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ENVIRONMENTAL CO-CREATION: BARRIERS TO CO-
DESIGNING PUBLIC VALUE IN ESTONIA

MA thesis

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Authorship Declaration

I have prepared this thesis independently. All the views of other authors, as well as data from literary sources and elsewhere, have been cited.

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Abstract

This research looks into the co-production/creation landscape of Estonia and, more specifically, into public value creation. The focus of this study is on the barriers that societal actors encounter while engaging in the co-production process. The public value perceptions of societal actors engaged in co-production are considered. Drawing from literature about co-production and public value, semi-structured interviews were conducted using four environmentally focused case studies. These case studies investigated between March and April of 2024 are the World Cleanup Day (2018 - present date), Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly for a Green Capital (2023), East-Viru County Green Plan (2020 - 2021) and Foodsharing Tartu (2019 - present date). The interviews were complemented by document analysis. The research identifies seven barriers to co-creation of public value in Estonia. These are the need for a common goal, recourses, observable outcomes, bureaucracy issues and need for change, the lack of community, language barriers and disregarding digital tools. In the final section of this thesis, a new operational framework for Estonian co-creation proposes mitigation strategies for these perceived barriers.

Keywords: Co-Production, Co-Creation, Public Value, Estonia, Barriers, Environmental Governance

“If we all work together, share our resources and ideas, build on our mutual strengths, inspire and encourage each other and build resilience, we have a good chance of succeeding and jointly creating a sustainable future in which humans, communities, and regions can blossom within the limits set by the natural environment” (Ansell et al., 2022, p. 1).

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List of Abbreviations

EU – European Union

G2C - Government to Citizen

ICT – Information and communication technology

M2I - Municipality to Inhabitant

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

P2P - Peer-to-Peer

QUAGOL - Qualitative Analysis Guide for Leuven

Introduction

This thesis researches the barriers to co-designing public value in Estonia. The focus lies on societal actors and their engagement with environmental topics. The main research question this study will answer is: What are the challenges to co-creation that societal actors experience concerning public value creation in Estonia? Having identified the most common barriers in the literature, these are utilised in further sub-research questions to dive even deeper into the topic. The barriers identified from the literature are role perception, responsibility, perceived usefulness, equality, inequalities, competence, transaction costs and digital barriers. The last sub-research question: How can these barriers be mitigated through co-creation management? is answered by the creation of a new operational framework for Estonian co-production.

The data-gathering process was done via qualitative semi-structured interviews. The interviews are accompanied by a document analysis. All actors considered are a part of an environmental co-production initiative. The actors that are focused on are societal actors. Four case studies are considered for investigating this subject matter. These are the World Cleanup Day, Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly for a Green Capital, East-Viru County Green Plan and Foodsharing Tartu. These case studies were investigated between March and April of 2024. The World Cleanup Day started in 2018 and is still ongoing, Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly for a Green Capital took place during the year 2023, the East-Viru County Green Plan was assembled between 2020-2021, and Foodsharing Tartu has been ongoing since its grounding year of 2019. Using the barriers and the data, themes are identified for Estonian co-creation to, in the end, answer the research question.

De Graaf et al.'s (2016) research is used for the categorisation of public value into responsive, proper, and performing governance. Linders' (2012) research is utilised to classify the case studies into different types of co-production. The four case studies are considered in the design phase of the service delivery lifecycle, as also outlined by Linders (2012). This is due to the assumption that in the design phase, choices are being made towards, among others, the form of governance that will be prioritised. Therefore, the design phase creates the opportunity to identify the public value cluster of the case studies. For this thesis, the case studies are in the citizen-to-citizen category and the citizen-to-government categories Linders (2012). World Cleanup Day and Tartu Foodsharing represent the citizen-to-citizen category, and Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly for a Green Capital, East-Viru County Green Plan, represent the choices for the citizen-to-government category. Having two case studies in each of the categories is a conscious choice, seeking to identify potential differences between the two. For

this study, it is assumed that there might be a difference between the barriers that societal actors experience who are co-creating with the government and for those who are not.

Public value research has thus far primarily centred around public service professionals. However, this thesis aims to redirect attention towards societal actors. Such diverted focus provides a possibility for this research to elaborate on the role of societal actors and thereby investigate their importance within the topic of co-creating public value. Moreover, citizens in this research are seen as part of the decision-making and public value-creating process. Another contribution that this research offers is the inquiry into case studies that are environmental in nature and deal with co-production in Estonia. Although scholars researching Estonia have covered the field of co-production from different angles, the insights into public value co-creation using environmental case studies as a focus have not yet been extensively covered. Therefore, this research seeks to contribute to the existing research on the Estonian co-production landscape.

The thesis is structured into six chapters: literature review, conceptual framework, methodology, findings, discussion, and a new operational framework. The first is the literature review, where the focus will be on the concept of co-production/creation and public value. Moreover, Estonian public value in the literature will be elaborated on, and finally, public value actors will be covered. After the literature review, the conceptual framework will categorise public value and types of co-production as well as outline barriers to co-creation from the literature. Third, the methodology for this research is explained. The third part includes the research design, description of the case studies, data collection process and an overview of the utilised codes. Fourth, the findings will be portrayed and then deliberated on in the discussion part. After the discussion, an operational framework is proposed for Estonian co-creation. The final part of this paper will be the conclusion, after which references and appendixes can be found. The following section of this work is the literature review.

CHAPTER 1: Literature Review

In the following chapter, the concept of co-production/co-creation will be clarified. As a second step, the concept of public value will be elaborated on. Also, an overview of Estonian public values in the literature as well as public value actors will be given.

1.1. The concept of co-production/co-creation

The origins of the term co-production are attributed to Elinor Ostrom (Leyshon et al., 2019; Musso et al., 2019; Steen et al., 2018a). The classical actors of it would be citizens and professionals (Pestoff, 2018), but the term has now expanded to include other actors. Co-creation and co-production are often used interchangeably (Steen et al., 2018a), and therefore, no differentiation will be made in this thesis. Brandsen et al., (2018, pp. 3) roughly define co-creation and co-production “as a joint effort of citizens and public sector professionals in initiating, planning, designing and implementing public services.” Nederhand and van Meerkerk (2018) emphasise citizens' role more by offering to define “co-production as the active role that service users can play in the service delivery process” (2018, p. 49). Other concepts related to co-creation are “public participation, collaborative governance or community involvement” (Voorberg et al., 2015, p. 1335). For this work, co-production will be defined as the effort of citizens to initiate, plan, design and implement public services with differing levels of government engagement (Linders, 2012; Nederhand & van Meerkerk, 2018; Steen et al., 2018a).

Co-creation can include different actors such as “citizens, users, academia/research, private sector, non-profit organisations, governmental actors” (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021, p. 9). Eckhardt et al., (2021) outline the potential of the concept as being “an intervention that changes the way things are done in several fields” (p. 2). A shift is experienced from a conventional top-down to a bottom-up process. Also, the actors change as the citizens become a part of the development process (Eckhardt et al., 2021). Co-production often gets to be seen as “a tool to reinvigorate democracy” (Steen et al., 2018, p. 286). Generally, co-creation has potential as a social innovation, as it includes new types of social and interaction practices. Capacities of what is possible are enhanced through the agreement of different stakeholders (Eckhardt et al., 2021).

It is essential to think about “participative modes of governance” (Terstriep et al., 2020, p. 896) to unravel the true potential of social innovations. Thus, it is interesting to consider citizen involvement in creating public value. Rodriguez Müller et al., (2021) state how

motivations behind co-creation can be “to improve public service provision, to innovate, to create new public services, and user-driven co-creation” (p. 6). Citizen involvement is also an essential aspect of participatory democracy – in this perspective, citizens should be invited and willing to dialogue with the government (Qin, 2023). For example, co-producers are thought to benefit directly from the services they have assisted with (Benjamin & Brudney, 2018) and are also assumed to engage in environmental resource management if they see a potential benefit for themselves (Moretto & Ranazato, 2018). There is a surge of interest in co-creation initiatives, where communication has been simplified through, e.g., cultural shifts (Steen et al., 2018a). Also, this creates a potential window of opportunity for researching this topic. The participatory aspect has also entered the larger field of environmental governance (Turnhout et al., 2020). Pestoff (2018) explains the potential of peer production as a “way to produce goods and services that relies on self-organising communities of individuals who come together to produce a shared outcome, i.e., the production of content by the general public rather than by paid professionals and experts in the field” (Pestoff, 2018, p. 3).

This thesis will utilise the opportunity to research such processes of co-creation that, in some ways, see citizens as an inherent part of the process. It is intriguing to inquire how such innovations are utilised in Estonia, and therefore this thesis will have a unique view into examples of the Estonian co-production landscape. Moreover, the considerations of co-creation necessity and what it means for the state are deliberated through this research. Also, it will add new investigations with a country-specific focus to the field of co-creation research. In the following, the discussion will move on to the concept of public value.

1.2. Public value

The heritage of the word value comes from the Latin “Valere – to be strong to be worthy” (Dietz et al., 2005). The original heritage of the word has changed its meaning rather reasonably and is widely debated as a concept. The current academic literature deals with a variety of public values and their meanings or categorisations. This can be done by either finding an overview of core values (Jørgensen & Sørensen, 2012), focusing on values of certain states (Van Der Wal et al., 2015), considering differences between the public and private sector values (De Graaf & Van Der Wal, 2008), focusing on conceptualising a type of value (Dietz et al., 2002) or showing the difficulties one may come across when defining public value (Meynhardt, 2009). Some authors set out to summarise the most present values and came up with a longer list than they originally expected. For example, Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007, p. 14)

summarised 72 fundamental values. The study of values has a fair amount of research in many disciplines, including sociology and psychology (Van Der Wal et al., 2015), but these will be deliberately excluded from further discussion.

The public value literature is rich, but it still struggles with accepting a common definition of the concept. Often, the demarcation of values remains unclear (De Graaf et al., 2016). Van Der Wal et al. (2015) use the term “dialogue of the deaf” (p. 14) to describe the debate, illustrating a one-sided conversation. Moreover, authors often use a rather conceptual approach to describe or distinguish public values instead of a definitional one (Van Der Wal et al., 2015). Despite the lack of agreement, a plurality of definitions and descriptions of public value have been offered. A choice from these is elaborated on in the next paragraph. First, a definition of public values will be offered.

Public value can be summarised as principles or a direction: “Public values can be defined as the ideals, articulated as principles, to be followed when producing a public service or regulating citizens’ behaviour, thus providing direction to the behaviour of public servants” (Beck Jørgensen & Andersen, 2011 in Jørgensen & Sørensen, 2012, p. 72). The authors here focus on public servants as actors and values as something necessary to lead their decision-making. Therefore, this definition remains narrow, as it only includes the one actor using and being influenced by values. On the other hand, including all actors Meynhardt (2009) argues that the lines of public value creation are about the “impact on how people think and feel about society” (p. 193). This definition is shorter but encompasses a larger group – the “people”. Also, it focuses more on the perception of society without any appeal to action. Another definition of values concludes all positive aspects of the term: “qualities that are appreciated for contributing to or constituting what is good, right, beautiful, or worthy of praise and admiration” (De Graaf & Van Der Wal, 2008, p. 22). The authors here do not include any actors – neither people nor service providers, as in the previous definitions. They focus on values as something to be appreciated due to the existence of which positive outcomes are created. De Graaf et al. (2016) state that public values are generally and, simply put, what the public values. Hartley et al. (2017) provide an umbrella definition for public value as “a contribution to the public sphere” (p.671). In Hartley et al.'s (2017) definition, an important aspect of this thesis – contribution - is included. All these definitions include aspects that are useful for understanding public value within the context of this work.

From these definitions, it becomes evident that public value can either be seen as first an action, impact, or contribution or second as a principle or ideal. Value can be created based on existing or changing values. Nevertheless, this work will have a focus on the process of

public value or as Nieuwenhuizen and Meijer (2021) put it – being “concerned with ‘doing’ governance” (p. 581). The process focus of public values will be laid out even more in the conceptual framework. Therefore, public value will be understood as a contribution to the public sphere, which can have an impact on how people think and feel about society, influencing their actions and decisions.

1.3. Estonian Public Value in the Literature

The research interest of this thesis is Estonia; therefore, relevant examples of Estonian public values were searched for in existing literature. In the following, two examples are considered. Jørgensen & Sørensen (2012) researched if public values can be inquired. They focused on the value of bureaucrats. The authors argue that public value is often written in states' codes of conduct. These documents can be considered as a less “costly challenge” (p. 72) to a detailed study, which has previously only been done scarcely. In their study, they include Estonian values taken from the state's code of conduct. Nevertheless, they criticise the Estonian two-page code of conduct from 1999 as being too brief and outdated. Their research invited a search for a possible fresher inquiry into codes of conduct. After their study was published in 2012, a newer code of conduct was published in Estonia. The newer edition focuses on values for public officials. The fundamental values stated are “lawfulness; focus on people; trustworthiness; professionalism; impartiality; openness and cooperation” (Council of Ethics of Officials, 2015, p. 1). Jørgensen & Sørensen (2012) conclude the labelling of “public interest, regime dignity, political loyalty, transparency, neutrality/impartiality, effectiveness, accountability, and legality” as core values (p. 85). Thus far, the research interest has been on public service professionals. Nevertheless, the work on hand will shift the focus from public service professionals to societal actors. The underrepresentation of societal actors' perceptions to date provides a great opportunity for this research to find its footing and underline its importance in the field.

Van Der Wal et al. (2015) deliberate values on a larger scale and try to understand the nuances of public sector value in the European Union (EU). For example, states seeking to join the EU should possess value such as “responsibility and predictability, openness and transparency, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness (Van Der Wal et al., 2015, p. 319). Within this context, they also considered Estonian public sector values (Van Der Wal et al., 2015). The most important values in Estonia turned out to be “honesty, competency, lawfulness, dutifulness” (Van Der Wal et al., 2015, p. 327). Both of these studies and their *written-down*

values give us a better insight into the Estonian public value systems. From the two studies, it can be seen that e.g., lawfulness was identified twice. This will be taken into consideration in the further categorisation as examples.

The literature on public value in Estonia, especially in the scope of co-production remains scarce and therefore, this thesis is taking the opportunity to expand on the inquiry of public value in Estonia. Also, as the actors that have been focused on so far remain more in the scope of the public sector or bureaucrats, the opportunity is taken to elaborate on other actors within Estonia and also thereby contribute to the literature. In the following paragraphs, the public value actors that will be important in the scope of this thesis will be clarified.

1.4. Public value actors

Before elaborating on the conceptual framework, the question of who creates public value in terms of this research is shortly clarified. Strokosch and Osborne (2020) elaborate on how regarding public values, traditionally the focus has been on public service professionals. The government as an actor is often mentioned. Nevertheless, there seems to be an agreement that the government does not possess the sole right to create public value (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). Strokosch and Osborne (2020) note service users as value creators, and Benington (2011) adds governments and “informal community organisations” (p. 13) to the list of value creators. Moreover, groups from the private and voluntary sectors can create value (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). Therefore, in this thesis, it is seen that there is no sole actor whose duty is to create public value or who possesses the power to do so. Similarly to the co-production processes, there is no group that this activity is reserved for. Having clarified the understanding of public value and co-creation as well as deliberated on the actors for this work, the following research question will be posed: With a focus on societal actors, the research question is posed: What are the challenges to co-creation that societal actors experience concerning public value creation in Estonia?

In the next section, the conceptual framework for this thesis will be clarified. This includes value categorisations, the different types of co-production as well as identifying barriers that are present in the co-creation literature.

CHAPTER 2: Conceptual Framework

In the chapter on the conceptual framework, first, value categorisations will be outlined. Second, different types of co-production will be identified. And third, barriers to co-creation will be clarified.

2.1. Value categorisations

Considering responsive, proper and performing governance (De Graaf et al., 2016) provides a categorisation of public value, which will be used in this thesis. Nieuwenhuizen and Meijer (2021) explain how proper governance deals with aspects such as equality, integrity and lawfulness (Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021). Responsive governance is described as a “strive for participation, legitimacy, transparency and accountability (De Graaf et al. 2016 in Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021, p. 584). Moreover, performing governance deals with ideas of effectiveness and efficiency. The potential clashing of these ideals in co-production and further deliberation will occur in the following conceptual framework.

Before giving a more thorough overview of the previous categorisation, Jørgensen & Bozeman's (2007) value divisions will be introduced to provide an insight into further possible options. They state how the differentiation between instrumental and prime values is commonly used in researching public values. The authors connect the concept of public value to principles of common law, thereafter acting in the place of criteria for action and accountability (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 377). They are also often used to measure them. “Prime values are those that are ends in themselves, which once achieved represent an end state of preference. The central feature of a prime value is that it is a thing valued for itself” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 373). On the other side, instrumental value “is valued for its ability to achieve other values (which may or may not themselves be prime values)” (ibid.). Instrumental values can be seen as “conditions and prime values as consequences” (ibid.). Nevertheless, neither is the only condition or consequence resulting from each other. Other terms used to describe such values are also “proximate and remote, or immediate and ultimate” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 373).

Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007, p. 359) emphasize through findings in their research, how there is not really a single approach or typology for classifying value which is extensively recognised or used. They summarize how, in the “Public Values Universe” (p. 359), different relationships play a role and how they can take place between politicians, public employees and citizens/users/customers (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). Within the universe, a contribution to society takes place by the actors, who then simultaneously side receive society's

input, influencing their decisions. They emphasise how, in their constructed universe, it becomes evident that not all values are equally important. They bring us “three dimensions on which we can consider values [...] (a) proximity, (b) hierarchy, and (c) causality” (p. 370). Proximity would imply the “closeness of one particular value to another” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 370). With hierarchy, a list of values is created, ranking them of importance. Causality of values implies that “one value is a means to an end” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

Although, Jørgensen & Bozeman (2007), in their value inventory, outlined thorough categorisations, this thesis will approach the value categorisations outlined by De Graaf et al. (2016). Their categorisation will be considered in the next paragraphs.

2.2. Responsive, proper, and performing governance and value conflicts

Public value will be categorized through responsive, proper, and performing governance (De Graaf et al., 2016). Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer (2021), using De Graaf et al.’s (2016) research, provide the following overview of “clusters of public values” (p. 582) in the table number one. Lawfulness as a public value in Estonia in proper governance was also identified in the code of ethics for officials (Council of Ethics of Officials, 2015) and Van Der Wal et al. (2015). Other identified Estonian public values were added to the table one as examples. In the following, an overview will be given of the three types.

