

THE PATH TO **JUST** URBAN GREEN SPACES

Exploring the role of spatial justice in the management of urban green spaces:
A case study in the municipality of Maastricht

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5912229

P5 presentation
27th of June, 2025
Management in the Built Environment



OVERVIEW

- I Introduction
- II Theoretical background
- III Methodology
- IV Research results
- V Discussion

PROBLEM STATEMENT



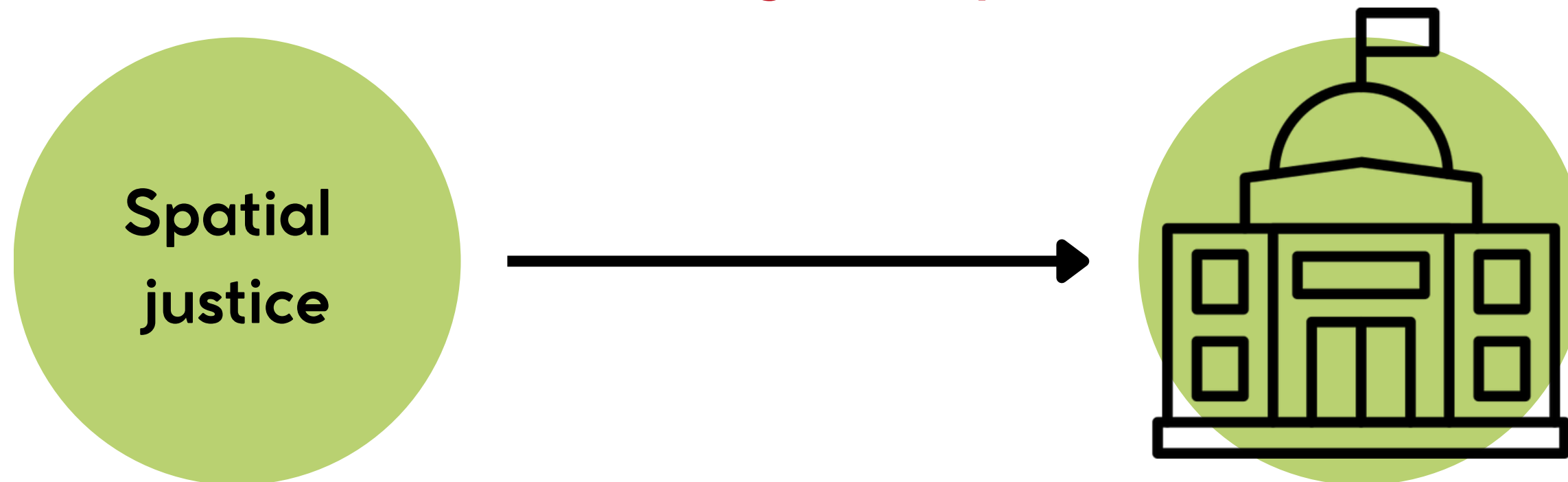
PROBLEM STATEMENT



