tune with those who are under the radar. Understanding their values, ideology, and language that they speak are major drivers to be considered by policy makers, armed with being present



#### Discern Their Needs

Climate transition policy should be something they enjoy, not something that adds to their burden. Besides the mandatory and voluntary approaches, climate transition could also consider an incentivized approach



#### Empower Social Capital

The phenomenon of segregation can be utilized through social capital, as a means of communication related to climate change and collective action, which can be undertaken in conjunction with the recognition of their identities.



For those who are content and stable, climate change is a meaningful word that everyone needs to be aware of. For some, it is no more than platitude policyspeak that gives more burden besides their inescapable fate to survive. Climate justice should incorporate inclusivity in all dimensions of justice, notably recognition of each community, which is then followed by real action



# BARRIERS FOR UNDOCUMENTED COMMUNITIES IN ACCESSING PUBLIC HEALTHCARE SERVICES: MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES APPROACH

by Yazhini Sivaram (yazhinsivaram25@gmail.com)

*"However, what we notice as an organization is that many health providers are unaware about this [Financial schemes]. So you still see that access to healthcare can be limited."*

*"I always find that a bit funny from social justice perspective. It has nothing to do with their own health interest. That's the health interests for other people."*

Climate change and infectious diseases have the potential to reinforce each other. Infectious diseases are expected to increase and changes in vector behaviors implies the scale of impact on health from climate is potentially large, which highly likely increases healthcare demand, compromising capacity of current healthcare systems. COVID set a clear example of how underprepared the global healthcare systems were due to stark differences in access to healthcare, vulnerability, and health inequalities.

The Dutch health policies aim for inclusivity, however, vulnerable populations such as undocumented communities have reported facing healthcare access barriers. These barriers exist at multiple levels, influenced by multiple perspectives with varying interests, making it a wicked problem.

This study aims to define this complexity and provide recommendations to build an inclusive healthcare system at the local level to improve efficiency in pandemic preparedness and effectively address climate justice.

## " FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings	Recommendations
<b>Miscommunication</b> Different parties with differing views	 <b>Network</b> Platform to share and seek support
<b>Fragmented capacity</b> Lack of coordination	 <b>Incentives</b> Subsidies and programs to address understaffing
<b>Misconception</b> Lack of awareness	 <b>Targeted workshops</b> Community led events to raise awareness
<b>Inaccessible preventive care</b> Vaccines inaccessible unless a public health risk	 <b>Subsidy for prevention</b> Accessible vaccines and screening procedures

Prevention is better than cure. With climate change strongly influencing spread of infectious diseases, a fragmented healthcare system is underprepared to deal with the rising demands for healthcare needs. Inclusive financial policies alone is not enough, action is needed to address communication and awareness issues beyond language barriers. While language is a strong barrier identified by multiple parties, the key issue remains to be lack of communication and trust. NGOs often know best about local needs and best implementation, but they often lack support. Communities lack awareness, while the healthcare providers have misconceptions. Effective network and community participation in decision-making is necessary to tackle this issue.



# MOVING WITH DEGROWTH: A JUST SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY PARADIGM FOR THE HAGUE

by Phone Myant Khant (phonemyantkhant@gmail.com)



The Hague has an admirable sustainable mobility agenda that aims towards an emissions-lite transport system for its citizens. However, degrowth offers a deeper perspective that goes into protecting and nourishing societies and the environment. More than emissions reduction, a degrowth mobility paradigm offers potential for convivial transport that is easy and accessible to use for all, transport that encourages social connection and values of sharing, and a model for governance to stand in solidarity with citizen's transport needs.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Technical & Lack of Behavioural Focus

The Municipality acknowledges the lack of behavioural policies that can encourage shifts in mobility patterns, thus limiting potential for prefiguration.



#### Uncritical of Growth Imperative

The issue of scarcity details the need to reduce transport demands for space and emissions, criticising a growth imperative.



#### Ground-Up Sharing, Commoning

Neighbourhood groups exist which give hope that a spirit of commoning based on social values can sprout from bottom-up



### Recommendations

#### Convivial Transport as Foundation

Adding a justice element to transport, sustainable considerations should be improved to convivial - where tools are easy to use, repair, and build a sense of community through movement



#### Focus on Values and Qualities

Degrowth ideals may seem lofty, but are built on important values of sharing, community and care - values that should be moulded and emulated in society



#### Building Municipal Solidarity

Degrowth encourages building of solidarity between municipality and citizens, where transport needs and desires are discussed.



The recommendations of degrowth help orient mobility in the Hague towards a paradigm where environmental protection, social benefits and values, and greater recognition justice are given equal importance. Degrowth can actually be broken down into simple recommendations, importantly building on actions that the Hague residents are currently practising. The municipality themselves recognise this, and provides hope that a just mobility paradigm is possible with the right focus, financial investment, and a belief in a possible future.





# THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE EFFECT IN INCLUSIVE CLIMATE COMMUNICATION

by Charlotte Purzel (charlotte7-7@hotmail.com)



In this thesis, I investigate how the use of Arabic (native language) versus Dutch (non-native language) influences the perceived inclusivity and willingness of Arabic-speaking residents in The Hague to engage in energy-efficient home improvements. The study builds on the Foreign Language Effect and Social Identity Theory to explore how language shapes emotional connection, perceived relevance, and behavioral intentions in sustainability communication. Using a between-subjects experimental design and survey data collected in neighborhood centers, the thesis offers practical recommendations for municipalities working on inclusive energy transition policies.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

#### Language Impact

Arabic ads lead to significantly higher perceived inclusivity



#### Social connection matters

Feeling represented increases emotional and cognitive engagement



#### Engagement drives action

Engagement mediates the relationship between language and willingness



#### Dutch Reduces Emotional Impact

The dutch version felt more distant and less personally relevant



### Recommendations

#### Use native language in outreach



Communicate in Arabic for stronger inclusion and trust



#### Emphasize identity & Belonging

Frame messages around cultural recognition and local relevance



#### Design emotionally engaging content

Use visuals and narratives that activate emotional and cognitive responses



#### Measure inclusivity in policy communication

Integrate inclusive language metrics in evaluating outreach campaigns

To reach climate goals fairly and effectively, municipalities must make language a core element of inclusive policy design. This thesis demonstrates that even a single word in the right language can make sustainability feel more personal, more relevant, and more actionable.



This Manifesto is the culmination of a passionate collaboration between eight students, supported by the LDE Center for Sustainability and the Municipality of The Hague. Images featured in this document are sourced from a variety of platforms, including personal documentations, copyright-free websites, and AI-generated image.

**As the final output of our joint research, we offer this Manifesto with conviction and hope. May it serve meaningfully as a call to action, guiding policymakers to advancing climate justice in The Hague and beyond.**

Published in the Netherlands, July 2025

FIN.

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