Table 1: Proper, performing, and responsive governance

Proper governance	Performing governance	Responsive governance
Integrity	Effectiveness	Participation/ <i>focus on</i>
Equality	Efficiency	<i>people</i>
Lawfulness	<i>Competency</i>	Legitimacy
<i>Dutifulness</i>		Transparency
<i>Professionalism</i>		Accountability
		<i>Trustworthiness/honesty</i>
		<i>Openness and cooperation</i>

Source: Nieuwenhuizen and Meijer (2021, p. 528) based on De Graaf et al. (2016)

Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer (2021) explain how co-production often neglects proper governance as a goal. It is rather seen as a “prerequisite” (p. 583), meaning that values that

connect with proper governance would often be seen as a starting point or something that usually exists in the background and is not explicitly thought of. Professionalism and dutifulness fit as proper governance attributes. Despite the importance of proper governance values, acting in accordance with all of them can be challenging. In the end, the way and if proper governance is considered will depend on the nature of the co-production practice (Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021, p. 583). However, it is important to note that including digital means and limiting human contact can have negative consequences on proper governance due to the potential lack of digital skills among the participants (Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021).

On the other side, digital means used to reach the goal of performing governance have simplified and lowered transaction costs in terms of contact with citizens (Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021). Performing governance deals with ideas of providing services that are both effective and efficient. Adding competent actors into the process can facilitate both of these goals. By being able to effectively reach more citizens, the efficiency of provided services increases. For example, the East-Viru people's assembly was done completely online. The call for participation on Zoom was posted on their website and social media. Thus, being more efficient in reaching people and perhaps more effective than when people would have had to travel to the event from different parts of the county.

De Graaf et al. (2016) argue that responsive governance has increased in importance in "Western democracies during the last decades" (p. 1107). The main focus of this type of governance is being receptive to different actors, having transparent processes, including various actors in processes and valuing cooperation. If the number of people reached increases participation, responsive governance can be facilitated through digital means (Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021). An example, therefore, would be the miniature representation of Tallinn created by the organisers of the People's Assembly. Through sortition, possible participants' data was accessed, and a representative sample was gathered. The process is made transparent by available materials describing it.

According to De Graaf et al. (2016), a set of values might be more important to one group of actors than to another. They agree with the incompatibility of some values and explain how striving towards one value can limit reaching others. Even though values between the different governance categories can clash, they can also do so within a categorisation. For example, the authors highlight the known case of struggling to balance efficiency and effectiveness. Professionals and individuals can either have conflicting values or are given conflicting values. For example, coordinating between different departments can lead to value conflicts if the professionals have initially been given different values to work with. Moreover,

if the values are not “separated institutionally” (p. 1122), the professionals must come to their own value conclusions (De Graaf et al., 2016).

In order to emphasise the line of argumentation with greater specificity, let us consider the following hypothetical scenario. The scenario includes a co-creation activity of waste management. Volunteers can join a municipality-organized event to collect litter from sites in the forest close to hiking trails. The goal of the activity is less waste pollution in the specific area. Let’s say there are two core values that the two different groups of volunteers have set as goals. One of them would be lawfulness, belonging to proper governance. The other is trustworthiness from responsive governance. After the event, the parties gather in a council and are asked to propose solutions to reduce litter in the specific area. For example, the group focused on lawfulness can suggest enforcing fines for littering. The other group, trusting the effectiveness of, e.g., more trash cans and signs, might see this measure as too unnecessary. Although both groups may find the other's value important to some extent, their own value over ways the importance of the other.

All the ideal forms of governance can have the potential to clash with each other. For example, including the highest amount of people to increase participation in responsive governance can lead to lower efficiency in performing governance. The most effective system might not be in line with official laws (De Graaf et al., 2016). Moreover, professionalism can conflict with the wish to include many citizens who can be considered non-experts on the matter. This thesis will seek to understand potential conflicting values present in Estonian co-production arrangements and their relation to various identified barriers to successful co-production as well as their relation to different barriers to successful co-production whilst uncovering the reasons thereof. In the next part, an overview of different types of co-production relevant for this thesis is given.

2.3. Types of Co-Production

Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021) found in their literature review that the setting of public service co-creation can be divided into three categories – analogue, digital and hybrid. More and more digital services are deployed to increase most often efficiency and effectiveness as well as users in public service provision. Participation in such efforts can differ from actors investing various resources such as “time, funding, experience, information, expertise, among others” (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021, p. 9). Pestoff (2018, p. 3) categorises the different co-production into peer-to-peer (P2P), Government to Citizen (G2C) and Municipality to Inhabitant (M2I).

The author states the importance of stating if co-production is analysed by looking at individuals or collectives, and a focus should be put on one of these actors. They also go further in dividing co-production between individual or collective action. The third is a mix of both actions (Pestoff, 2018, p. 3).

In this thesis, the digital aspect of co-production will not be neglected. Yet, it will not be the focus of this work. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are often discussed in the scope of co-creation as either enablers or barriers thereof (Clark et al., 2013; Huang & Yu, 2019; Meijer, 2015; Nieuwenhuizen & Meijer, 2021; Sandoval-Almazan & Ramon Gil-Garcia, 2014). Digital technologies have been recognised to have “considerable power to restructure politics, public administration, and public participation in particular” (Huang & Yu, 2019, p. 3). Clark et al. (2013) even argue that the use of different communications technologies is what has encouraged co-production in the last decade and emphasize how the capacity of citizens to participate in co-production efforts can be increased through “technological advances” (p. 689). Moreover, Rodriguez Müller (2021) emphasizes how such technological advances have “extended the applicability of the coproduction model” (p.2).

Linders (2012) outlines the change from the government's perspective in co-production, now seeing the public as their partners (p. 446). Co-production is divided into three categories: “Citizen Sourcing”, “Government as a Platform”, and “Do-It-Yourself government” (Linders, 2012, p. 447). Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021) disagree with including the third category into co-production as they understand the concept of co-production within “public service provision” (p. 9). Nevertheless, here it will be argued that the following examples are in the scope of public service provision by more unconventional actors and thus belong under the scope of co-production.

Table 2: Co-Production Categories

Linders (2012)	Explanation	Examples
<p>Citizen to Government</p> <p>Citizen sourcing</p>	<p>Citizens assist “the government to be more responsive and effective” (p. 447) and steer the results.</p>	<p>Tallinn’s citizens’ assembly for a green capital, East-Viru County Green Plan</p>
<p>Government to Citizen</p> <p>Government as a Platform</p>	<p>Data is available from the government for citizens to use. The government has no responsibility towards the outcomes.</p>	<p>Map data by Estonian Land Board</p>
<p>Citizen to Citizen</p> <p>Do-It-Yourself Government</p>	<p>Citizens have the ability to self-organize, “potentially presenting a substitute for traditional government responsibilities” (p. 447). The government can contribute but is not essential.</p>	<p>Foodsharing Tartu World Cleanup Day Repair basement in Tartu “Yes, it is Vegan” group on Facebook</p>

Source: Based on Linders (2012)

Linders (2012) then assigns the types to "stages of the service delivery lifecycle" (p. 448). Co-creation efforts can occur during every step of the public service cycle (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021). This research will focus on the citizen-to-government and citizen-to-citizen categorisations, as noted in Table 3 below. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the focus is on Estonian cases. Government as a platform, especially within the scope of Estonia, has been researched to a fair extent in past bodies of literature. Examples of such works can be found in, e.g., Margetts & Naumann (2017) or Tammpuu et al. (2022). For this exact reason, this work on hand will neglect government as a platform or government-to-citizen as a research interest and dive into the other categories. Also, due to a perceived gap in the environmental scope of co-creation in Estonia, there is still the possibility to expand on the citizen-to-

government and citizen-to-citizen categories. Therefore, the most suitable examples for the work on hand were identified within these two categories. The examples are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Stages of the service delivery lifecycle

	Citizen to Government	Citizen to Citizen
Design	Tallinn’s citizens’ assembly for a green capital, East-Viru County Green Plan	World Clean-up Day Foodsharing Tartu
Execution	World Cleanup Day (Citizens providing waste- data)	Repair Basement
Monitoring		“Yes, it is Vegan” Facebook group

Source: Based on Linders (2012)

Table 3 also shows the different stages of the service delivery lifecycle, with Estonia-based examples. The chosen case studies will be considered from the design phase of their organisational structures. The design phase is where plans are made for how different programs are executed (Linders, 2012) and where “most important strategic decisions occur” (p. 448). Therefore, it can be assumed that in this phase, the choices are made towards, e.g., which form of governance is prioritised. As public value is categorised through proper, responsive, and performing governance, the design phase is where we expect to have the various value bases set for the case studies.

From the citizens-to-citizens example, the author explains how, in this phase, “communities govern themselves” (Linders, 2012, p. 449). The government does not play a role or has an insignificant role in the arrangement. The underlying aspects of this phase would include “the conception and layout of the service that is to be designed (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021, p. 3). Moreover, Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021) state how, within the design phase, user consultations, “design labs” (p. 3) or the inclusion of stakeholders can play a significant role. They also find that most of the current empirical research focuses on the design phase as this part of service delivery is more inclusive to include various stakeholders (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021, p. 14). The two central ideas in the design phase are the “consultation and ideation of service design elements” (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021, p. 3). Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021)

underline how this creates an experience that is more user-centric and helps to nurture trust between diverse stakeholders. The design phase also creates a perfect space to investigate co-production barriers. Within the design phase, intentions and outcomes are best identified and thus, the barriers that lay between them. In the design phase, different actors – either within the organisational or volunteer bodies – are coordinated. Also, within this variety of stakeholders, even more barriers can become evident for investigation.

Having now identified the types of co-production and categorized value, in the next part, common barriers to co-production will be identified from the literature. As mentioned before, the focus will lay on understanding potential conflicting values with their relation to identified barriers that are present in Estonia in the design phase of the case studies.

2.4. Barriers to co-production

Torfinng et al. (2019, p. 810) first outline more general barriers, describing higher-risk situations and fields where co-production is more difficult. They state that under such a list are aspects that deal with state security and vulnerable information, moments that require immediate action, e.g., those in crisis, and “political and ideological conflicts” (Torfinng et al., 2019, p. 810) hindering cooperation. Yet, the authors point out examples where co-creation has proved to be an excellent solution for such situations and warn about limiting the practice to low-risk areas. This paper will not go into more detail in the high-risk areas of co-production as this does not include the research interest of the current work. Nevertheless, the following section will create a short overview of different barriers using existing literature reviews and, in the end, come to a specification of sub-questions using perceived barriers, helping to guide empirical inquiry.

The first of such is about role perception and the perceived usefulness of certain projects. Torfinng et al. (2019) state how developing “a role perception that is conducive for their engagement” (p. 810) is a strong barrier to co-creation. Under this are set tasks that public sector or private sector professionals have gotten used to and will not too easily give up, change, or share power and oversight. The concern of power dynamics also arises in the literature review by Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021). They agree with Clifton et al. (2020) that such roles can bring resistance to change as some can get caught up in their old roles and tasks. Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021) suggest having a clear distribution of responsibilities to mitigate this barrier. Torfinng et al. (2019) state that this has previously been overcome if political leaders

understand that dialogue with other actors can “strengthen their political leadership” (Torfing et al., 2019, p. 812) and provide a more comprehensive view of societal issues.

A similar case of role distribution can be found with citizens who do not see themselves in the shoes of a public service provider and expect public services to be provided to them through the taxes they pay. On the side of the citizens, they can seek to collaborate for the feeling of belonging to a community and having a “purpose” (p. 812) as well as being able to influence their “quality of life” (p. 812). Verschuere et al. (2018) also note how citizens need evidence of how their involvement can have an impact on the outcomes. They introduce the concept of salience (p. 248) as a relation between the importance of the project and the citizen’s direct environment. Also, Clifton et al. (2020) under the cultural barriers to co-production, note the “no-perceived usefulness” as one of the main barriers. Moreover, role distribution also includes the barrier of responsibility. Steen et al. (2018) indicate that co-production can result in unclear responsibilities. According to Brandsen et al. (2018a), co-production can sometimes create unrealistic expectations among citizens regarding the government's abilities to achieve certain goals.

The second barrier moves within the scope of inclusion, reinforced inequalities and competence of societal actors. Rodriguez Müller et al. (2021) take a slightly different approach and identify barriers within the scope of “the inclusiveness and equality of co-creation processes” (p. 11). Steen et al., (2018b) also identify reinforced inequalities as a barrier to coproduction. Also, Brandsen et al., (2018) note the unequal participation opportunities as an issue. This includes the worries of whether everyone has similar access to skills and knowledge to participate in co-creation initiatives (Rodriguez Müller et al., 2021; Steen et al., 2018b; Verschuere et al., 2018). Competence, as described by Verschuere et al. (2018, p. 247-248), is the “need for resources and knowledge to participate”. Verschuere et al. (2018) note competence as a driver of inequity in participation. Steen et al. (2018b) explain how inequitable power dynamics can arise when one party holds a position of strength over another (Steen et al., 2018b). This challenge arises in all digital and non-digital as well as hybrid settings of co-creation. Among other issues, social inequality can provide a barrier to the inclusion of citizens in co-creation – the authors note, in this case, the case of language or skills. In a digital setting, users can experience a digital divide, meaning the lack of willingness or ability to be engaged or engage as co-creators. This can lead to a focus on specific groups that can be overrepresented in digital co-production initiatives, with perhaps unrepresentative results.

The fourth barrier identified can be transaction costs. Transaction costs can rise mainly due to consultations with citizens that, in the end, add no value to the service provided. The

issue with this would be that recourses, which could be used to improve a certain service, will be used on citizen consultations with no guaranteed benefits (Steen et al., 2018a). Steen et al., (2018) point out that co-production can in a way pose a “threat to democracy” (Steen et al., 2018, p. 286) but conclude that co-produced services have often more scrutiny than those which have been provided in a traditional manner – both of which should be viewed with a similar critical stance.

Huang & Yu (2019), in their review of the literature, find that using digital tools has a positive effect on co-production. Their findings state how it can either “enrich the channels” (Huang & Yu, 2019, p. 7), “reduce the cost of citizen involvement,” or also “extend the communities of coproducers” (p.7). Enriching the channels is largely about enhancing communication opportunities and simplifying the transfer of knowledge. The costs that are lowered are mostly administrative, or, in other words, “transaction costs” are lowered (Huang & Yu, 2019, p. 7). The third perceived benefit is explained as opening co-production to more citizens than before and, therefore, having larger participation (Huang & Yu, 2019). Within the scope of this thesis, it will be interesting to consider if any such benefits exist in the selected case studies or if there could be anything that is not mentioned within these considerations.

On the other side, it is necessary to consider the perceived disadvantages of ICTs and see what type of barriers they can pose. One of the concerns is how advances in technology may “disempower citizens” (Rodriguez Müller, 2021, p. 3) through, as Rodriguez Müller (2021) mentioned, “algorithmic manipulation” (p.3). Huang & Yu (2019), as well as Rodriguez Müller (2021), raise the concern of the digital divide. Criado & Villodre (2018) add the concern of a potential “second digital divide” (p. 22), which could potentially be enabled through co-production. The concept of the digital divide refers to computer literacy, the existence of which or lack thereof, can create a divide within society, mostly regarding access to services or participation (Huang & Yu, 2019). Or, to put it differently, the unequal opportunities for accessing or utilising ICTs (Rodriguez Müller, 2021). Criado & Villodre (2018) argue that their potential second digital gap can exist through gender-based inequalities. Although the general digital divide is narrowing, it hasn’t yet disappeared (Ragnedda & Kreitem, 2018). A more specific inquiry into the Estonian digital divide found that, according to Ragnedda & Kreitem (2018), Estonia is far above the EU average in internet usage. Also, in the state, a majority of individuals have at least basic internet skills (Ragnedda & Kreitem, 2018). Therefore, it could be assumed that in Estonia, the digital divide could be significantly less than in other states.

Steen et al. (2018) suggest considering the following questions when evaluating co-creation efforts, illustrated in figure one. These have been considered whilst compiling interview questions in the further section.

Figure 1: Guiding questions for evaluating co-creation

“Who is in, and who is out?”

“Who benefits, and who loses?”

“How is power redistributed?”

“What were stakeholders’ goals, was there consensus over these goals, have goals been met and, if so, whose goals?”

“Which services are scaled up, and which are slimmed down?”

“Who can service users or other stakeholders keep accountable for lacking or inadequate services?”

Source: Steen et al., 2018 (p. 291)

As a summary, the main topics identified and that will be used as a framework are:

1. Role perception, responsibility, and perceived usefulness
2. Equality, inequalities, and competence
3. Transaction costs
4. Digital tools

With the help of the main barriers identified, sub-questions will be added to the previously stated research question: What are the challenges to co-creation that societal actors experience concerning public value creation in Estonia?

The sub-questions will be:

- 1.1. How does the “role perception, responsibility and perceived usefulness” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia?
- 1.3. How does the “equality, inequalities, and competence” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia?
- 1.4. How does the “transaction costs” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia?

- 1.5. How does the “digital tools” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia?
- 1.6. How can these barriers be mitigated through co-creation management?

With having outlined the research question with the sub-questions, the next part of this thesis will focus on the methodology of this research, including research design, the case selection and the data collection and analysis process.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1. Research design

This qualitative study gathers the necessary data through semi-structured interviews, which will be supported by existing documents. The research design is a multiple-case analysis using the previously outlined case studies. There are different benefits to using case studies. For example, “case studies [...] offer the advantage of studying phenomenon within their context” (De Graaf et al., 2016, p. 1122). Also, Dietz et al. (2005) claim that studies of actual actions in the area of values are underrepresented. Thus, it is welcomed that this study will add to the body of research on actions in the area of values. The case studies will be elaborated on in the next methodology section. Individuals who have had a leading role in a case study will be targeted through homogenous purposive sampling (Etikan et al., 2016). In homogenous sampling, individuals, or groups with certain types of similarity are used. For this research, the interviewees have first all been engaging in co-production and, second, have had a leading role in terms of the case study.