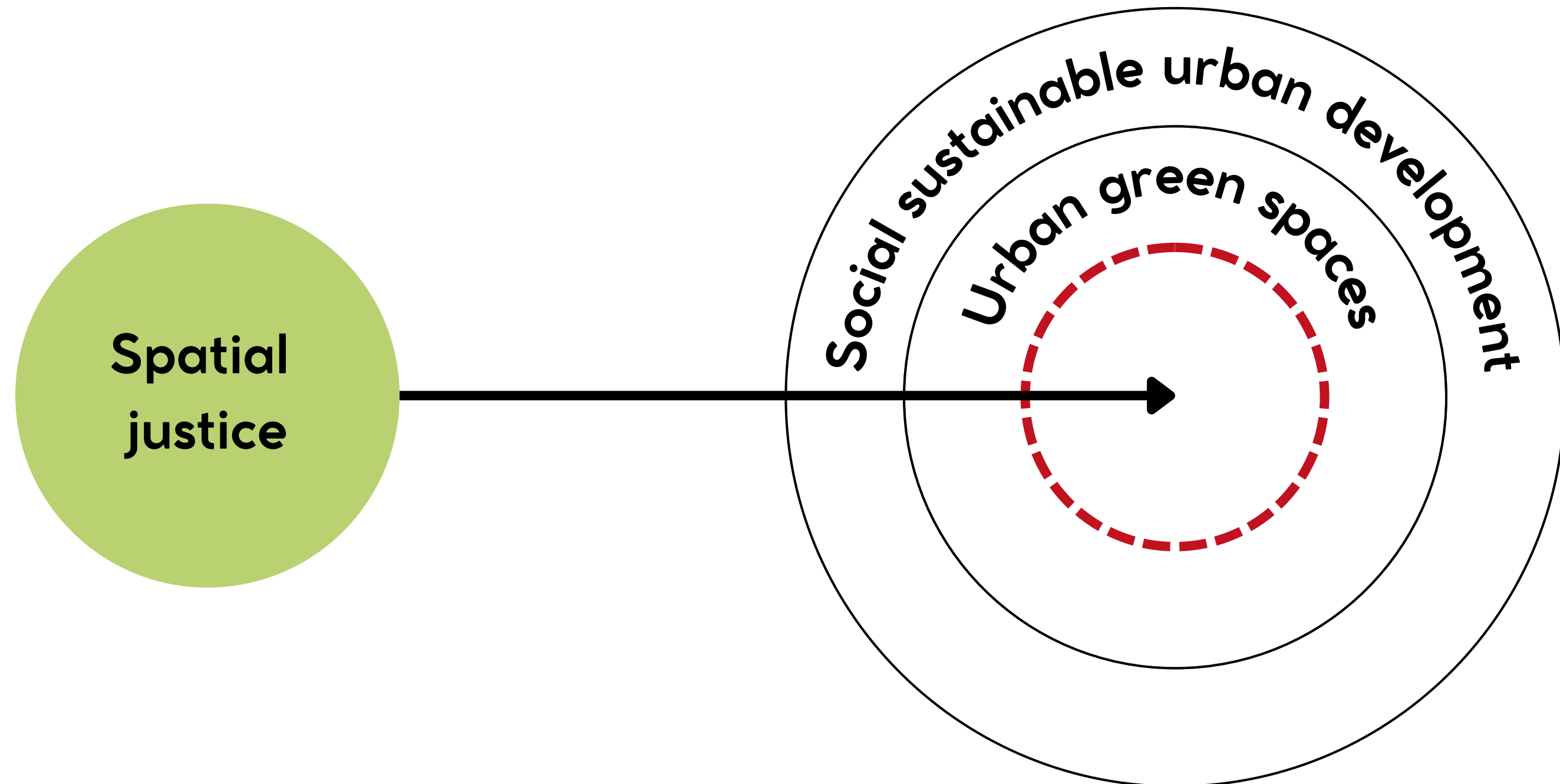
Especially hurting the more disadvantaged neighbourhoods

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Explore to what extent incorporating **spatial justice** into municipal policies can strengthen **socially sustainable urban development** in the management of **urban green spaces**



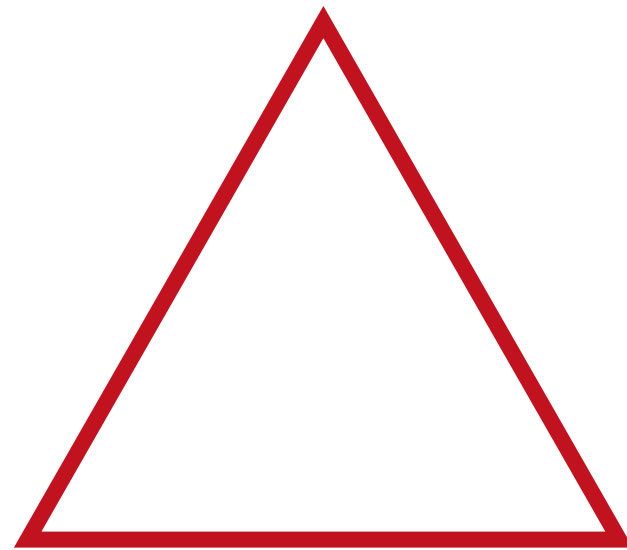
KEY CONCEPTS



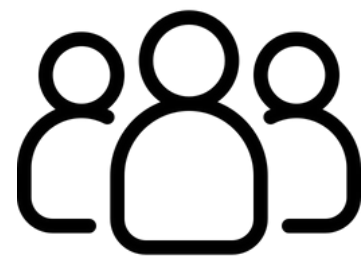
SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT



Environmental



Social



Economic

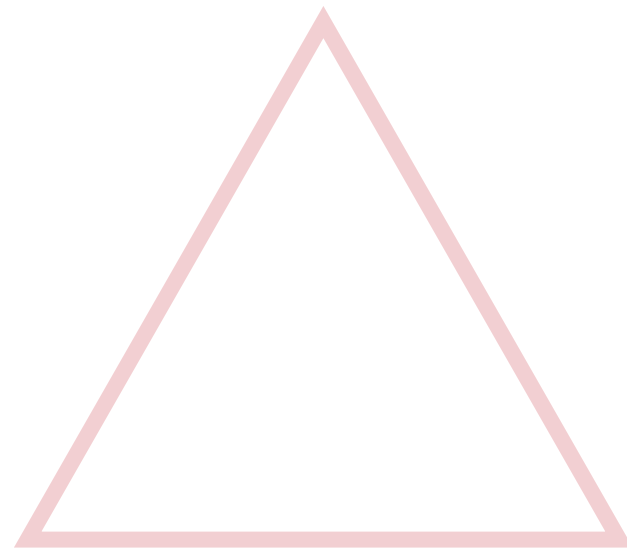


Taking care of people's needs
today, without making life harder
for **future** generations

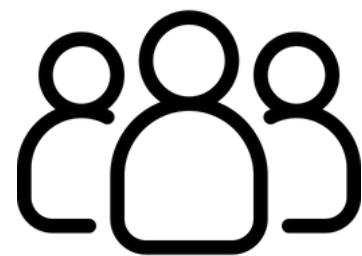
SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT



Environmental



Social



Economic



Creating cities that focus on people's **well-being**, encourage **social connection**, and are planned with the **future** in mind

JUSTICE



Equality



Equity



Justice

JUSTICE



Equality



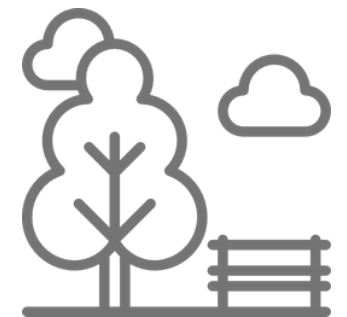
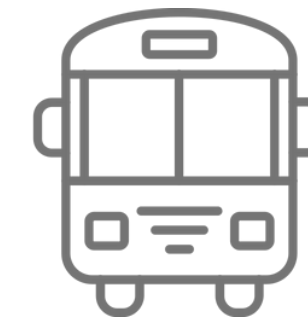
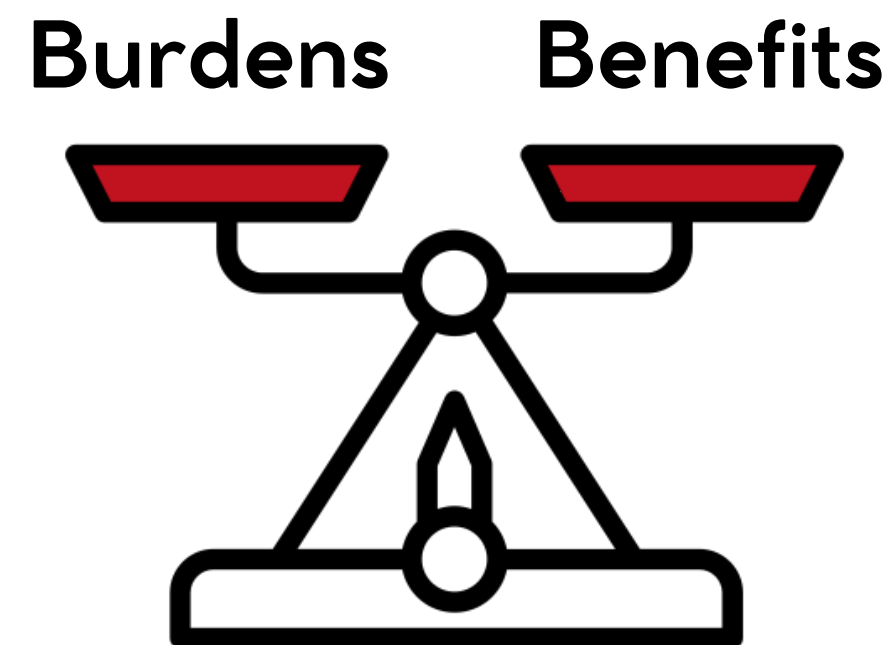
Equity



