Annex SI. Overview of interview partners

Respondent code	Location	Organisation type (anonymised for privacy concerns)	Function
SW01	Leuven	Local social work NGO	Social worker advising on retrofitting options
SW02	Vilvoorde	Local social work project of a regional social work organisation (NGO)	Social worker in community work
SW03	Leuven	Local, multi-stakeholder climate action NGO	Social worker involved in several local climate policy initiatives, including Leuven 2030
SW04	Mechelen (Province of Antwerp)	Local social work project of a regional social work organisation (NGO)	Team coordinator 'Energy and Water'
SW05	Leuven	Local multi-stakeholder climate action NGO	Sustainability officer involved in various local climate policy initiatives
SW06	Leuven (Province of Vlaams-Brabant)	Regional social work organization (NGO)	Director of community work
SW07	Leuven	Local multi-stakeholder climate action NGO	Process manager
SW08	Mechelen	Local public welfare centre	Staff member
SW09	Leuven	Regional social work organisation(NGO)	Director
SW10	Leuven	Local social work NGO	Coordinator
SW11	(Region of Flanders)	Regional social work organisation (NGO)	Staff member
SW12	Leuven	Local social work NGO	Social worker (member a team working on energy aspects)
SW13	Vilvoorde	Local project of a regional social work organisation (NGO)	Social worker in community work

EE01	Leuven		Experts by experience
EE02	Leuven		Experts by experience
PO01	Leuven	Local public service	Coordinator
PO02	Leuven	Local public centre	Policy officer
PO03	Leuven	Local public service (related to sustainability)	Policy officer
PO14	Mechelen	Local public service (related to housing and retrofitting)	Policy officer
PO05	Mechelen	Local public service (related to retrofitting)	Policy officer
PO06	Leuven	Local public service (related to mobility)	Policy officer
PO07	Mechelen	Local public service (related to energy)	Policy officer

Annex SII. Interview guidelines

Intro Outline the purpose of the meeting	- **Introduction** of the researcher (if there is more than one, explain why there are multiple researchers). - **Purpose of the interview:** to provide context within a broader study, - **Approach:** a number of open-ended questions; only tell us what you wish to share; there are no wrong answers; - Mention anonymity and also refer to informed consent - **Duration:** approximately one hour. Allow some time for questions and any necessary clarification. **INTRO: What this project is about. Ensure this is presented in a neutral manner. Avoid being prescriptive or patronising about what should or should not be said, or what is right or wrong.** In this study, we focus primarily on the inequalities that climate change and climate policies may bring to light. We will explore the structural measures that policymakers do or can adopt to tackle forms of inequality. We will therefore not go into further detail on the individual efforts citizens can make to contribute to a more climate-neutral world. Note: The conversation will be **recorded using an audio recorder**. This recorder will be placed on the table in plain view. The audio recorder will be switched on once the introduction has finished and instructions have been made sufficiently clear to all interview partners. All information regarding data recording, use, storage, and retention was provided prior to the interview.

Questions (guideline: 10 questions, always leaving room to ask follow-up questions and to respond to what is being said)

Repeating the questions from the online questionnaire, the interview allows respondents more scope to elaborate on their answers and to respond more from their own perspective.

INTRODUCTION	1. In what capacity are you involved with an organisation that is committed to tackling climate change? *What position/role will you be taking on within the organisation (if applicable)?* Are you involved in any other way in the climate transition processes in your local authority/town? 2. What do you understand by climate change? 3. Do you see this as an environmental issue, a social issue, or a combination of both?
CLIMATE JUSTICE **Who bears benefits and costs; Is everyone on board; What is a fair distribution of costs and benefits?**	4. What do you consider the main challenge in addressing climate change? What is the main challenge in the energy transition? *Keep asking questions if they don't bring up the 'social' aspect themselves: In what way do you think everyone should benefit from climate policies? In what way? How do we ensure that the energy transition and various adaptation measures are fair? What do you consider to be fair? How can we achieve that?*