Purposive sampling “starts with a purpose in mind, and the sample is thus selected to include people of interest and exclude those who do not suit the purpose” (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 3). The participants are chosen due to their qualities. This is a part of nonprobability sampling, which does not provide the whole population an equivalent chance to be put in the final sample. It is assumed that in the design phase, the people having leading roles in the initiative will engage in activities such as goal setting for their initiative, intentionally or unintentionally, perceiving such though responsive, proper, or performing governance. Their input will “contribute to a better understanding of the theoretical framework” (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 2). Also, they are most likely to have experienced or possess an overview of perceived barriers to the initiatives. It is expected that the organisers or people with leading roles in the initiatives can provide valuable “unique and rich information” (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 4) to the research and help provide data to answer the research questions due to their expertise. Etikan et al. (2016) state the usefulness of purposive sampling for concentrating individuals with particular characteristics. Due to the anonymity of the interviewees, their exact positions will not be named.

The four interviews lasted between 42 minutes and 82 minutes. For the interviews, three of the initiatives were represented by one individual and one initiative was represented by two individuals. The participants of the interviews had extensive knowledge and overview of the considered projects. Three of the interviews were conducted via Zoom, where they were

recorded with the application's own recording option. The interview that was conducted via Google Meet was recorded using the app QuickTime Player. The interview guide is listed in annex 3. A semi-structured interview format was followed. The interviews were coded using qualitative "concept-driven coding" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 10) and analysis software (Gibbs, 2007). The analysis software chosen is MAXQDA24, which is "developed to support the coding process" (Schreier, 2012). A thematic analysis was conducted with the data gathered. The results are presented in a qualitative style (Schreier, 2012) "using continuous text" (p. 220), underlying with examples from the gathered data. Moreover, in Annex 4 there is an overview of the coding results in table form, illustrating the frequency of the categories. A trial interview was conducted first with a fellow student and then with an Estonian speaker to check the clarity and understandability of the questions as well as the overall coherence of the sequence of the questions.

The protection of participants' data is taken with the utmost priority. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants are ensured through various measures agreed upon through a consent form. The participants received the consent form via email a day before the interview and confirmed their agreement orally or via email. The informed consent form is added as annex 2. The gathered data will be protected through document encryption by the DigiDoc4 software, eliminating unauthorised access to the gathered data. This can be done "using the extension .cdoc" (Information System Authority, n.d.). Folders with passwords protect gathered data which is not in text form. Additionally, the responses have been made anonymous by using abbreviations that were previously agreed upon with the interviewees.

3.2. The Case Studies

In the following paragraphs, a detailed overview will be given of the chosen case studies. The case studies selected will focus on the design phase of the service delivery lifecycle, including examples from co-production where citizens play a central role: the East-Viru County Green Plan, Tallinn's citizens' assembly for a green capital, the World Cleanup Day and Foodsharing Tartu. All these examples act in the scope of environmental protection, are participatory and can be considered in the scope of co-production. For this research, the Estonian co-production landscape in the past years was considered with a lens of finding suitable examples which have some environmental goals or considerations and seek to answer an environmentally significant question or questions. Therefore, the focus on "environmental co-creation" is significant and made it into the title of this work. Moreover, ICTs will be utilised in the following case

selection, but the thesis' focus is not ICT-based co-production. The examples from citizen to government and citizen to citizen are considered as noted in table four.

Table 4: Design phase and cases

	Citizen to Government	Citizen to Citizen
Design	Tallinn's citizens' assembly for a green capital, East-Viru Greenplan	Foodsharing Tartu World Cleanup Day

Source: Based on Linders (2012)

3.2.1. Citizen to Citizen

First, the “Do it Yourself Government” (Linders, 2012, p. 449) will be considered to outline the examples in more detail. According to Linders (2012), in the citizens-to-citizens stage, communities govern themselves. The government does not play a role or has an insignificant role in the arrangement. The author emphasises how social media can be seen as a tool for citizens to self-organize, enabling collective action and minimising hierarchies. Linders (2012) brings the community portals and the virtual world as ICT-centred approaches. The interest for the thesis will be the design aspect of the organisation. It will be considered how they use the internet as a tool to coordinate their actions and find volunteers. Within this, the goal is to identify the organisational goals by using the categories of proper, performing, or responsive governance.

3.2.1.1. Foodsharing Tartu

The Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Foodsharing Tartu (Foodsharing, 2023) is an initiative that helps to reduce food waste and provides open access to their gathered food to the citizens of Tartu. This NGO is a citizen's initiative and is run by around 30 volunteers and its Tartu branch was created in 2019. The main idea is to collect *about to expire* or excess food that is provided to the organisation by other citizens, cafés, or the supermarket chain COOP. These are stored in public fridges around Tartu, accessible to everyone. Also, through their social media presence, the organisation is doing advocacy work by sharing information about the issue of food waste. Moreover, active citizens are posting about the situation of the fridges and notifying them of new deliveries on Facebook. From the criteria previously outlined, it can be seen that the NGO is also an example of an ICT-facilitated co-production,

as citizens are using social media as a tool for self-organisation. The volunteer base of the organisation makes it a self-governing community. It is an example of a citizen-based organisation, as the government does not assist or coordinate.

3.2.1.2. World Cleanup Day

World Cleanup Day has been clustered with Foodsharing Tartu due to its classification by citizens to citizens. World Cleanup Day is an initiative to clean up waste globally and was initiated in the year 2018. However, this thesis will focus on the Estonian aspect of the initiative, given its Estonian origins. A group of citizens organises the day by coordinating and finding participants, applying for funding and creating awareness about the day. On World Cleanup Day, volunteers clear trash among different sites in Estonia (Favoino et al., 2018). During the year, between the clean-up days, the organisation engages in advocacy work focusing on littering. Similarly, as with the other NGO, the thesis will seek to concentrate on the design phase as outlined by Linders (2012). The thesis will seek to understand the coordination of how World Cleanup Day has been made possible. For the digital aspect, most of the coordination takes place using digital means.

3.2.2. Citizen to Government

Linders (2012) also describes the citizen-to-government or citizen-sourcing classification. In the design phase thereof, opinion sharing is enabled through consultation (p. 449). The goal thereof is to improve “representation and responsiveness and to help governments best select from among the policy and design alternatives” (Linders, 2012, p. 449). In the design phase, such consultation can be seen as a way of citizen participation or e-participation (p. 447).

3.2.2.1. Ida-Virumaa Roheplaan

East-Viru County Green Plan created a space where citizens were invited to discuss their environmentally friendly future, creating open-call meetings on Zoom. Moreover, smaller co-creation workshops took place online (Kliimamuutused, 2022). The Green Plan was created in between the years of 2020-2021. The goal thereof was to consult citizens and public actors on a “Green plan” for the county. In the meetings, citizens met with different experts who shared their opinions, were able to brainstorm on future matters and gained information on how to act environmentally. Due to using e-participation, the East-Viru County Green Plan is an ICT-based co-production example.

3.2.2.2. Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly for a Green Capital

In Tallinn, 60 citizens were randomly selected for an assembly to propose green solutions for the capital's green areas and answer the question of how Tallinn can connect all of its green areas (Veersalu, 2023). The Citizen's Assembly took place during the year of 2023. The digital aspect of this initiative is evident due to the usage of sortition, where a mini-Tallinn was created. First, 30,000 citizens received an invitation to the citizen's assembly, and from those who responded, a representative sample was selected. In the frame of this initiative, invited citizens voluntarily met in person in different venues in Tallinn. The participation can be considered as a small community representing the voice of the citizens. The citizens were able first to hear experts' opinions for green space creation in Tallinn and then engage in discussions thereof. As in all the other initiatives, the design phase of this citizen's assembly will be considered. In the upcoming section, the research methodology will be discussed in detail, including a research design in regard to the preceding cases.

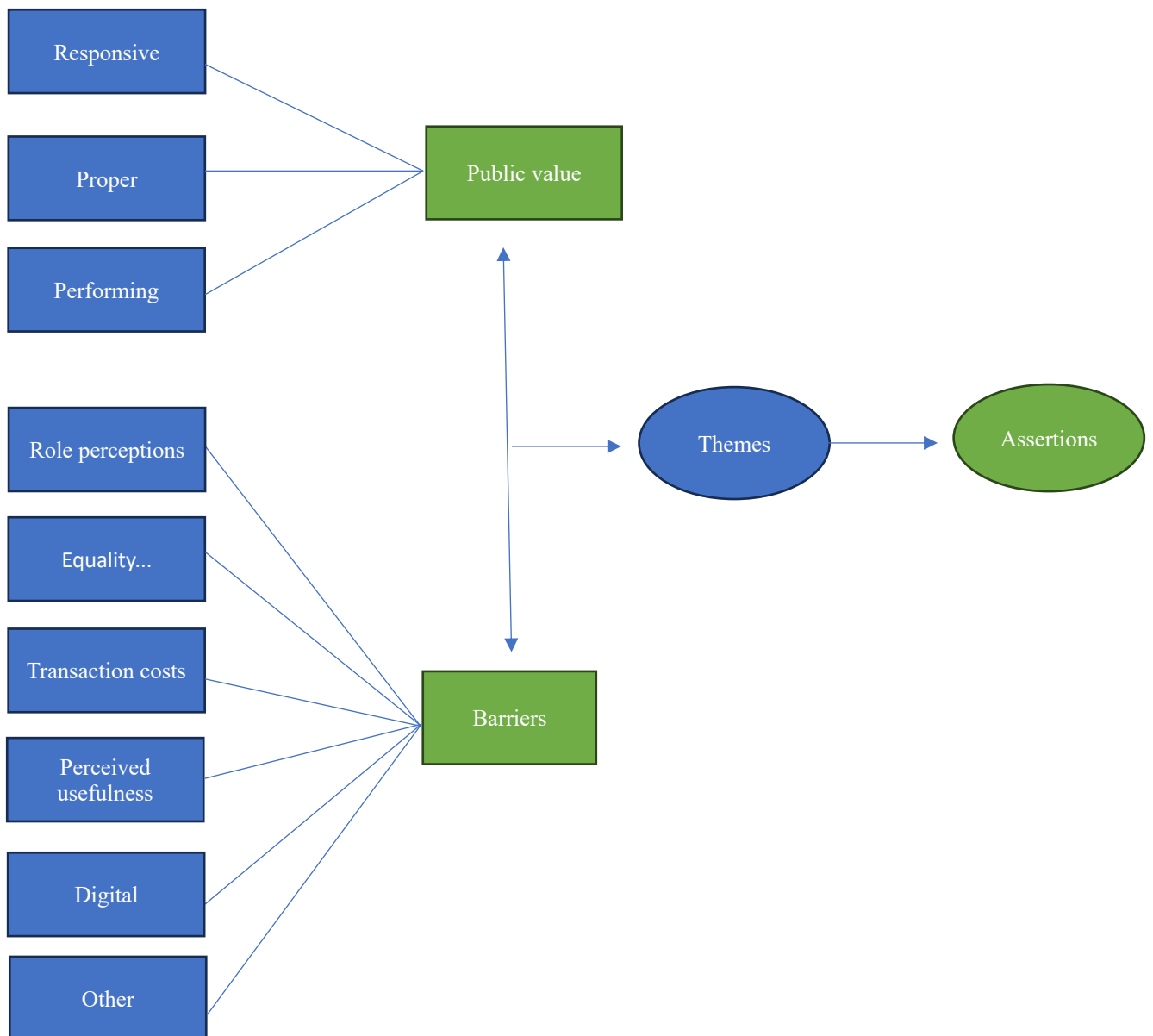
3.3. Data collection

In the following a more specific overview of the coding process will be given. Saldaña (2015) states that through the coding process, the gathered data will be arranged in a systematic way. The systematically arranged data will be used to consolidate meaning (Saldaña, 2015, p. 9). The analysis will be done to search for patterns in the data (Saldaña, 2015, p. 9). The data was collected in April 2024. To support the interview-based gathered data, existing documents about the initiatives will be used as knowledge about helping to understand the organisational structures. The documents provide an overview of either the mission statements or the values of the initiatives. For the Tallinn's citizens' assembly for a green capital, the additional document used is the 33-page suggestion summary about the initiative, 8 pages about selecting participants and around 20 pages from the 70-page interview results conducted with the citizens about their motivations (TCA3, TCA4, TCA5). The participants in the interview kindly provided the last two documents. The documents for the World Cleanup Day are on their webpage, including information about the last clean-up days and their value statement (Maailmakoristuspäev, 2024). For Foodsharing Tartu, also their short one-page mission statement on their website is used as information (FoodSharing, 2023). East-Viru Green plan's documents are around 40 pages of the 94 of the final published plans and around 4 news articles on their own page, *kliimamuutused* (Kliimamuutused, 2022).

During the data gathering, preliminary handwritten notes were taken directly during the interviews as ideas for “analytic consideration” (Saldaña, 2015, p. 20). These were there only to be considered if anything arose which could not be trusted to memory. Then, the following steps were considered. The first step that was taken with the gathered data was transcription. The interviews were transcribed using Speech Recognition and Transcription Service or Automatic Speech Recognition (ARS) developed at Tallinn University by Olev and Alumäe (2022). After the automatic transcription, the audio was listened to, and minor errors made by ARS were manually corrected. Third, the practice of “pre-coding” (Saldaña, 2015, p. 19) took place. This means that the transcripts were read, and notable quotes by the participants were highlighted. These were saved for later review and were used as pieces of evidence or excerpts to illustrate the analysis. Fourth, the material was read again in a thorough manner to be truly familiarized with the materials (Dierckx De Casterlé et al., 2012, p. 363). Gibbs (2007 from Charmaz, 2003, p. 94) has cited basic questions which should be considered during this process, such as “What is going on? What is the person saying? How do structure and context serve to support, maintain, impede, or change these actions or statements?” and recommends using these to assist the reading process.

The coding process is concept-driven (Gibbs, 2007). For the coding process mostly Saldaña (2015) and Schreiers (2012) were followed. Nevertheless, Dierckx De Casterlé et al.'s (2012) developed Qualitative Analysis Guide for Leuven (QUAGOL) is also consulted due to its clear structure. The explanation of the pre-coding frame and the codebook will be added as Annex 4. The preliminary coding frame can be seen in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Preliminary coding frame



Source: Based on Saldaña (2015, p. 13)

Nevertheless, during the process of coding, other categories may arise, and therefore, the coding process will be repeated twice (Dierckx De Casterlé et al., 2012). Coding twice will ensure a sufficiently thorough reflection on the data. The interviews will be coded one after another. In the process, also the gathered documents will be coded. After the coding has been finished, relevant codes, sentences and paragraphs will be translated into English.

3.3. Codes

The following paragraph will describe the process in this research, which took the codes to themes. “A theme is an outcome of coding, categorisation or analytic reflection..” (Saldaña, 2015, p. 14). The codes that were used for analysing the data included those of the barriers and separately the three categorisations for public values by responsive governance, proper governance, and performing governance. Under barriers, codes such as digital, transaction costs, equality, inequalities, competence, perceived usefulness, and role perceptions, including responsibility as well as the code other barriers (see annex 4). Decisions to include or not to include certain codes are in the previously outlined codebook, which can be found in the annex 4. Nevertheless, here a short overview is given for the reader to be able to follow this step.

First starting with the other barriers code, which included everything that did not quite fit the other more specific codes. Transaction costs code has focused on the potential added benefit of citizen inclusion and a potential lack thereof. The equality, inequalities and competence code were interested in project access, the goals that were sought for in participation and power dynamics within the data. Perceived usefulness was mostly about the assurance for citizens that their participation has an effect on outcomes, sense of fulfilment and inherit motivation. Last, role perception and responsibility include individuals or groups unwilling or unable to cooperate, the inclusion and interest of stakeholders as well as perception of responsibility and the division thereof. For an overview of the frequency of codes please see annex 1.

To give an even better idea of the coding process, an example is given for some codes. A more thorough overview can be found in the codebook, which is in annex 4. As an example, the following sentence was coded for transaction costs: “When they're in public debates, that's what happens, where there might be somebody who's got a very strong vision of their own and still loves to stand up and talk for a long time” (EV1). It describes a person who takes up more space in discussions than others. For Foodsharing the usefulness is shown from caring about what they do: “But here it's like a refresher for us, because we're all dealing with our work and parts of our lives anyway, whether it's, as a kind of extra phenomenon, actually caring about what we do” (TFS1). Some might be wary about new tasks in the example for role perceptions and responsibility: “But in another place, again, there's a new young person in local government who doesn't know anything about it, so it seems to them that the task is much more difficult if they've never done it before” (WCD1).

3.3.1. From codes to themes

In the second round of the coding process, using the descriptive codes outlined previously, more abstract categories were identified. This was done by going through the coded segments and making notes about themes. About 45 first ideas were identified in a more specific manner, including words and word combinations. As a next step, the ideas were grouped under similar notions, from which themes were then identified. These themes were: Resource constraints and needs, Environmental concerns, The need for observable outcomes, Bureaucracy issues and the need for change, Community Empowerment and engagement, Language barriers and Digital tools (Annex 4).

To explain these in more detail, the theme of resource constraints includes the issues of funding and time as well as the lack of support from other actors. Moreover, the notion of continuity and difficulties that come with having long-term or repeated projects are mentioned. As well as a need for a sustainable system by the public sector to keep the initiatives going. Furthermore, the notion of skills as a needed recourse (Annex 4) The theme of environmental concerns was expected to arise due to the case-study selection. Within this theme, Environmental concerns include the perceived need for environmental protection and the general concern for the environment. Also, disinterest in the environment is included and the feelings of not being impacted by environmental issues. On the other side, the feelings of doing the “right” thing and the notion that if someone is personally not affected, they do not engage. The need for observable outcomes were the impact and benefit of projects, the notion of a little goes a long way and the concrete implementation of certain goals or the plan to implement as a goal. Furthermore, the impact of the initiatives is included in this theme.

Bureaucracy issues and need for change include the feelings of things having been done in a certain way, and even if there is a willingness to change, their work processes do not facilitate such action. The changing of people in the public sector can lead to issues as they might perceive tasks as more unmanageable than they are. There is a need to follow their work process to achieve co-production results. The theme of need for community empowerment and engagement includes the notions of need of deliberation in society and the accessibility to deliberation or other initiatives. Moreover, taking initiative either in behalf or for your community and doing such from a sense of obligation and through this notion seeking to change one’s own or other behaviour. Also, the power of community action and the interest of the well-being of one’s own community is included under this theme. Last, the notion of overview of who the community is, is included. For the language barrier’s theme, mentions of difficulties

due to different languages in communication. The digital tool's theme includes using different platforms for communication.