Justice

SPATIAL JUSTICE

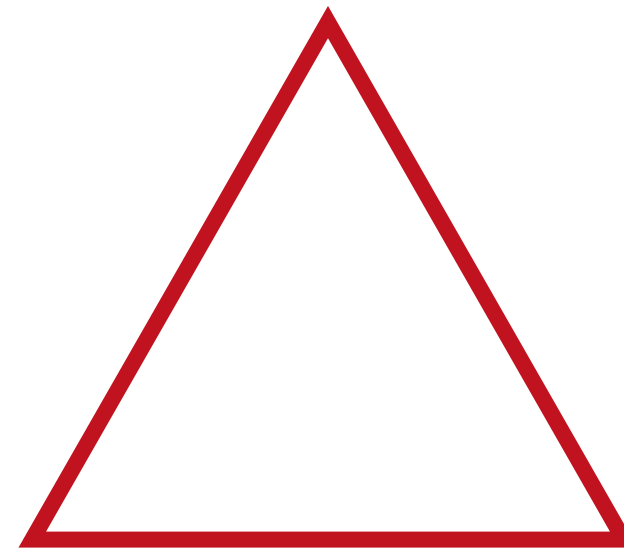
→ Where you live affects what you get in life.
It is about making sure these things are **shared fairly** across different areas.