RESPONSIBILITY	5. Who do you think is responsible for ensuring that everyone is on board with the climate policies, such as the energy transition? • What is the role of policymakers? • What is the role of social work professionals and organisations (including citizens' initiatives)? • What is the role of people experiencing poverty and/or social exclusion?
PARTICIPATION (as in taking part and being involved)	6. Do you think it's important to invite people in poverty situations or involve them in discussions about the climate transition? Why? And how do you think this can best be done? 7. Who is involved in discussions about climate change in your local authority/region/town? (Apply this specifically to your own situation/practice) 8. Do you have any insight into whether people living in poverty take part? *Possibly keep asking:* - *Who organises these discussions? What is the aim?* - *Are people living in poverty directly involved (or are they represented)?* - *Who sets the agenda?*
POWER (participation as influence and impact)	9. When decisions are made about climate change, whose voice do you think is given the most weight? 10. Follow-up question (if applicable): What do you think this is down to (influence, representation, resources, etc.)? 11. Do organisations of people experiencing poverty or organisations representing them also help shape the city's climate policy? How? Examples?
COLLABORATION (insider-outsider perspective)	12. In what ways is there dialogue between policymakers and formal/informal civil society organisations/social work (i.e. counsellors, the cabinet, the administration) regarding the climate transition? 13. Which other organisations or people do you work with to ensure that everyone can be part of the climate transition? *Note: Should we keep asking questions even if they aren't cooperating or engaging in dialogue? Why not? What are they doing instead? Why?* 14. Do you feel that this way of working achieves the desired results?? *Keep asking: What works and what doesn't, and why? What makes it work?*
Wrap up	15. Can you think of any other people who might be worth interviewing? 16. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Annex SIII. Deductive coding framework for RQ4

Analytical approach

To analyse how the integration of experiential knowledge into local climate policymaking is shaped, interview data were analysed using a two-stage coding approach. Following an initial inductive coding phase, segments relevant to the fourth research question were re-coded deductively using the 3-i framework. This framework captures how institutional arrangements, stakeholder interests, and dominant ideas jointly shape whether and how experiential knowledge is recognised, translated, and incorporated into climate policy processes.

Coding principles

- Unit of analysis: meaningful statements (sentences or coherent passages)
- Multiple coding: segments could receive multiple codes
- Attention to the position of the speaker (e.g. individuals in vulnerable situations, social workers, policy officials/officers), used to maintain an overview of who articulated specific perspectives
- Analytic notes were used where needed to capture ambiguities and contextual nuances; more in-depth analytical development took place after coding, using these notes.

Analytical framework

1. Ideas

Beliefs, values, and knowledge systems shaping climate policymaking.

Subdimensions:

- Problem framing: How actors define climate justice (just climate adaptation or mitigation; just distribution of costs and benefits of tackling climate change and its effects)
- Beliefs about effectiveness: Perceptions of governance approaches.
- Underlying values and normative commitments: Implicit norms shaping engagement; ethical principles guiding perspectives.
- Knowledge legitimacy (including the role of experiential knowledge): Whose knowledge is considered valid?
- Perceived lack of expertise: Feeling unqualified to contribute.
- Perceptions of feasibility: Beliefs about what is achievable.
- Trust in public institutions: Confidence in fairness and responsiveness, i.e., mentions of distrust that institutions act fairly, transparently, and in public interest.
- Ideological influences: Political or economic ideologies shaping preferences.

2. Interests

Stakeholder priorities, power relations, and capacities shaping engagement.

Subdimensions:
- Stakeholder agendas: Mechanisms for transparency and responsiveness.
- Power relations: Influence dynamics among stakeholders.
- Mobilisation capacity: Ability to organise and advocate.
- Coalition-building: Forms of alliances to pursue shared goals.
- Barriers to interest formation (practical and psychological):
  - Resource constraints: Time, information, language, staff, funding.
  - Conflicting interests: Tensions between stakeholder priorities.
  - Insecurity or lack of confidence: Discomfort, self-doubt, or distrust in partners (watch out: overlap with ideas)

3. Institutions

Formal and informal structures, rules, and practices shaping policy processes and participation.

Subdimensions:
- Formal structures: Mentions of government departments, legal frameworks, mandates.
- Informal norms and practices: Informal norms and practices: Cultural expectations or unwritten rules.
- Policy legacies: References to past policies influencing current practices.
- Organisational barriers: Lack of coordination, bureaucratic inertia.
- Access mechanisms: Channels for participation (consultations, hearings).
- Accountability structures: Mechanisms for transparency and responsiveness.

Analytical integration

The analysis integrates these dimensions to explain how experiential knowledge is differentially recognised and incorporated into policymaking. Institutions shape structural conditions of participation, interests explain engagement and power dynamics, and ideas structure problem framings and notions of legitimate knowledge. Together, these dimensions explain patterns of inclusion, marginalisation, and selective uptake of experiential knowledge in local climate governance.