As a summary the themes that were identified from the codes are:

1. Environmental concerns
2. Resource constraints and needs
3. The need for observable outcomes
4. Bureaucracy issues and need for change
5. The need for community empowerment and engagement
6. Language barriers
7. Digital tools.

The next step in the process was to engage with the second round of coding, which results will be presented in the following. In the second round of coding, the themes were used. Nevertheless, prior to this, the findings about categorisation the cases under proper, performing, and responsive governance are outlined.

CHAPTER 4: Findings

“Citizens are not clients – they are the holders of the highest power - the question is how to give them back the power of decision-making so, perhaps, they will be seen in this role” (TCA1). This quote is taken from the gathered interview data, and it introduces the following analysis. It is interesting to see different roles in society, where different actors are perceived to be, and the sought-after changes thereof. In the next parts the different categories of public values are deliberated on, using a case-to-case basis and the summarising of general trends. Then, the findings about the barriers will be stated before moving on to the discussion of the outlined findings in the next part.

4.1. Public value

The chosen categorisations for public value in this thesis were proper governance, performing governance, and responsive governance by De Graaf et al. (2016) in Nieuwenhuizen and Meijer (2021). The case studies were coded using these three categories and the previously outlined more individual values that the governance categories are concerned with. The findings will be presented first combined for all four case studies and then individually for each case study. As mentioned previously, the results will be presented in a qualitative style, in a continuous text, based on an assessment of the findings in the data. The case study findings will be presented separately, and then a combined trend will be outlined.

4.1.1. *East-Viru Green Plan and Public Value*

It appears that the main value conflict within the East-Viru Green Plan is between engaging a diverse group of people and involving individuals who have the expertise or position to implement the project outcomes. This conflict categorises the perceived split found in the data between being able to categorise the East-Viru Green Plan between responsive governance and performing governance. First, because the green plan was composed through engaging in co-production, but the composing of the green plan was not the end goal. The final goal of the initiative was to work towards implementation of the targets that were agreed upon. Nevertheless, simultaneously the interviewee expressed a great interest in the engagement of different stakeholders and citizens.

During the project, some stakeholders were invited using a method of interest and impact (EV1), which means that the potential participants were mapped out using the matrix and aiming for the people with the highest combination of the two.

“So, in this group, we tried first of all to find out who could have a connection with the issue that the green plan would help to solve, and then we placed all these parties on a matrix, so that one axis had an impact. Impact means that each organisation or group has the ability to influence the process, either in a positive way, but it can also be the other way round, in the direction of working against it, because the impact is so great, and the interest is on the other axis. The interest indicates the readiness, and it is usually said that the most appropriate group to deal with in such processes are the people/representatives of the organisations who have a great interest in the topic, as well as those who have a great influence” (EV1).

As a side note, the necessity of including some who had a high impact, but low interest due to their decision-making capacities. This again highlights the focus on the efficiency of the process in the terms of its outcomes. Furthermore, according to one research participant (EV1) a very specific experience was pursued from the participants in the context of the environment – for example in green economy. This indicates that the targeted selection of the participants to ensure effective outcomes of the meetings. Targeting the participants was also done through seemingly important connections in their network and the interviewee mentioned the interest in the idea of network governance in the process of connecting and collecting participants. This was all because it was perceived truly important of what type of influence the people have who are participating in the final implementation of the plan as one of the interviews put it: “again, it is important that they support policy-making through their activities” (EV1). Therefore, the competence of the actors was very important and also the effectiveness and the efficiency of the final plan after its implementation.

Nevertheless, a similar importance was put onto responsive governance, with e.g., having more open calls for engagement by side of the co-production meetings on zoom and advertising them through local celebrities on the radio in different languages (EV1). Moreover, in the zoom meetings there was a focus on people by providing the synchronised translation to the events. Also, citizens outside of the matrix were invited to participate and the importance of cooperation was mentioned multiple times, demonstrating the openness towards the wider public and the importance of engagement was emphasised:

Then the importance of engagement is surely that if it is well conducted processes, then all those who participate, they will also learn something new. Well, at least if there is this habit of listening to each other and making sense and making connections, that, in fact, grows that kind of collective wisdom or, or gives, adds new knowledge” (EV1).

Or also expressing the value of citizen inclusion of bringing people together around a certain topic and theme, who would otherwise perhaps not meet (EV1). Therefore, concluding the importance of responsive governance.

All in all, it seemed that the East-Viru Green Plan experienced public value conflicts between first being sure of effectiveness of the final outcome but also wishing to include a diverse crowd into the discussions. This is illustrated well by, for example, the notion of people from different levels having different experiences. The interviewee outlined a story about a local chairman of a building complex with good ideas but having difficulties engaging them with world-level entrepreneurs (EV1). Nevertheless, although this value conflict between the two was identified, the case will still be categorized under responsive governance, due to the slightly stronger evidence towards this regard, with the focus on people, openness, participation, and other aforementioned regards. However, the performing governance follows as a close second. For proper governance, almost no data was identified to outline an argument towards this regard.

4.1.2. Tallinn's Citizens' assembly for a green capital and Public Values

The public value cluster identified for Tallinn's citizens' assembly was responsive governance. From all the case studies, it seemed as the notion of responsive governance was the most in focus in designing the citizens assembly. It was deemed as important to include a most diverse group of people and have this designed into the process and through this empower citizens. The concept of the citizen's assembly and the creation of a miniature version of Tallinn, with an equal chance for everyone to be chosen as a goal, shows how important the aspect of participation was for this initiative:

“Participants in the People's Assembly, as a mini-public method, are recruited on the basis of a random statistical sample. Random selection of participants respects the democratic principle that everyone has an equal chance of being elected. This approach ensures a level of representativeness for the assembly that is not comparable to the results of democratic elections or the involvement of interest groups or active citizens. The members of the People's Assembly represent the true variability of the population”
(TCA3 p. 5).

Their focus on people became evident through how they already designed some elements for a better discussion into the event. For example, there were facilitators at every table to help with conversation (TCA1/2). Furthermore, people were invited to outlive their strong emotions in the first meeting of the assembly (TCA1/2). Also, the organisers did their best to openly

advertise their event and experienced success within this aspect. One of the interviewees explains:

“The fact that such a thing is coming up is important to start communicating this early. But I think it worked. That we like got into both Estonian and Russian communication and it was, it was quite a big interest in some of the articles. It could be seen from the readability” (TCA1).

The whole process can be described as highly transparent, as the blueprint is openly available to use for other organisations and the organisers expressed their content with the possibility of others using it (TCA1/2). Responsive governance could also be noted in the city structures of Tallinn’s goal towards a greener city, which would be open to the world and welcoming to people living and working there (TCA1).

Performing governance included only some mentions regarding the need for implementation after the people’s assembly has finished (TCA1), and proper governance could be outlined only through the thoughts about the data protection procedures after the sortition process had been completed (TCA4). Therefore, it is concluded such as also the last initiative, also this is categorised under responsive governance.

4.1.3. World Cleanup Day and Public Value

The World Cleanup Day has published a strong value statement in addition to the ideas gathered from the interview. The essence of many of the statements can be distributed under responsive governance. A good example for summarizing this can be found in their mission statement:

“The NGO values and acts on the basis of honesty, equality, dignity, openness, solidarity, cooperation, diversity, and integrity” (WCD2).

Moreover, similar to the Citizens Assembly, they also put a focus on having an outreach and hoping for wide participation through different communication campaigns. The interviewee explains their campaign process:

In addition, of course, we do radio advertising and, in this sense, classic campaign advertising and information, we also do whatever possibilities we have, and then there's a gap of about a month before the World Cleanup, where the main campaign starts in mid-August, and then goes until September 20th, which is World Cleanup Day” (WCD1).

Moreover, the World Cleanup Day as an organisation focuses on accountability of people as a group in the sense of the environment. Moreover, they have created a strong group, with whom

they cooperate every year comprising of many schools, kindergartens as well as some local governments. Also, it can be stated that the organisation is transparent in their actions and goals, which are publicly available. Within the coding process, it became evident, that also the World Cleanup Days public value cluster is responsive governance. Performing governance was much less in focus, with only a few ideas about, e.g., the efficiency of the mission statement (WCD2). Proper governance was also not touched upon in the interview but mentioned in the mission statement. For example, in the ethical statement:

“In their day-to-day activities, NGOs are guided by the laws and other legislation in force in the Republic of Estonia” (WCD2).

Here it can be seen that thoughts of proper governance have been present in the organisation’s composition, but it was found through the data, that such do not comprise the main focus. As a summary, also the case study World Cleanup Day is categorised under responsive governance.

4.1.4. Foodsharing Tartu Public Value

Foodsharing Tartu representative clearly outlined their mission. This included having less food waste and providing a system to tackle it on the local level. As a side note the local level is mentioned as this thesis is focussing on the Tartu branch of the organisation and this might differ from the organisational body as a whole. From the aspects of performing governance, it was noted that whoever has food that need to be saved, can call the initiative and the food will be picked up and they can package the food (FST1). As one of the interviewees described:

“If there is interest in this topic - we always make an offer. It's very easy with us. Here's the phone number, if you need food to save, call. We'll be there. We don't have any system. We can put the food together ourselves or you put the food together, we deliver it and that's it. We don't do anything complicated like having to fill in any forms etc. We don't have to call, we don't have to put stamps, we don't have to show any kind of cards, we just do it very quickly” (TFS1).

This shows that they are able to efficiently provide a service to help anyone with excess food and willingness to do so. On the other side, the same example can also outline the openness and cooperation with new actors wishing to engage with the initiative, without posing any barriers to them. They are highly transparent about the process of saving the food as well and make the saved food available for the wider public in their public fridges. Also, the lack of any system portrays the accountability volunteers have towards the initiative, with them being

willing to dedicate their time to save food at a moment's notice. This also highlights the significance of trust in the process as the lack of system is working. Moreover, their volunteers have to have a car and the willingness to contribute multiple times a week portraying the availability of trustworthiness of the participants.

The organisation highlights the importance of cooperation within the people who are working with them. The close-knit community that the volunteer base represents was truly emphasized. According to the research participant:

“Our point is not that only food can be saved, our point is that you are a truly nice person who cares about others” (FST2).

Nevertheless, they do have open calls for volunteers at all times in e.g., pages for Estonian volunteer portals. Thus, they are accepting more people into their community. Tartu Foodsharing is also in cooperation with some student organisations of Tartu, exchanging food for events for the possibility to use their conference rooms when needed. As a side note is that their usual communication happens online but sometimes it is good to have an in-person meeting space. Proper governance classification referred to re-establishing integrity with companies who had made poor experiences with a similar initiative. Other people who had expressed themselves with same goals to a current stakeholder, has started to sell the food they had received. Therefore, in the beginning, Foodsharing Tartu had to prove themselves in their professionalism (TFS1).

All in all, also this case study of Foodsharing Tartu was classified under responsive governance, due to its focus on people, trustworthiness and openness, transparency as well as openness and cooperation and accountability. Having now classified all case studies individually, the next section will consider the perceived patterns across all case studies.

4.1.5. All case studies and public value

In this segment, all case study findings about values are combined. The main finding for all case studies was that from the public value clusters all the case studies can be considered under the scope of responsive governance. In the dataset, across all the cases, a focus on people as well as participation, including openness and cooperation were identified and the inclusion of people was highly regarded. Although the other examples could be more clearly distributed under the umbrella of responsive governance, in the East-Viru Green Plan, it became evident that there was a bigger division between responsive and performing governance. Nevertheless, it was found that the aspects of responsive governance outweighed the aspects of performing

governance with the cooperation of various actors and provision of open zoom calls for the whole population of East-Viru County.

For the other cases, mentions and aspects of performing governance were significantly less focused on but still appeared more important to the initiatives than proper governance but less than responsive governance. As previously stated, proper governance is frequently regarded as either a foundational element or an aspect that typically operates in the background without being consciously considered. Meaning that for example following the laws or lawfulness is important for any of the case studies but it is usually not explicitly mentioned. The aspect that proper governance stays in the background withing co-creation initiatives was also found from the data gathered for these case studies. Also, some aspects were considered, but it can be stated that the aspects of proper governance, although considered, would not be the driving force behind these initiatives.

Therefore, summarising the last public value clusters identified within the case studies, it was found that all of the four can be, to the highest extent, categorised under responsive governance.¹ The identification from the conceptual framework with having various actors and being responsive to them, as well as transparency in processes and the emphasis on cooperation, were identified. In the following, the findings about the barriers are going to be outlined before moving on to the discussion.

4.2. Barriers

Now, having talked about the public values and their relation to the case studies, as well as identified responsive governance as the main cluster, the results section will move on with presenting the results of the values. The results for the barriers will be presented through each of the aforementioned and through the coding identified themes. Some themes were slightly altered after the second coding and will be discussed as follows:

1. The need for a common goal (cases – environmental protection)
2. Resource constraints and needs
3. The need for observable outcomes
4. Bureaucracy issues and need for change
5. The lack of community
6. Language barriers
7. Disregarding the digital

¹ A similar conclusion is also reached by examining the frequency of codes included in Annex 1.

4.2.1. The need for a common goal (cases - environmental protection)

There is a need for a common theme to unite people in co-production initiatives, and a lack thereof can be a barrier. For these cases, such a theme identified was the concern for the environment, which, to a varying extent, was able to bring either the participants and/or the organisers together to seek to address such apprehensions either on a personal level or on a global level. This means that the personal level can be the personal concern someone expresses about environmental topics that lead them to action. The societal level is perhaps that the whole initiative was planned due to the need for change for environmental sustainability reasons. Nevertheless, in both cases, the aspect of environmental concerns or multiples thereof plays a role. The barrier identified on the basis of the case studies is the lack of a shared purpose or the perception that the initiative is important. In other words, the lack of common goals or ideals can hinder successful co-creation. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the case studies helped to portray the opposite, demonstrating the strong existence of a common goal. The World Cleanup Day interviewee states:

“More and more people are starting to realise the impact their own actions have”
(WCD1).

Examples the point made, is that all of the organisers had something to note about their initiative and the environmental concern. Often, it was about why what they were doing was important. For example, Foodsharing Tartu’s ideal is to fight the issue of food waste. According to the initiative, more than one-third of all food that is produced ends up in the trash (FST2). As the research participant noted:

“When we think of the whole of Estonia, the amount of food that is actually wasted, well, it's actually very scary. So, we are doing everything we can here” (FST1).

That does not only end up in wasting the food but also in wasting the resources that are put into the production of food (FST2). From the data, the environmental concern becomes truly evident. In Tallinn’s’ Citizens’ Assembly, around 85% of the participants (of the survey and the assembly) stated that climate change was an issue (7 on a scale from 1-10), and 75% also felt like the environmental protection issues should be discussed more with citizen engagement on the local level (TCA3). As one of the interviewees explains:

“Participants are more in some way, shape or form, see this climate change issue as a bigger problem than perhaps the average population of people in Estonia do. And you still have, I think, the drive and the motivation, the climate concern, the environmental concern then, to understand what is happening in the city” (TCA1).

Thus, most of their participants had some inherent motivation that had to do something with how the environmental topic is being discussed in their city of Tallinn and wanted to be a part of this aspect. Therefore, if there is a lack of such an inherent motivation, this can turn out to be a barrier.

For World Cleanup Day, such a concern is the waste that is observable and lying around. However, in their newer campaigns, more and more focus is put on microplastics as well (WCD1). Nevertheless, it does unite people to leave their house and do something for the environment. The interview participant explains the importance of clearing up the observable waste:

“It's something like doing something very good for the nature and you're actually doing something very good for your environment and you're giving back in the sense that even if you cleaned up a little bit it has a big impact. There's plastic, there's plastic junk that's floating around. So, if you clean it up, it's got a lot of value, because I mean, for example cigarette butts poison a lot of water, some of the animals, such as marine animals, the smaller ones even die from it. With the plastic too, so the birds don't realise it's not, it's food and then eventually they'll just die from it, they've eaten, some sort of... God knows what, it is. So, on and on and on...” (WCD1).

Therefore, this initiative holds environmental concerns in high regard, and its organisers and participants hope for less waste to surround us and also for the production of waste to decrease (WCD1). On the side of the barrier, a lack of such a goal or ideal can turn into a barrier.

For the East-Viru Green Plan, the essence of it was to compose a plan that could make the county greener, with a focus on, e.g., circular economy or on turning green (est. *rohepööre*). The goal was to become a leader of such a green transition in Estonia (EV2) which is as a goal seen as addressing the environmental concerns. Nevertheless, contrary to the others, it was found that many who attended the meetings were rather scared of the more environmental changes that could happen and, therefore, wanted to observe the process. This is explained by the interviewee:

“I think that we had more of the participants who felt that these changes could hurt them, that they would rather be there, so that something would not be decided that did not fit, than those who, well, felt that they would like to come in an idealistic way and, well, like to join in” (EVI).

Thus, individuals were aware that addressing such environmental concerns could prove harmful to them and, therefore, participated. Nevertheless, it can be said that the whole idea of

the need for a Green Plan was born out of the environmental concerns present in society. Hence, the lack of goals or ideals from an initiative can turn out to be a barrier.

4.2.2. Resources

Not having enough time, not enough money, and an insufficient number of people were some of the things that stood out in nearly all of the case studies. For example, in Ida-Viru County, the meetings had to be shortened to 2 hours instead of the planned 4. World Cleanup Day is not sure if they have the funding for this year. Tallinn Peoples Assembly had to deliver results by the end of the year, and Foodsharing Tartu would be looking for more people if they had more cooperation partners to save food from.

As a barrier, it could be seen that there are some necessary conditions that have to be fulfilled in order to design a co-production initiative. Some of these are their own constraints that follow from not having some resources, and others are needs that need to be fulfilled to have an initiative. Under resource constraints, it was understood that there are often difficulties with reaching sufficient funding, even in the systems that are put up for applying for funding to make the co-production event happen. Relying on certain funding can, in the end, decide if the initiative can take place or not. The World Cleanup Day interviewee explains:

“And since these [funding] systems are not consistent in Estonia, for example, if KIK [Centre for Environmental Investments] has supported us in organising the World Cleanup last year, but this year KIK has changed the timeframe for the call for applications, so that the Cleanup should already take place before the application decision is shared. And we don't even know if KIK will support us or not, or if there is no support from the state, see that is the most difficult moment” (WCD1).

