

Track 2 - The smart energy system transition in cities and regions

**Title of the proposed paper**

Sustainable innovations, conflicting interests and citizen participation

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**Text abstract (max. 300 words)**

Projects contributory to the Dutch energy transition are both initiated by the (local) government as well as by citizens. Recent literature assumes both parties play an important role in the energy transition. From a governmental perspective, it is their task to fulfil public interests, such as achieving environmental and climate change reverse goals. From a citizens' perspective, they can reduce their end-use and implement sustainable solutions. In the implementation these solutions these differing interests may pose a problem. For instance, with the realisation of a district-heating network, a municipality needs as many connections as possible, but an apartment building wants to facilitate its own heating facility making the district-heating network less profitable. However, both parties are mutual independent. The citizens need the essential permits for their plans yet the municipality needs the citizens to connect to their network. In order to avoid or mitigate problems alike, a process of citizen participation in the governmental policy and decision-making procedures can be applied. Another advantage of citizen participation is a co-production in the formulation of plans and projects, which are therefore more likely to be accepted by all parties. The question remains however how a process of citizen participation is best applied in a setting as described above.

In answering this question the paper will be divided in several sections. Firstly, the role of both citizens and (local) governmental bodies in the energy transition will be discussed, which roles will be explained in more detail by way of examples. With this, relevant theories concerning both roles will be examined. Secondly, through several examples issues arisen in practice relating to the different interests described above will be further analysed. Thirdly, relevant theories regarding co-production and citizen participation shall be analysed and applied to the problems formulated in section 2. From this, conclusions will be drawn.