Therefore, the NGO has a grounded expectation to be funded by the agency, but their need to know if this will or will not happen is not met. The structures of the agencies should allow for more long-term planning.

Furthermore, there can be a lack of continuity where co-production that is more “event-based” such as the World Cleanup Day, which happens during a day (sometimes longer with side events) in one year, the East-Viru Green Plan, which happened over a known time period in 2018 and the Tallinn Citizens Assembly, which took place over the course of weekends. It seemed that there is a need to have systems in place to not have to start from scratch every time, but if the initiative is perceived as a success, to prolong it for a certain time period. The interviewee of the World Cleanup Day expresses this point as:

“Here in Estonia, we talk about the climate and the environment and very important issues, but if you have a citizens' initiative that covers the whole of Estonia, but there is no real system or even the will or desire to keep such things alive or to make it easier, where to find the money. And is it even possible to do it all this year if it comes from anywhere?” (WCD1).

The sum needed in the scope of the state budget is very low compared to the benefit of the amount of cleaning and awareness raising that happens during World Cleanup Day, but such an event cannot be planned fully for free (WCD1). Although, Foodsharing Tartu operates without any cash, their volunteers contribute with their own funds for gas. The representative mentioned the usefulness of support which could be provided in terms of public fridges (FST1).

There was also the recourse constraint identified from the side of some volunteers who were willing or unwilling to contribute. Also, they need time to take part in the initiatives, and their time is valuable. There are many various reasons why a personal constraint would arise if someone were not able to participate. For example, in the Tallinn case, it was noted that sometimes participating can be a choice between spending time with family or working (TCA1). The interviewee shares this notion:

“Estonia is currently one of the last countries that does not currently pay in any way for those participants that we even have, and the gift card is no such thing as a no, that elsewhere in a word is also paid” (TCA1).

One of the Tallinn Citizens' Assembly participants shared a story about how they have to pay someone else to be able to participate. This more explicit personal example was brought, illustrating this situation:

“We ourselves have interviewed a couple of actors and then it turned out that one woman is a 24-hour carer for her mother, in fact she paid her own carer's salary. In fact, a person should not have to pay to be involved in such a process. But of course, there was also a commitment and emotion where people felt that this was such a special process” (TCA2).

Therefore, it can be assumed that some individuals would turn down their participation in such a process if they do not have the means to – as in this case – pay for someone to take over their duties. This barrier, as the interviewees mentioned (TCA1/2), has been mitigated in other states by giving some form of monetary compensation to the participants for their time to lower the entry barriers. For Tartu Foodsharing, as they do not deal with money, participants use their own cars to carry out the process and also need to be able to pay for gas (FST1). Therefore, the participants experience a similar need for certain resources.

Other abilities that would be needed are the ability to listen and to be able to discuss different topics (EV1). A co-creation process needs people with an open mind towards opinions different to theirs, and even if they do not agree, the need would be to listen to their counterparts' estimations. The ability to talk to those who you wouldn't necessarily talk to in your everyday life (EV1). Nevertheless, this ability does not need to be inherently given but can also be learnt throughout the process. However, having such abilities can simplify the participation significantly (EV1). The organisers of the Tallinn's Assembly had previously, in another project, implemented talks about active listening as a part of the skill development process (TCA1).

There can also be a need for certain people to participate from the side of the organisers. In some instances, it can be the access to certain individuals who have the power to implement decisions in their roles as, e.g., policymakers. Such individuals having high impact in the policy making processes are sometimes invited to co-produce but express low interest in doing so by laying their priorities in other places. In other cases, the individuals could be the ones who would bring expertise with them to the process to make it more efficient with their knowledge, whether this is about environmental topics or how to conduct such processes. Nevertheless, this part of the constraint is covered even more in the next section, which is about the need for observable outcomes.

4.2.3. The need for observable outcomes

Under this theme, it was identified how one cannot do the co-production process solely for the process, but there has to be something that happens – an outcome - after the initial activity is done. There should be a plan for implementation or other steps. The observable outcomes make the process even more valuable. Co-production, due to its goals of including various stakeholders, can be a costly process, and having observable outcomes can provide a lowered barrier to the justification of the process. One of the interviewees explains:

“The criterion for people's assemblies is always that the follow-up process must be known” (TCA1).

Also, the East-Viru initiative representative explained how the goal should not be that something is written but that after the written parts are done, the work will also be implemented (EV1). The Green Plan had to have an observable outcome that was legitimate. The research participant explains:

“But well, we had to put together a kind of a strategy so that it would be like a green plan, so it had to be legitimate in the sense that it's not the opinion of the citizens, it's how we're going to proceed strategically in the region” (EV1).

Therefore, they had to know from the start how to legitimise the outcome of the project without it being vulnerable to the scrutiny of being based only on citizens' opinions.

These observable outcomes also consider who is included in the process and who is not. For example, as the interviewee of the East-Viru process mentioned, they sought to include people who would be there for the whole process and commit to it. There would be no point in having a different group for every meeting (EV1). Moreover, as mentioned under recourse constraints and needs, the individuals who join should see some importance in participating in the process. The process can be steered by seeing observable outcomes, and more participants can be motivated to join. If the goals and observable outcomes are set, the understanding of the initiative can change. This means that the participants may observe the initiative as something that is not a competition but a benefit for all (EV1). Furthermore, this process also includes the aforementioned matrix used by the East-Viru County interviewee, which considers the interest and impact of the people participating (EV1). This is because the planning process wishes to control the outcome as much as possible, and such an outcome is seen by them as potentially more compelling if they control the people who participate. Thus, in the perception, such control would give a better sense of observable outcomes.

An observable outcome can also be that the process is connected to some activity. For the World Cleanup Day, many schools and kindergartens participate. Some of the teachers see this as an excellent opportunity to talk about the general topic of waste pollution (WCD1) and appreciate the chance to connect it to the day itself to have a more hands-on approach to the topic. As the interviewee explains:

“Teachers are like happy to go out with the class to do, something beneficial, to talk to them they can actually within the framework of this like World Clean Up day, they can also, in general, this whole theme to open up and talk about it” (WCD1).

Hence, it can be considered as a two-layered activity; on the one side, they learn about the issue of waste and on the other side, they go and see it for themselves. Therefore, the children could be able to also connect their thoughts between trash outside and e.g., littering – making this also an observable outcome after the initiative itself has ended.

4.2.4. Bureaucracy issues and need for change

The existing structures have the capacity to hinder co-production initiatives. The East-Viru Green Plan organisers were interested in having representatives from all local municipality governments join the co-production workshops. Nevertheless, even though some showed a willingness to search for a representative, it wasn't always the case that they were able to send someone (EV1). This illustrates how the working processes of the municipality governments do not always allow flexibility in their working structures. This lack of flexibility in their procedures means they might miss out on opportunities to engage with or support these important occasions for their community. The Tallinn process representatives describe a similar situation of how the systems of bureaucracy struggle to fit innovative ways of citizen engagement:

“But of course, there were also many difficulties. It's the kind of innovation that means it doesn't fit in very well with their work processes. This work process is for a different kind of engagement for a different kind of communication. We had to argue quite a lot in order to find ways to somehow reconcile these possibilities, to introduce this innovation into their usual work routines, into the bureaucratic machine” (TCA1).

In both Tallinn and East-Viru County, the organisers were open to meeting up with different government representatives (EV1, TCA1). Although, in Tallinn, around 70 meetings took place in East-Viru County, the interest in such information exchange remained mild (EV1). In Tallinn, it was as if two different processes had to happen at the same time – organising the assembly and engaging officials (TCA1). The organisers felt as if they could not provide a full action plan to the officials but had to provide them with the plan step by step and also have regular reminders to move on to the next stage (TCA1).

The Tallinn Assembly interviewee explains:

“For me, it almost became a cliché that in every meeting I attended, someone said that in Tallinn, we actually do things differently” (TCA1).

This quote also highlights the perception of following procedures of how things have been done and the hesitation that comes with change. Change can be daunting as the stakeholders who need to engage in change do not have experience with the implications that can come with it. They might have differing expectations about the time and money needed and might be unsure about if the change has benefits to justify the resources put into it. The World Cleanup Day interviewee stated that after the stakeholders understand that participation might only take around 5 hours of their time and no extra funds are needed, their hesitation is lowered (WCD1). Nevertheless, to arrive at that point, there needs to be openness toward such explanations.

The World Cleanup Day has a contact person in a plurality of municipality governments. After six years of the initiative, many of them know how it works and are willing to collaborate. Nevertheless, some collaboration issues may arise if the person is responsible for, e.g., environmental affairs changes. The interviewee brought an example of how participating in World Cleanup Day seemed more difficult to manage and cost more time than it actually does. It was said that there is not really any barrier to going out and cleaning or organising a cleaning as even for people with mobility issues - there are tools to help them lift trash off the ground (WCD1). Similarly, in Tartu, existing cooperation with stakeholders works better than engaging new actors. Newer actors can feel a barrier in engaging with something they perceive as unknown. Therefore, as seen in both cases, newer stakeholders – whether officials or other collaborators - might need to be more convinced that the task on hand is not too difficult.

The World Cleanup Day interviewee emphasises the power of citizen engagement. An example is the following:

“I'm very much a believer in this kind of civil society in the sense that it's like all this state itself, this state apparatus, can't for the life of it make things happen, make things happen as people themselves can as a community, as a group of friends. Citizens' initiatives often do a very large part of the work that the state itself cannot do or cannot do well and that the state does not have the capacity to do, so I think that without such citizens' initiatives, we would have a very, very sad society” (WCD1).

Hence, it can be considered important to adopt the state apparatus in a way, where citizens initiatives and co-creation are facilitated and supported.

4.2.5. The lack of community

The lack of a plan or a goal to either engage or empower the community can turn out to be a barrier to co-creation. In the case studies, the representatives explained doing one or the other and highlighted the different strategies they used. A noteworthy approach to engaging the community was made by the Green Plan organisational team. In East-Viru County, approximately 90 individuals from 60 organisations took part in the workshops (EV2). East-Viru Green plan organisers especially focussed on the idea of network governance. In gathering participants, they used already known contacts that they had cooperated with. The organisers believed that if a known actor connects with others in their network asking to collaborate, they are more likely to do so than if the request would come from an unknown source. Therefore, they believed by using this method and researching different network structures, they were able

to have a diverse set of participants. Nearly all of these diverse sets of participants then carried the responsibility of realising the green plan (EV1). Without using this or any other methods for engagement, a true barrier would appear for having participants in the co-creation.

If a co-production initiative fails to incorporate the community, the range of the potential of the results can be held back and become a barrier. An aspect of community empowerment is that through such co-creation initiatives, a diverse group of people meet, who perhaps, without such engagement, would not have met. Not only do they meet, but they receive new contacts (EV1) and also get to talk to people whose opinions do not necessarily match their own (EV1, TCA1/2). Moreover, communities are created from the aspect of strangers being able to express a shared interest in their environmental concerns. The World Cleanup representative brought an example about two elderly women who met on World Cleanup Day and, after participating together, seemed as if they would be best friends (WCD1). The goal of having diverse participants would engage the community past the co-creation. Also, not including a diverse set of people or stakeholders is a barrier to the quality of the co-production outcomes. Also, in this example, the case studies outlined a necessary condition for co-production, where a lack thereof or no interest in achieving the goal can become a barrier in one way or another.

Although the following example is not a barrier per se, it illustrates how the efforts of community engagement can go beyond the organisational efforts and how individuals can take on leading positions. Moreover, how co-production can foster the creation of community. From World Cleanup Day, an interesting example was made about self-organised community engagement. The German Embassy proved to be an interesting example of organising one's small community around a certain topic. The example for this instance was done at the World Cleanup Day, where the German Embassy of Tallinn invited their diplomatic community to join the event with them (WCD1). Then a large group from the diplomatic community joined the cleaning activities for a day. In Tartu, a musician made a public call to join them in the cleaning (WCD1)- hence, community engagement in different processes can also be initiated by a voluntary actor.

According to the Tallinn's Assembly, the community that is engaged, does not need to bring expert knowledge with themselves (TCA3).

“Participants contribute their life experiences and values as residents and are not expected to be or become experts” (TCA3).

Also, in the East-Viru County, it was noted how the participants did not need to be experts on all the topics and even for some, such as blue economy, no experts were found (EV1). In the

Tartu Foodsharing case, the participants also create a community by being similar minded individuals (TFS1). Therefore, the community that is created can differ on case-to-case basis by the participants, but not having such goal of a community can turn out to be a barrier.

Newer actors were church communities that agreed to start to clean up different cemeteries. For the church communities, they had already realised the problem of the waste pollution on the cemeteries, but no-one had yet to come and help (WCD1). The largest community that was engaged in World Cleanup Day were schools and kindergartens. Yearly, there is significant interest from these actors to be a part of World Cleanup Day. They are also thinking about how to motivate them to engage. As the interviewee explains:

“Schools and kindergartens are one of the important groups with whom we have a lot of contact, to whom we send information, whom we think about, whom we think about in terms of children's children, so that we can offer children something nice, like going to clean up, so that they have the opportunity to get some kind of nice prize” (WCD1).

Therefore, to foster community engagement, some motivational aspects might be needed for the participants.

4.2.6. Language barriers

Language barriers was a theme that was identified through the variety of case studies. Although, it was mostly able to be mitigated, it is still noteworthy how to deal with this and how to overcome the aspect. The languages mostly mentioned were Estonian, Russian, and “other” as a group of languages (TCA1/2, FST1, EV1). The only group that mentioned other languages was the Tallinn Citizens Assembly. Nevertheless, for the Tallinn Citizens Assembly, only a few arrived that were a part of the group of the “other” languages.

One of the questions that arose was how to have a discussion in multiple languages in both Tallinn and East-Viru County. In East-Viru County, this issue was most present when seeking to do open discussions. A research participant explained the initial situation in Tallinn:

“[...] people were unaccustomed to the fact that in what sense, but we have to like Russian-speaking people who don't speak Estonian to be at the same table together. From there, the Estonian speakers were worried that you wouldn't go on like that. It was reflected in the fact that we are not used to holding discussions together in this diversity and adapting to this situation. But this discomfort was something that we designed into the process” (TCA1).

Nevertheless, the initial division was changed, according to plan, after the first weekend to have people sit together who spoke the same language. In the East-Viru Green Plan, a

synchronised translation opportunity on Zoom was used to overcome such a barrier (EV1). This meant that a translator was providing live conference translation to the participants speaking languages other than the one that was currently spoken, allowing for real-time information to be transmitted to all participants without a language issue. Nevertheless, when it came to the actual discussions in breakout groups, the groups were separated into language groups (EV1). This mitigation strategy also collides with the aspect of digital tools. Moreover, in East-Viru County, to get people to participate, a local Russian-speaking celebrity was used on the radio to be more approachable to the Russian-speaking population (EV1).

In Foodsharing Tartu, a concern was outlined: people reaching out in Russian to volunteers who did not speak Russian. The mentioned issue for the team was the expectation of them being able to communicate in the Russian language and no effort being made in, e.g., using translation software in their emails (FST1). The only case study where language barriers were not identified was World Cleanup Day; the only note of awareness of language differences was made by the fact that the NGO has a Team member for Russian-speaking communication (WCD2). It is important to note that no leading questions towards identifying language barriers were asked and the results here, were mentioned during speaking about other categories.

4.2.7. Disregarding the digital

More innovative tools such as the synchronised translation on zoom or other language-based applications were already mentioned under the last point about language barriers. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise this point also under the aspect of digital tools as the availability of such can facilitate multi-language meetings.

Tallinn Citizens Assembly explicitly focused on mitigating the perceived digital divide in the society. The organisers did so by sending out half the invitations digitally and the other half per ordinary post. This worry correlates with the perceived boundaries of digital literacy in the literature. For Tartu Foodsharing, the volunteers need access to a smartphone which can connect to the application Signal. They must show willingness and ability to follow the conversation on the application. Nevertheless, for the other case studies, no mentions were made of any strategies or issues that could be considered in the scope of the digital divide.

Organising the meetings via Zoom, instead of the originally planned in-person meetings, had several benefits. In East-Viru County, the benefits were considered, and it was finally decided in favour of Zoom meetings to save people's time. The time was saved from having people drive to a location, as the event included the whole county (EV1). Similar benefits were also mentioned by the Tartu Foodsharing representative:

“We have so many people, we can't expect everyone to be able to come to a meeting at this point in the day, but because we can use Zoom, we can meet. [In today's meeting] one came in, one walked home, one cycled home from work, one just got out of the shower. One finished work. That everyone can like put these earphones in their ear and be part of it, that's really helpful for us. Also, the signal communication platform we can be in touch with each other like this, email is also an option, but it has now gone a bit slow, so to speak, to exchange the kind of information we need” (FST1).

Also, for Tallinn's Assembly and the World Cleanup Day, the organisers noted that a significant amount of their usual communication happens online. This was described as normal or just having an operatively functioning system (WCD1). The interviewee emphasised how much digital connectedness can reach a wider range of people than, e.g., a poster on a local shop (WCD1). Social media as a communication tool was also well regarded for either sharing or exchanging information (WCD1, EV1, TFS1).

The Tallinn Citizens Assembly was only able to reach a representative sample of the population or the “mini-Tallinn” (TCA1/2) though using digital tools. Reaching the data of 30,000 citizens through sortition would be a much more tiresome process if it could not be done digitally. For the data, there is the possibility to request access from the local authority, and it is handled with discretion (TCA3). Although this method worked for the Tallinn Assembly, it has failed for other assemblies that the organisers have hoped to plan. They express that there is a need to access such data to enhance a digital society, and it should be accessible for democratic processes. The interviewee states:

“It would be necessary that this data could also be used for democratic processes, for example, at the moment, the same MKM [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications] is doing this [...] or the IT-Minister, is doing this digital society development. They forgot democracy out of it, they are doing service development, entrepreneurship, but how to develop digital democracy has been neglected” (TCA1).

Therefore, the restricted access to data or the consideration for what processes data will be made available can be a barrier to co-creation.

CHAPTER 5: Discussion

In the following discussion, the findings will be discussed, and the research questions will be addressed before moving on to a proposed conceptual framework and, last, the summary in the conclusions section of this work. To recall, the main research question was: What are the challenges to co-creation that societal actors experience concerning public value creation in Estonia? The supplementary sub-questions focused on findings from the literature and asked first: How does the “role perception, responsibility and perceived usefulness” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia? The second sub-question was: How does the “equality, inequalities, and competence” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia? The third sub-question: How does the “transaction costs” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia? And the fourth: How does the “digital tools” barrier affect co-designing public value in Estonia? The final sub-question, which will be mostly addressed in the operational framework, was: How can these barriers be mitigated through co-creation management?

The main finding for public value was that all the case studies can be categorised under the cluster of responsive governance. Thus, public value such as examples mentioned earlier, participation, focus on people, legitimacy, transparency, accountability, trustworthiness, honesty, openness, and cooperation were identified as being created by the societal actors considered within the Estonian case studies. For this type of public value, certain barriers were identified, some of which coincide with the findings in the literature fully, others to an extent and some that do not overlap with the literature overview constructed for this work. The barriers identified within the scope of these case studies were common goals, observable outcomes, recourses, bureaucracy and change, community, language, and digital aspects. These were shortened for simplification purposes for the discussion. Therefore, if creating public value through responsive governance, these barriers need to be considered. A more explicit discussion of the aforementioned and newly identified barriers will follow.

A barrier to co-designing public value can be the lack of a common goal. In these case studies, due to the case selection, such common goal was environmental protection. The barrier is similar to the one of perceived usefulness. People will participate if they see that something is useful for them or society. Also, this usefulness perception can be created by having a common goal or ideology. In the case of the chosen case studies, such goals were creating green spaces, reducing food waste and general waste, and collecting green solutions for the county. Moreover, the common goal doesn't need to be singular. For example, people also participated to contribute with their voices in this deliberation process and held such participation in high

regard (TCA1/2). Nevertheless, the opposite can also be the case. For example, in East-Viru County, many recognised the common goal the green plan had and were not necessarily there for the ideology but with the goal of doing damage control for themselves (EV1). Nevertheless, for all the case studies, a common goal was clearly identified (TCA1/2, EV1, TFS1, WCD1). Participants noted either the environmental or participatory goals (TCA1/2, EV1, TFS1, WCD1) of the various initiatives as a factor for participation. Hence, a lack of a common goal can become a barrier to co-designing public value as it would be a hindering factor for the “co” part of co-production discouraging participants.

Something that needs to be created within the scope of co-production is community. Through co-creation, a community can also be empowered. If there is no sense of community or approaches to create such, a barrier to co-creation is created. The chosen case studies demonstrated different approaches to community creation and inclusion. One used the ideas of network governance to increase the variety of participants, others emphasised the importance of creating such contact between people (EV1). Moreover, the significance of having a variety of opinions and then the deliberation of ideas in society was emphasised (TCA1/2). The goals varied about which type of inclusion is important, but all case studies had made efforts to include a certain type of group: whether schools (WCD1), a representative sample (TCA1/2), people with influence (EV1) or people with a sense of mission (FST1). On the other side, the potential that such initiatives have to bring together groups of people was emphasised. The barrier of community can be seen as similar but not identical to the previously identified inclusion and competence of societal actors. Yet, it was identified that the competence of societal actors from the citizens’ side is not as important as originally implied. The data found that the participation barriers are mostly held quite low, allowing citizens to use tools to help them participate or providing them with expert knowledge (WCD1, TCA1/2). Barriers to participation are, with the exception of cases created through who is targeted as a goal audience for participation. The barrier identified in this case would be the lack of community.

The need for resources can turn out to be a substantial barrier to co-designing public value for societal actors. Such a barrier was not inherently mentioned in the considered literature, but it has some overlap with the bureaucracy barrier mentioned just before. Although this barrier was not considered previously, it is considered in research. For example, Briley et al. (2015) consider time as a resource barrier, the funding barrier is considered by Boyle and Harris (2009) and also Smith et al. (2022) and Gheduzzi et al. (2021) for skill barriers as well as others. From this case study it was highlighted that if the actors designing co-creation cannot be sure if they have access to certain resources, this can become a barrier. Such resources can

be monetary, e.g., the uncertainty of funding. If there is no guarantee of funding and if funding is needed to realise the project, then this can be a substantial barrier to public value creation. This lack of funding can be created due to bureaucracy issues. Also, such resources can be the people participating in value creation. They are a substantial part of making co-creation happen. Which types of people are expected to participate depends on the individual co-creation case, but it could be identified that different interests must be met. For Tallinn, this was a representative sample; for East-Viru County, this was the crossover between influence and interest; for Tartu, it was people who had access to cars and were perceived as suitable for the group. The third recourse need is time either for the whole process or for the people participating. It was identified that a short timeframe can become a barrier. Also, for some individuals, their time is a resource that answers to their employers or personal life, and they have to make choices accordingly. Thus, a lack of recourses was identified as a barrier.

Diverse actors are engaged in creating public value, but different actors and institutions can also pose a barrier to public value creation. The barrier of bureaucracy and change is similar to the role perception barrier identified in the literature. Both of these are similar in the sense that there can be a person who is unwilling to participate in the initiative as they do not see themselves in the role of having to do so. The aspect that is included in the bureaucracy and change is that it is not only individuals who can see themselves in some roles but also whole institutions whose working process might not be suitable to the whole co-production format. As many of the projects were not on the state level, the barrier often came from the level of municipality and city governments, being used to doing things a certain way and thereby being hesitant to change. This barrier cannot be mitigated without the openness for change.

The lack of observable outcomes was identified as a barrier. To a certain extent, this can also overlap with perceived usefulness. People need to know what use is of the project after it has been completed. In other words, the barrier in this case would be not having any follow-up process. In the case studies, the importance of knowing how the process will continue or being able to repeat the co-production initiative was greatly emphasised (WCD1, EV1, TCA1/2). The goal should not be to create something and then lay it to rest but also to see a sustainable future or long-term potential for it. Whether it is to implement a composed plan, continue with saving food or create an annual event for sustainability. The lack of such observable outcomes can become a clear barrier.

The barrier noted in the literature but not found in this research in the scope of responsive governance was the transaction cost barrier. As every individual contributes in their own way and also emphasis is laid on this plurality of participants, no inquiries within the data

could prove to have any evidence of the disadvantages of citizen inclusion. The representatives of the case studies believe in the public value they create through the inclusion of citizens and, therefore, the deliberation that goes with decision-making in society. Even examples were brought of surprised politicians, who were positively pleased about the extent of constructive participation (TCA1). Moreover, the benefit is in including a diverse set of people with a range of opinions.

The digital tools barrier was often mentioned in the ICT literature, where an increased focus has been on such forms of co-production. Nevertheless, the findings differed from the initial inquiries, which were more focused on e.g., a digital divide. A second digital divide, brought to the attention by Criado & Villodre (2018) with a focus on gender could not be identified but further research on this topic is invited. The differences are in how normalised such tools have become and although some still experience digital illiteracy, they are often assisted with overcoming it. Hence, the barrier identified is disregarding digital tools. With openness to participation, it is noted that the societal actors can have goals of in-person meetings, where digital tools can help during the process or through gathering the participants through the means of sortition. The digital tools helped to legitimise, for example, the sample of the population extracted from Tallinn (TCA1). If in-person meetings are not deemed necessary, digital tools such as online meeting platforms can help to engage a diverse set of participants without the cost of time for them to gather in one location. Also, in Tartu, due to using instant messaging services and video communications, in-person meetings are only utilised at times through cooperation with student unions (FST1). Therefore, it can be seen that the barrier in this scope can be disregarding the usage of digital tools to assist with co-creation and creating public value. Nevertheless, the awareness about the digital divide should not be disregarded.

The barrier of language was not identified in the literature considered for this paper. It is important to note that the literature review did not dive into the topic of multi-language communities. Nonetheless, this topic did not surface in the perceived main literature about barriers to co-creation. Yet, it can be assumed that this barrier can be quite substantial. This is due to the goals of responsive governance and its focus on the participation and inclusion of a diverse set of people. Although the perceived willingness is there to include citizens with a mother tongue other than Estonian, it seems more difficult to realise, and after initial contact, groups were often divided by language (EV1, TCA1/2). Therefore, within the scope of responsive governance values, language differences should be accounted for when engaging in co-production. From the case studies, it was identified that the most accessible way of doing

so is using digital means such as synchronised translation on Zoom or different translation applications. Thus, language barriers are an exciting barrier to Estonian co-creation.

As the case studies were divided into two categories, citizen-to-citizen and citizen-to-government, in the next part the potential differences are elaborated on before moving on to the proposed operational framework for Estonian co-production.

5.1. Citizen to Citizen and Citizen to Government barrier differences

All the cases were categorised in the design phase of the service delivery lifecycle based on Linders (2012). The case studies were also categorised into citizen-to-government and citizen-to-citizen categories, and in the following, some differences based on these categorisations will be outlined. It was expected that though selection of the cases based on the co-creation categories stronger differences would be identified and also category-based recommendations can be made. Nevertheless, such strong varieties between the two groups could not be identified. First, as mentioned in the findings part, all of the case studies were categorised under responsive governance. For the identified barriers, either none or small categorisation-dependent differences could be noted. In the following paragraphs, these will be discussed.

First, the need for a common goal and recourse constraints are discussed. In both of the categories, a significant common goal could be identified in the scope of the environment. Going beyond the goal of environmental protection, for the citizen to government category, a lean was toward having more deliberation in the society. For the citizen-to-citizen category, beyond environmental protection, is awareness raising about different waste issues in the society. For recourse constraints, the differences can be that before the citizen-to-government initiatives are planned, the monetary aspect of funding is certain. In the other category, this is more application-dependent. Nevertheless, both categories need participants and sufficient time to plan the process.

Second, the need for observable outcomes and bureaucracy issues and need for change are deliberated on for potential differences by category. For both of the categories, it was emphasised how the continuity of the process is needed, and the goals of continuity were mentioned. Bureaucracy issues and change both categories had some push-back from local governments and explained how the system is not made for co-production. Both categories called for the need for change. Therefore, in the scope of these barriers, no real differences were identified between the two case study categories.

Third, community barriers, language barriers and digital barriers are discussed. The difference between participation is that for the citizen-to-government category, the participants

are targeted and sought out more than in the citizen-to-citizen category, where open calls are made on social media or other platforms. However, it is important to note that some open calls were made for some of the events of the East-Viru case. Nevertheless, the focus was more on targeted selection than on the other category. For both language barriers and disregarding the digital, no category-dependent patterns were detected.

In most of the data no category dependent patterns could be identified. The potential reason for this could be that for the barriers the perspective of the societal actors was considered, and the governmental perspective was not. Therefore, even though the actors were engaged in either co-producing with the government or with other societal actors, for the societal actors the perceived barriers remained similar. Nevertheless, the small differences identified in some were outlined above. In the next section a proposed operational framework for Estonian co-creation is proposed.

CHAPTER 6: New Operational Framework

This proposed operational framework can be used for cases in which public values can be categorised under responsive governance. The application for the following framework would also be Estonia-specific, as the data was collected within Estonia, and such a focus was laid for this research. In the following paragraphs, the identified barriers and a mitigation strategy are proposed, thereby answering the last sub-research question: How can these barriers be mitigated through co-creation management? This question is answered by a combination of using data gathered during research for this thesis and investigations by Ansell & Torfing (2021) and Corsaro (2019). The mitigation strategies and the barrier descriptions are first outlined in the Figure 3 and then described to more detail below.

Figure 3: Operational framework for Estonia-based co-creation

Barrier	Description	Strategy for mitigation
The lack of a common goal	Unclear goals for the initiatives. No motivating goals for participation.	Be sure of the goal or challenge to be addressed of the initiative before starting the design process. Make sure to communicate the goal understandably and within a reasonable timeframe.
Recourses	Issues with gaining recourses for the initiative and being limited thereby. The recourse issues can move within the scope of funding, time, and skills or profile of participants.	<p>For funding be prepared that due to bureaucracy issues, some sources of funding can become unreliable. Overcoming the lack of funding may be helped by considering more than one funding source or engaging in fundraising.</p> <p>For time consult other similar projects for their needed timeframe and plan every step, even the smallest, with the needed timeframe. Consider that due to unforeseen circumstances - such as a set project end date out of your control - the time supply can become more limited than expected.</p>

		<p>For participants plan the needed participation and a strategy how to reach them – consider if any certain skillset is needed or how to facilitate the lack of a certain skillset. Engage in a “stakeholder analysis” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021) finding actors who are relevant and affected. A “process map” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021) can help to know who is needed in which part of the process.</p>
Observable outcomes	<p>The outcomes of the initiative are unclear. There is no follow-up process after the initiative is done.</p>	<p>Make sure that the co-creation has a follow up process set from the start, whilst being aware of who is responsible for which tasks and what type of implementation. Engage a diverse set of participants and facilitate a process in which they feel ownership of the outcomes.</p>
Bureaucracy issues	<p>The existing system is standing in the way of realising the initiative. There is hesitation in participation. You can see that the system needs innovation but there is resistance to innovation.</p>	<p>When designing the initiative be aware of having to adopt to other work processes. Build awareness of these issues to help mitigate them and facilitate change the system. Openness to change can potentially be achieved by trust building. Expect potential repetition of some steps and assist other actors with the completion of these steps. Provide encouragement to others experiencing difficulties in realising their tasks. Also here creating the feeling of ownership to the critics can help with mitigation of this barrier. Make strong arguments and provide a plurality of reasons for the intentions of the initiative. Ansell & Torfing (2021) state how important it is to name the “elephant in the</p>

		room” (p. 129) to overcome the obstacle by making it observable.
The lack of community	No efforts are made for creating a community or for facilitation of community building.	Use different methods to facilitate community building and empowerment. As mentioned in the resources, consider engaging in “stakeholder analysis” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021) to know the type of community that is in need to be created. Lower the entry barriers by facilitating and supporting the participants and providing them with needed tools or knowledge to participate. Engage in capability sharing in communities. Consider how trust building can enhance community building and how trust can be built also through more informal settings. Different participants and stakeholders can have “pieces of the puzzle” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021, p.145). The endorsement of mutual learning can help with community building.
Language barriers	Due to different language groups, there are issues of communication between such groups.	Be aware that such differences may be present in the Estonian society. For mitigation, make use of digital translation applications or a translator to be able to convey similar information to all participants. Keep initial messaging about the initiative understandable and simple.
Disregarding the digital	The worry of digital illiteracy invites the choice against using digital tools. Not using	Whilst being aware of the barrier, take steps to curb digital illiteracy. The issue in Estonian society is well documented, where the vulnerable groups can be determined and approached by using other means. Realise the benefits of digital tools and their potential to

	the potential of digital tools.	help with your co-production initiative. Consider technological and other options concurrently.
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Source: Compiled by the author using thesis research data, Ansell & Torfing (2021) and Corsaro (2019)

In Figure number 3, the overview of the perceived barriers to Estonian co-creation was given. Moreover, in Figure 3, their proposed mitigation strategy is outlined to answer the last sub-question. When considering these barriers and their mitigation strategy, the public values of responsive governance can be created through co-production in Estonia. These mitigation strategies will be outlined even further in the following.

When planning a co-creation initiative, the first step that needs to be taken is compiling a common goal. Such a common goal will be the cornerstone of the whole initiative and has to be set before starting the design process. Within the process of planning the co-creation, strategic steps need to be set on how this goal would be communicated to the public. Moreover, it should be communicated to the potential participants within a clear timeframe.

Recourses are crucial to ensure the success of a co-production initiative. The main resources that need to be taken into consideration are the timeframe, funding and the profile of the participants. The funding process can be made more difficult by bureaucratic issues due to having no control over the procedures of some actors (WCD1). Nevertheless, by being aware of this constraint, the process can be mitigated. For example, fundraising can be an alternative source of funding (Ansell & Torfing, 2021). Engaging in awareness raising about these issues can help to alleviate them. For time as a resource, a detailed plan of how to engage in the initiative can help to portray the varying degrees of importance of the different steps. Mapping out the steps can help with adapting to unforeseen circumstances and prioritising the steps with utmost importance. The third recourse is a certain profile or skillset the participants should bring with them. A “stakeholder analysis” highlighted by Ansell and Torfing (2021) can assist in finding actors on the interest and impact scale. Also, a “process map” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021) can assist in mapping out who is needed and where. Moreover, use channels that the target groups are most likely to come in contact with, ranging from local radio stations with known public figures to a social media campaign for a younger audience.

Being sure of observable outcomes and taking steps to create them can be a vital aspect of a successful co-creation process. Therefore, in the first steps in the design of the initiative, it is crucial to know the follow-up process (EV1). This includes who is expected to complete

which tasks and what the implementation will look like. Creating the feeling of ownership can help with raising interest in the follow-up process as well as the carry-out of the follow-up process.

There is a need to address bureaucracy issues in a more general setting but for the time being, it is important to be aware of having to adapt to certain processes that can make planning a co-creation initiative more difficult. With time, the degree of adaptation that has to be forth taken by organisers will decrease (e.g., WCD1). Some steps will have to be repeated, and some actors will have to be assisted in the process. Nevertheless, the following of others in their steps can make future processes easier for all parties. It is important to encourage others in their tasks. When engaging different actors, strong and understandable arguments about intentions will help the process. The issues can be made observable by communicating them and by exposing the “elephant in the room” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021, p. 129). Only if everyone is aware of the more specific issue can it be addressed.

To find out first what type of community needs to be built, the aforementioned stakeholder analysis (Ansell & Torfing, 2021) can be engaged in. For community creation, low entry barriers are necessary for the desired participants. Some initiatives have inherently low entry barriers (WCD1), and for others, such lowered barriers are created. The process can be done, for example, by making the information accessible in different languages on the radio (EV1). Moreover, workshops can be provided about e.g., active listening (EV1) or any other skill that would potentially be needed. Furthermore, capability sharing can strengthen community-building. Another important factor is trust, which can also be built through prior workshops or meetings in an informal setting (Ansell & Torfing, 2021). Mutual learning is an inherit and important part of the process of empowering the community that has been created. Participants can provide others with necessary “pieces of the puzzle” (Ansell & Torfing, 2021, p.145). These puzzle pieces can come together to create a holistic picture of the issue at hand.

When engaging in co-creation in Estonia, with the goal of communicating between a variety of groups, language barriers can be mitigated through clear language and digital tools. If the messages are kept understandable and simple for the initial process of engaging participants, a part of the language barrier can be mitigated. Also, the use of digital tools such as translation applications can help participants engage in multi-language discussions. Also, if the process is happening online, an interpretation option for platforms such as Zoom can be used, where in real-time, participants hear the channel with a translator to understand the discussion. As mentioned for the language mitigation strategy, digital tools are helpful for multi-language communication. Furthermore, using digital benefits can facilitate the process

in different ways – for example voting for the deliberation outcome (TCA1/2). By being aware of the more vulnerable groups and helping to curb digital illiteracy, the full potential of digital tools for these initiatives can be used. Digital tools can also be used in addition to analogue tools.

These mitigation strategies can help to enhance the planning of future co-production initiatives and mitigate the identified barriers to Estonian co-creation. Thereby the final research question is answered. The next part of this thesis will be the highlighting of potential further research. The final part will be the conclusion.

6.1. Future research

The language differences in Estonia propose an interesting area of how to approach the research of co-production. Moreover, approaching this topic from the side of public sector actors in Estonia, rather than societal actors would be worth considering. Research in Estonia about co-production has been conducted before (see e.g., McBride et al., 2018; Toros et al., 2022), but less with an environmental focus. Also, the inclusion of participants in the data-gathering process can give this topic an even more comprehensive overview. Another potential future research could be in the scope of comparing differences in environmental and, for example, social co-production and realising differences and similarities between these topics. Also, this thesis only focused on the design phase of the service delivery cycle and another possibility for future research could be considering case studies in the monitoring and execution phases. After having outlined some future research possibilities, the next and final step for this thesis will be the conclusion.

Conclusion

The research objective for this thesis was to investigate the barriers to co-designing public value in Estonia. The thesis answered the research question: What are the challenges to co-creation that societal actors experience concerning public value creation in Estonia? In addition to the main research question, sub-questions were posed using barriers to co-production identified from the literature. The barriers were studied from the perspective of societal actors, and the role of societal actors in co-creating public value was highlighted. The barriers were investigated by using four environmental case studies in Estonia. These case studies were World Cleanup Day (2018 - present date), Tallinn's Citizens' Assembly for a Green Capital (2023), East-Viru County Green Plan (2020 - 2021) and Foodsharing Tartu (2019 - present date). The investigation took place in March and April 2024 through gathering data using semi-structured interviews with individuals who had some type of leading position in the initiative. The interview data was accompanied by document analysis.

To answer the research questions, barriers were identified from the literature as a guide for empirical inquiry. The barriers identified from the literature were role perception, responsibility, perceived usefulness, equality, inequalities, competence, and transaction costs, as well as digital barriers. From these more specific themes were identified from the data. The Estonia-specific challenges that were identified as being experienced by societal actors are the following: the need for a common goal, recourses, observable outcomes, bureaucracy issues and need for change, the lack of community, language barriers and disregarding digital tools. As for the sub-questions, more specific mitigation strategies were suggested for each of the barriers in the conceptual framework.

The literature used to categorise public value was the De Graaf et al.'s (2016) research. Public value was categorised under proper, performing, and responsive governance. Certain public values cohered to the different categories and Estonian public values identified from the literature were added to this classification. Through carrying out this research, it was concluded that the public value cluster for the case studies is responsive governance. Especially with their actor's focus on people and cooperation as well as openness in the considered design phase. Linders' (2012) design phase of the service delivery lifecycle was considered as a grouping of the case studies. From all the lifecycle phases, the design phase portrayed an insightful opportunity to research co-creation in Estonia. Investigating the design phase made it possible to identify the public value cluster of responsive governance for all the four case studies.

Yet, not only public value was categorised. Also, co-production was split into categories outlined by Linders (2012). The case studies were originally divided into two co-production categories, citizen-to-citizen and citizen-to-government (Linders, 2012). In the citizen-to-citizen category, societal actors co-created with other societal actors. In the citizen-to-government category, the societal actors co-created with the government. However, as already noted, the primary focus was on the societal actors. Nevertheless, in the data, no major differences between the barriers between those co-creating with the government and those co-creating with other societal actors could be identified. Therefore, this primary expectation of different outcomes between the two categories was not met.

In general co-creation research, the focus has so far not been on societal actors and this thesis sought to challenge this notion by diverting focus onto societal actors and their creation of public value. In Estonia, there haven't been many works focussed on environmental co-creation. However, through this research, it became evident that this is a promising field for more research. In terms of implications for policy creation, this study contributes to the notion of the importance of including citizens in societal processes which deal with a variety of important topics, such as the environment, highlighting the importance of deliberation in society. The case studies showed how societal actors have the ability to contribute significantly if included in the deliberation process about solutions to environmental problems or if given the means to create an environmentally beneficial process themselves. Notably some did so from completely own motivation and received no initial support.

In this thesis, barriers that Estonian societal actors experience concerning public value creation were identified. Also, a strategy for the mitigation of such barriers was proposed. These can be in the future used and considered by societal actors wishing to engage in public value creation or by the public sector as awareness of barriers they might be creating. With its unique focus on environmental case studies, the findings of this thesis will contribute meaningfully to research on the Estonian co-production landscape.

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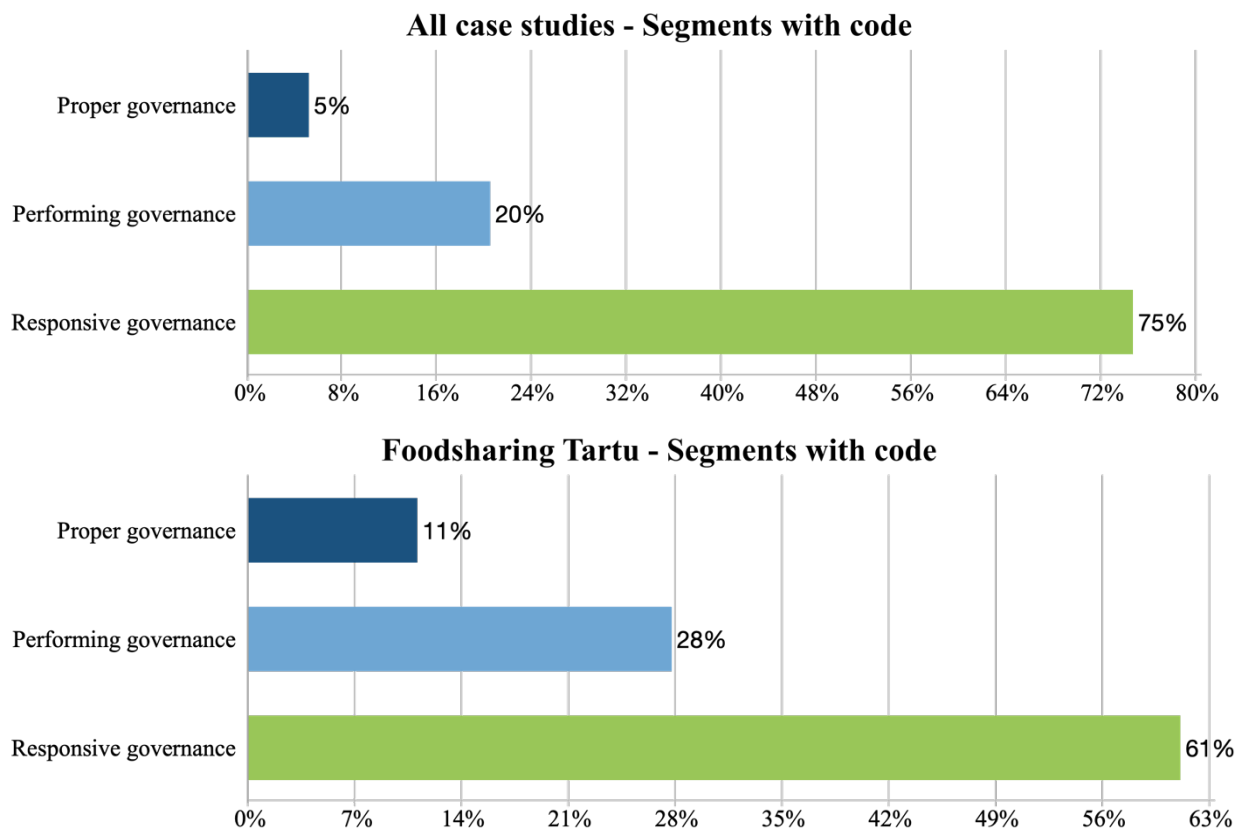
List of Interviewees and Data Citation

1. Project managers of Tallinn’s Citizens Assembly (TCA1/2)
[Google Meet interview with the length of 82 minutes]
2. Project manager of East-Viru Green Plan (EV1)
[Zoom interview with the length of 49 minutes]
3. Founder of Foodsharing Tartu (TFS1)
[Zoom interview with the length of 42 minutes]
4. Communication specialist of World Cleanup Day (WCD1)
[Zoom interview with the length of 60 minutes]

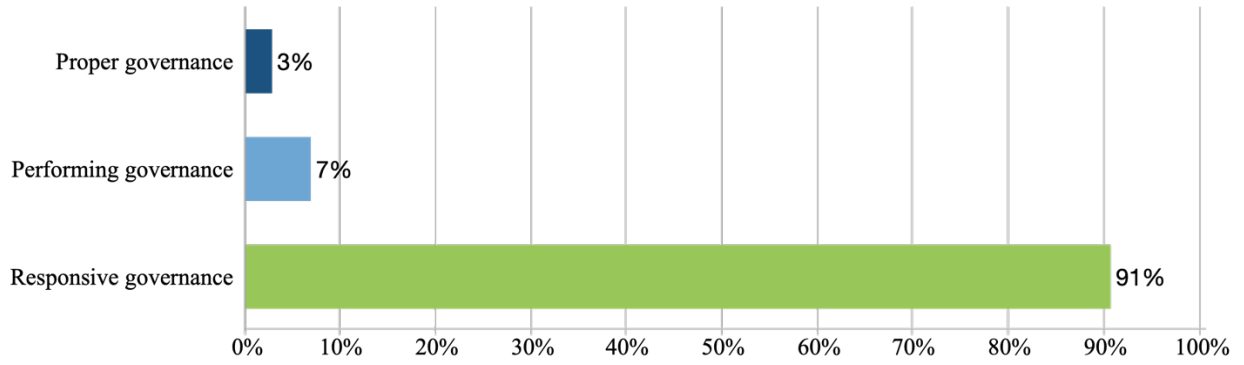
The representative of the East-Viru Green Plan	EV1
The representatives of the Tallinn Citizens’ Assembly	TCA1 TCA2
The representative of World Cleanup Day	WCD1
The representative of Tartu Foodsharing	FST1
The World Cleanup Day website segments	WCD2
The Tallinn Citizens Assembly summary	TCA3
The Tallinn Citizens Assembly participant selection document	TCA4
The Tallinn Citizens Assembly interviews conducted by the interviewees	TCA5
Foodsharing Tartu website segments	FST2
The East-Viru Green Plan	EV2
East-Viru Green Plans own page news articles	EV3

Appendixes

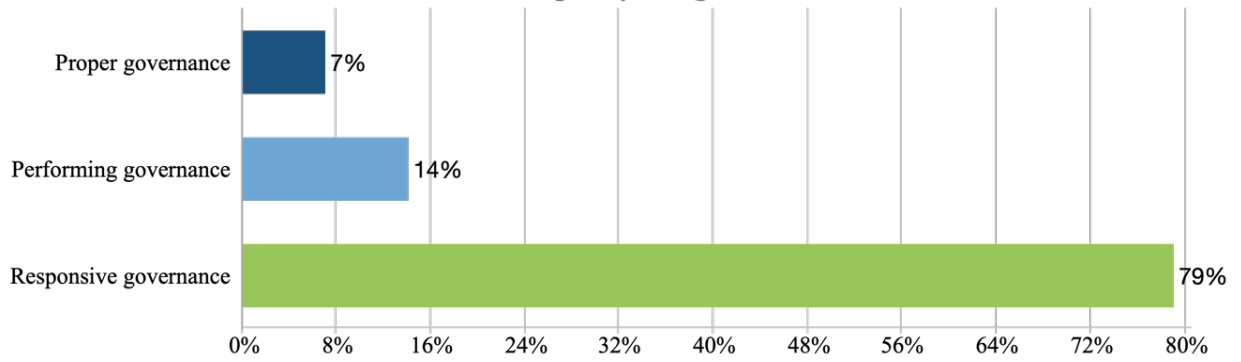
Annex 1: Overview of the Frequency of Codes



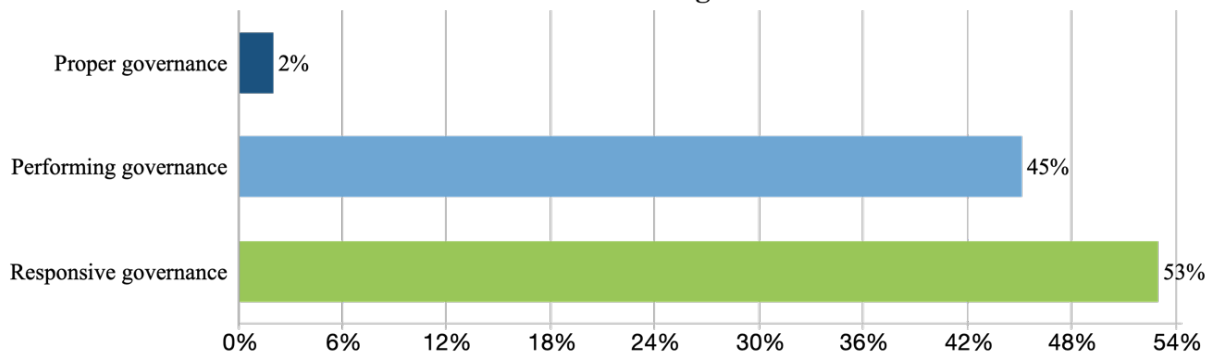
Tallinn Peoples' Assembly - Segments with code



World Cleanup Day - Segments with code

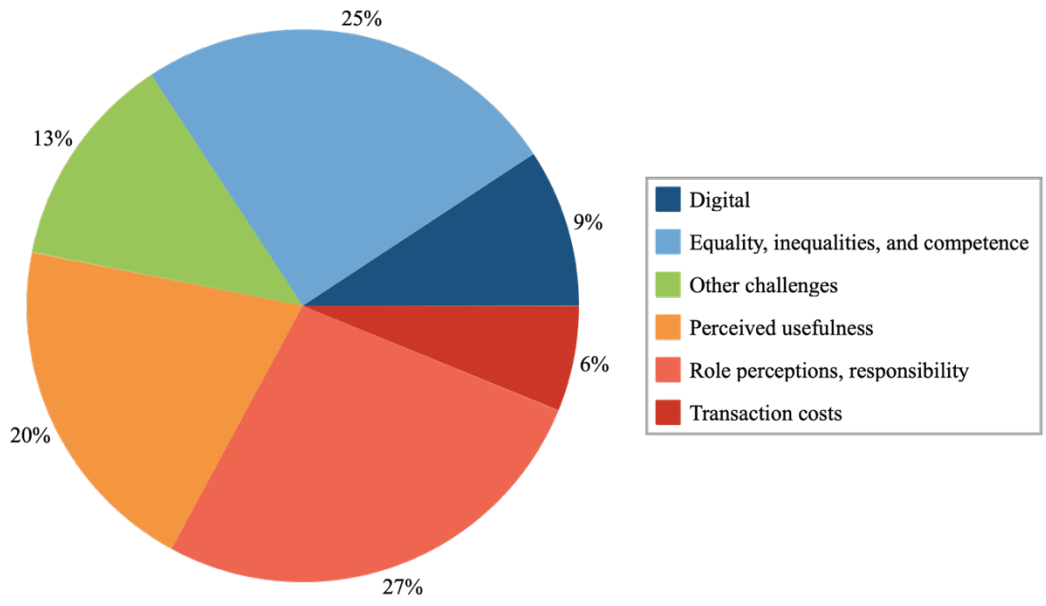


East-Viru Green Plan - Segments with code

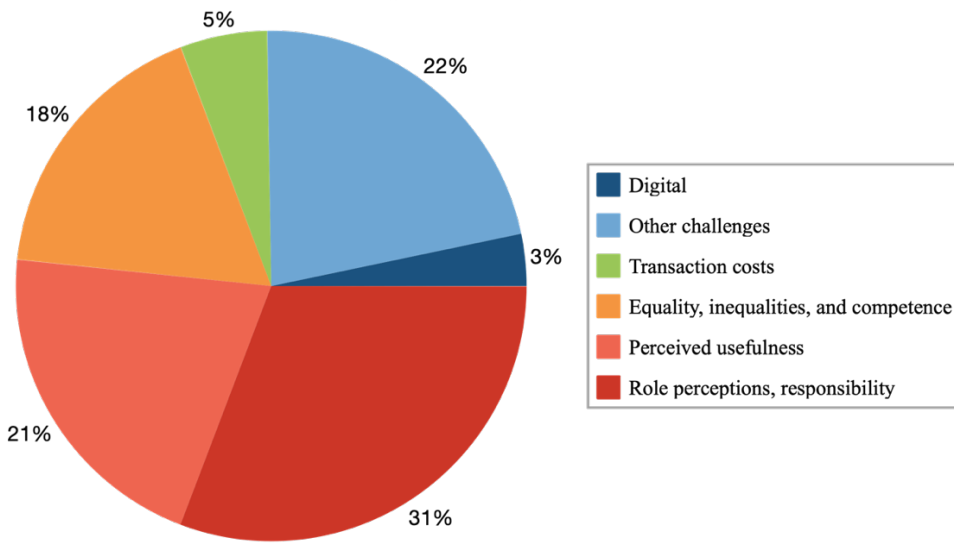


Barriers

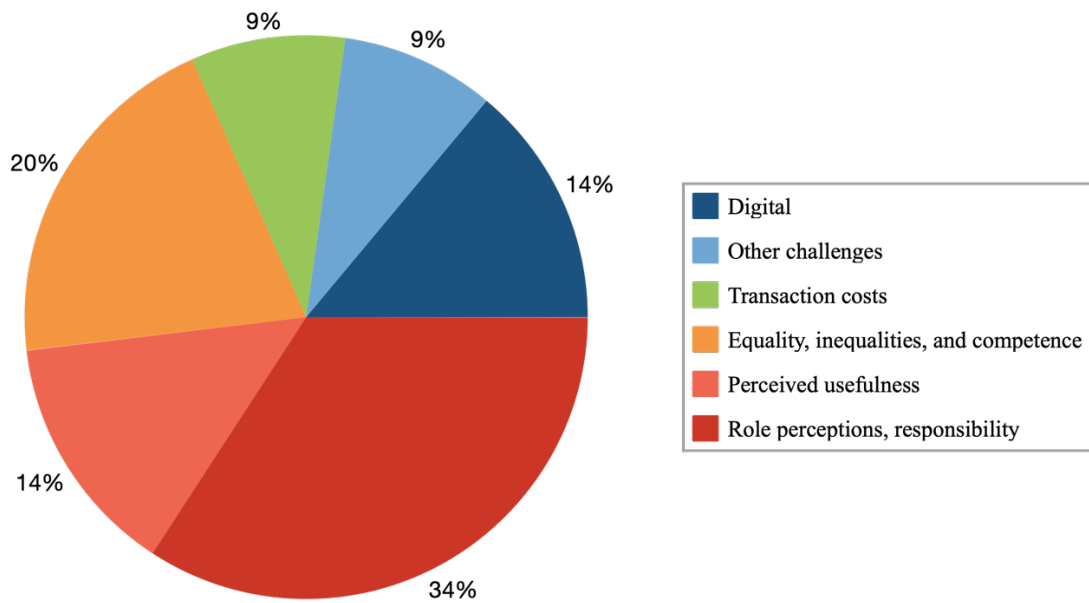
All case studies - Segments with code



World Cleanup Day - Segments with code

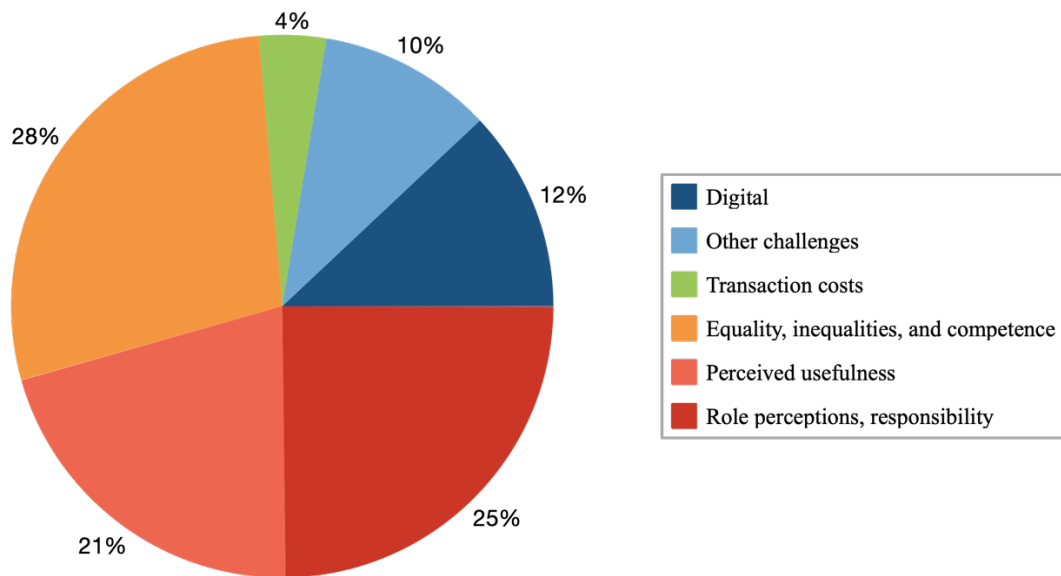


Foodsharing Tartu - Segments with code

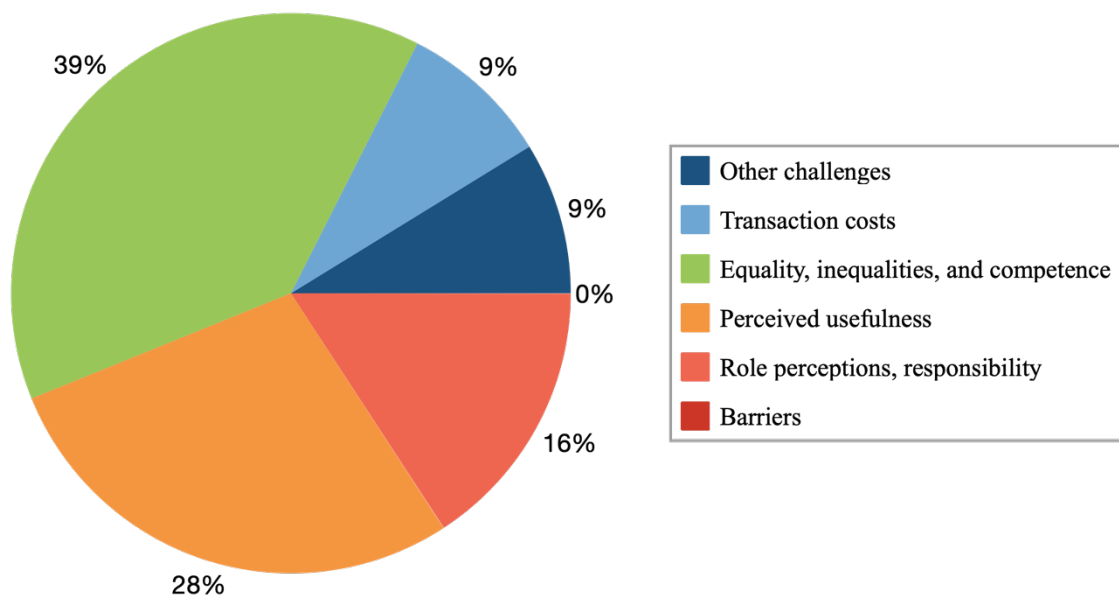


Tallinn's citizens' assembly for a green capital,

Tallinn Peoples Assembly - Segments with code



East-Viru Green Plan - Segments with code



Annex 2: Consent Form

Informeeritud nõusoleku vorm

Lõputöö pealkiri: Keskkonnaalane koosloome: keskkonnaväärtuste ühisloome takistused Eestis

Töö autor: Elli-Maria Luud

Juhendaja: Kristina Muhhina, PhD

Ülevaade: See vorm annab ülevaate uuringust “Keskkonnaalane koosloome: keskkonnaväärtuste ühisloome takistused Eestis.” Uurimistöö valmib magistriõppekava "Poliitika ja valitsemine digiajastul" lõputööna, autor on Elli-Maria Luud. Lõputöö juhendaja on Kristina Muhhina, PhD. Küsimuste korral pöörduge palun Elli-Maria Luudi poole elli-maria.luud@ut.ee või 5919 1490.

Eesmärk: Käesoleva uurimuse eesmärk on mõista ühiskonnas koosloomisega tegelevate osalejate väärtushinnanguid Eestis. Uurimistöö küsimus on: Millised on koosloome väljakutsed keskkonnapoliitika valdkonnas?

Vabatahtlik osavõtt: Uuringus osalemine on vabatahtlik. Teil on õigus keelduda uuringus osalemisest ja õigus uuringus osalemine lõpetada. Olete teretunud esitama küsimusi või selgitusi uuringu kohta. On oluline, et te tunnete end mugavalt ja informeeritult, enne kui otsustate osaleda. Palun lugege teave hoolikalt läbi ja teatage oma positiivne või negatiivne otsus enne intervjuu alustamist.

Intervjuu protseduur: Intervjuu kestab umbes 60-90 minutit Zoomi või Teamsi vahendusel. Intervjuu dokumenteeritakse ekraanisalvestuse abil, tagada arutelu täpne märkimine. Intervjuu käigus küsitakse Teie kogemuste ja arusaamade kohta ühisloomealgatuse kohta, milles olete osalenud. Küsimused käsitlevad vabatahtlike motivatsiooni, ülesannete jaotust, võimalikke raskusi, vabatahtlike rühmade tüüpe ja sidusrühmade kaasamist.

Riskid ja eelised: Selles uuringus osalemisega kaasnevad vähesed riskid. Osalejate privaatsuse tagamiseks rakendatakse konfidentsiaalsusmeetmeid mis on täpsustatud allpool. Selles uuringus osalemisest ei ole Teile otseseid eeliseid.

Andmekaitsemeetmed: Teie konfidentsiaalsuse tagatakse järgmiste meetmete abil:

- intervjuu transkribeeritakse, kodeeritakse ja kogutud andmeid kasutatakse analüüsis selliselt, et isik ei ole tuvastatav;
- uurimistöös ei mainita nimesid ning Teid nimetatakse anonüümselt, kasutades lühendeid, milles leppime kokku intervjuu alguses;
- ekraanisalvestust kaitstakse kaustas millele juurdepääs toimib vaid salasõna abil;
- transkriptsiooni kaitstakse dokumentide krüpteerimise abil DigiDoc4 tarkvara abil, mis välistab loata juurdepääsu kogutud andmetele;
- uuringuga seotud teave jääb konfidentsiaalseks.

Annex 3: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Did you receive the consent form, and do you agree with its conditions?

Are you okay with me referring to you as _____?

- 1) How do you find volunteers to participate in _____? How would you describe a usual participant in the initiative? Do you think there was a group that was over or underrepresented? Can you give an example? Is there any skills/knowledge you would deem useful to have to participate? Was there anything that could have made it difficult for certain groups or individuals to participate? Have there been any instances where someone quit? If so, what was the reason?
- 2) What could motivate people to participate in this initiative? Can you give an example of someone explaining their motivation? Are there any principles that participants have named that led them to join the _____ (add name)? --Does the feeling of belonging have an impact on motivation levels? -- Do people participate because they find it useful?
- 3) Has there been an instance where any person or institution has stood in the way of realizing this initiative? If yes, how did this situation play out? Have you noticed people who resist change because they are used to doing things in a certain way? Can you give an example?
- 4) Was there any point where you considered not including citizens in the process? Do you have any examples of participants causing more harm than good? What would be different in this project if it were provided by the city of Tartu/the city of Tallinn/ Ida-Viru County or the Estonian government? Do you think that the outcome of your project will be more or less impactful through citizen engagement?
- 5) Can you indicate the means by which cooperation took place - e.g. face-to-face meetings, calls via Zoom/Teams, emails? Do you think the use of digital tools facilitated the planning of the People's Assembly?
- 6) How were tasks divided between the team and the participants? Do you have any examples of individuals/citizens taking on leadership roles? How has the communication been with people who work in the area of _____ (add) professionally? Can you name any examples?
- 7) Are there any reoccurring problems that happened in planning the _____? Can you remember a specific example of a problem that occurred or a problem that was avoided? How did you approach to overcome it?
- 8) Can you name reasons why it is important to have initiatives like yours? When your project was being planned, what were the main goals or guiding principles that you and your team considered in the decision-making processes? Do you think this initiative can have an impact generally on _____waste management_____green areas_____sustainability? (If yes, in what way)

Annex 4: Codebook

No.	Code label	Description of code	Example quote	No. of coded segments
1.	<i>Transaction costs</i>	The participation of citizens adds no value to the project. The project is very costly and could be provided without citizen inclusion. Individuals have made it more difficult to realize the project. There is uncertainty about benefits of citizen inclusion and no guarantee thereof. If the project would have been done by a public service provider, it would benefit more people. Also sentences proving the exact opposite from the statements above.	<p><i>“When they're in public debates, that's what happens, where there might be somebody who's got a very strong vision of their own and still loves to stand up and talk for a long time.” (EV1)</i></p> <p><i>“Or at all, that maybe there's no moment of interaction with them because they just don't seem to get on.” (WCD1)</i></p> <p><i>“The quality of the proposal coming from the citizens is then always an issue with co-creation, what quality they come from, how they can be used, that again can be done a lot cheaper and a lot easier to ask for, just like doing a brainstorming session - I myself have developed a slight allergy to any kind of brainstorming session because well, we have so many ideas - you just have to pick and choose.” (TCA1)</i></p>	22
2.	Equality, inequalities, and competence	This concerns itself with the question of everyone has equal access to the projects. It also includes the question of equality was even the goal or if there was a focus on certain groups. The interest is in the over or underrepresentation of groups. Moreover, if there were any barriers that excised or that were created for participation. Also, if there were any skills that allowed for participation or if the lack thereof made participation more difficult. It will be looked for if any participants changed their mind throughout the process and if such group had any similar qualities. Furthermore, an interest lays on power dynamics and the distribution of power.	<p><i>“So, we have identified for ourselves those who should definitely be involved in the whole process.” (EV1)</i></p> <p><i>“There's no specific skill or knowledge at all required to either come and clean or organise the cleaning.” (WCD1)</i></p> <p><i>“We ourselves have interviewed a couple of actors and it turned out that one woman is a 24-hour carer for her mother and actually paid her own carer's salary- in fact, a person should not have to pay to participate in such a process.” (TCA2)</i></p> <p><i>“If you're not good at communicating, for example, it's hard for you to fit in” (TFS1)</i></p>	89
3.	Perceived usefulness	Perceived usefulness has the insight of how citizens need assurance of their	<i>“They have to evaluate all the time where they're putting their time, especially if they're in a</i>	72

		<p>involvement having an effect on outcomes. The people participating can search for a feeling of belonging, which can either be created artificially by the project managers or be there inherently. There is a sense of fulfillment because the participants see how the project has achievable goals and therefore their expectations are realistic. The inherent motivation of the participants is considered.</p>	<p>process where they're investing, or they have to negotiate with donors.” (EV1)</p> <p>“Teachers are like happy to go out with the class to do, something very useful, to talk to them they can actually within the framework of world cleanup day, they can also in general this whole theme to open up and talk about it.” (WCD1)</p> <p>“There must be an intrinsic motivation to be interested, and it's like the debate in the academy about whether it's a good thing to be motivated to come, that it's still a kind of bias in this case, isn't it, only those who are interested in the subject come, and really people were happy with it, their motivations were, but again, looking at it from the psychologist's point of view, it's actually that people have an intrinsic motivation to participate.” (TCA1)</p> <p>“But here it's like a refresher for us, because we're all dealing with our work and parts of our lives anyway, whether it's, as a kind of extra phenomenon, actually caring about what we do.” (TFS1)</p>	
4.	Role perceptions, responsibility	<p>Role perception would indicate how certain actors have gotten used to their position and don't want to or have no interest in giving up their oversight or adapting different procedures. In the case of this thesis e.g., municipal governments or other bureaucrats who would be unwilling to cooperate. This would also include various stakeholders and their interest and role in the project mentioned and certain change that might or might not have happened. Also, the idea of individuals or organizations overtaking certain roles voluntarily as well as the distribution of responsibilities.</p>	<p>“We see ourselves as an education policy movement.” (EV2)</p> <p>“Perhaps senior officials in ministries who are ultimately the decision-makers, but who would have had no interest in participating in the discussions.” (EV1)</p> <p>“But in another place, again, there's a new young person in local government who doesn't know anything about it, so it seems to them that the task is much more difficult if they've never done it before.” (WCD1)</p> <p>“In order for these proposals to go somewhere and become something we need to have a</p>	92

			process on the side to engage with officials.” (TCA1)	
5.	Digital	Any mentions of usage of ICT solutions. This includes the importance of ICT for the project or also difficulties that using such tools could have brought within themselves. Moreover, any innovative ways ICTs were used or any ways where there was a failure of intended use.	<p>“We arranged these meetings with this co-creation group only online because it helped to avoid having to travel just to the meetings.” (EV1)</p> <p>“Basically, we can put a poster on the door of a local shop, but a large part of the work of the network is still done in technological channels, so basically all the information is sent by e-mail, and we have it in the cloud, we have everything here in a folder, so it's impossible to do without it.” (WCD1)</p> <p>“The one difficulty also then, to which we responded by dealing proactively was that we sent out both electronic and paper invitations.” (TCA1)</p> <p>“One problem we've had one time, because we use a signal chat so to speak app to communicate, if you want to get to the app you have to have smartphones, one woman didn't have it, but she was still able to do it through her family using her family phone, but it can be used on the computer.” (TFS1)</p>	33
5.	Other challenges	Any challenges that do not quite fit under the other categorisations, but it seems that they are important to consider.	<p>“People take a candle in a disposable plastic container to their loved one's grave, it burns there for twenty-four hours and then the rubbish sits there on the grave for the next five months, as if in reality you're taking rubbish to your loved one's grave, basically.” (WCD1)</p> <p>“And the other big challenge, which is an annual challenge, is where to find the money to organise it at all, because it is not possible to do it for free.” (WCD1)</p> <p>“East-Viru County was also difficult in this sense, because there is also the Russian language side.” (EV1)</p> <p>“Then, on the ground, the main difficulty was how to make it</p>	45

			work in several languages, this discussion.” (TCA1)	
			“In this sense, the biggest biggest and best, meaning the need that would be, would be to have just the right food storage cabinets.” (TFS1)	

Proper, performing and responsive governance

Coding category	Definition of this code? Decision rules for including/excluding units of text?	Examples of material to be coded with this label?
Proper governance	Any following public values mentioned or described: Integrity Equality Lawfulness <i>Dutifulness</i> <i>Professionalism</i>	Access to personal data is strictly limited and the data is kept in a secure hosting environment (TCA4). In their day-to-day activities, the NGO is guided by the laws and other legislation in force in the Republic of Estonia (WCD2).
Performing governance	Any following public values mentioned or described: Effectiveness Efficiency <i>Competency</i>	we certainly can't use a random sample, but it was important for us to get the different players in the different areas and the people with influence together (EV1).
Responsive governance	Any following public values mentioned or described: Participation/ <i>focus on people</i> Legitimacy	In food sharing, we bring together people from different backgrounds and encourage everyone to

	<p>Transparency</p> <p>Accountability</p> <p><i>Trustworthiness/honesty</i></p> <p><i>Openness and cooperation</i></p>	<p>contribute, think and use resources sustainably (EV2).</p> <p>We have the hearing, we have the deliberation, the discussion, and then there's the decision making (TCA1).</p>
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