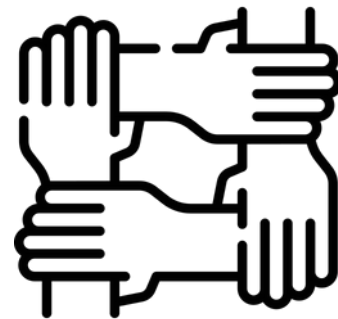
SPATIAL JUSTICE DIMENSIONS



Distribution



Recognition



Process

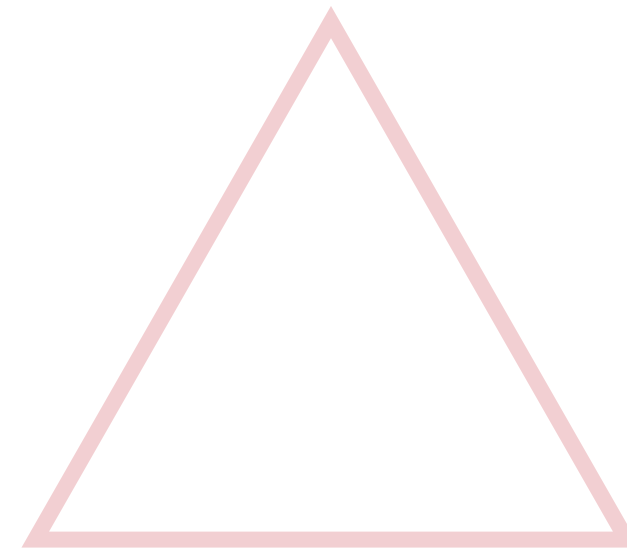


DISTRIBUTIONAL JUSTICE

Everyone gets a **fair share** of important things no matter where they live



Distribution



Recognition



Process

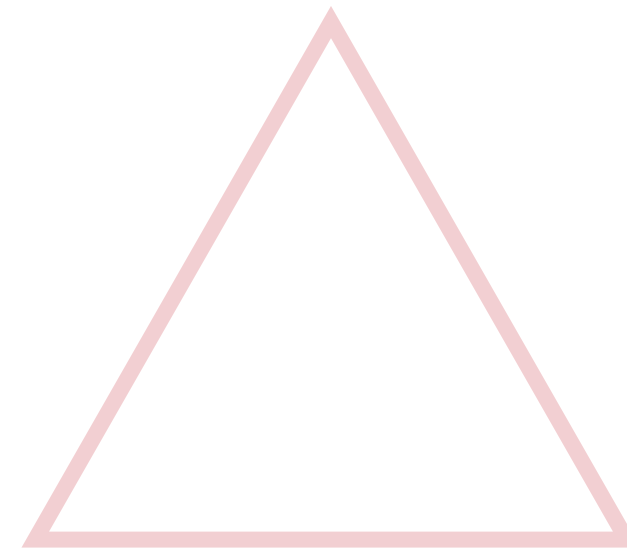


PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

Everyone has **a voice** in decisions that affect their neighbourhoods, not just experts or powerful people



Distribution



Recognition



Process

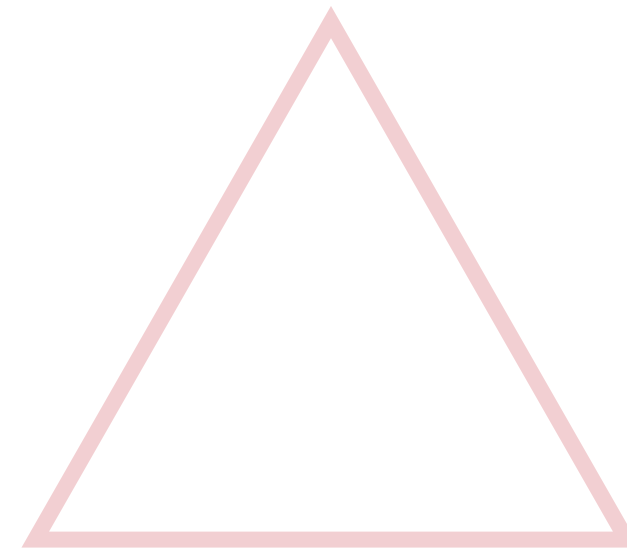


RECOGNITIONAL JUSTICE

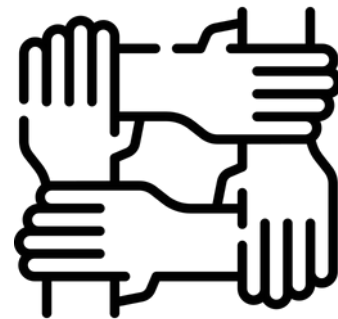
All people and cultures feel
respected and included,
especially those often
overlooked



Distribution



Recognition



Process

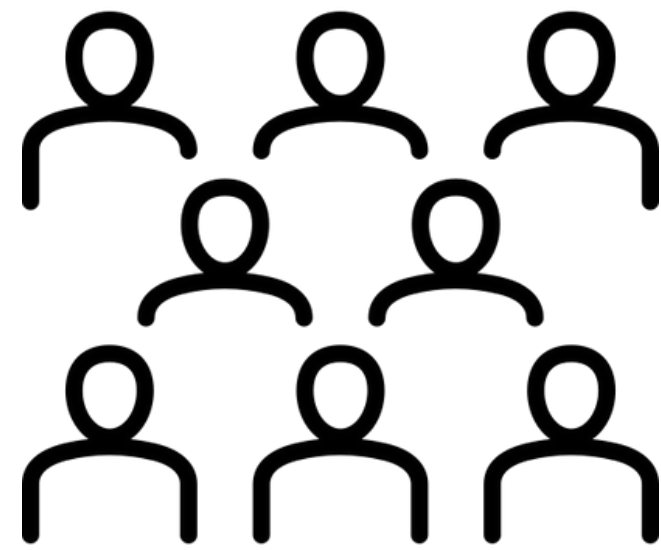


URBAN GREEN SPACES

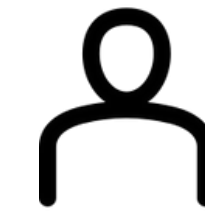
Open spaces in urban areas that are mainly covered by **vegetation**



URBAN GREEN SPACES OWNERSHIP

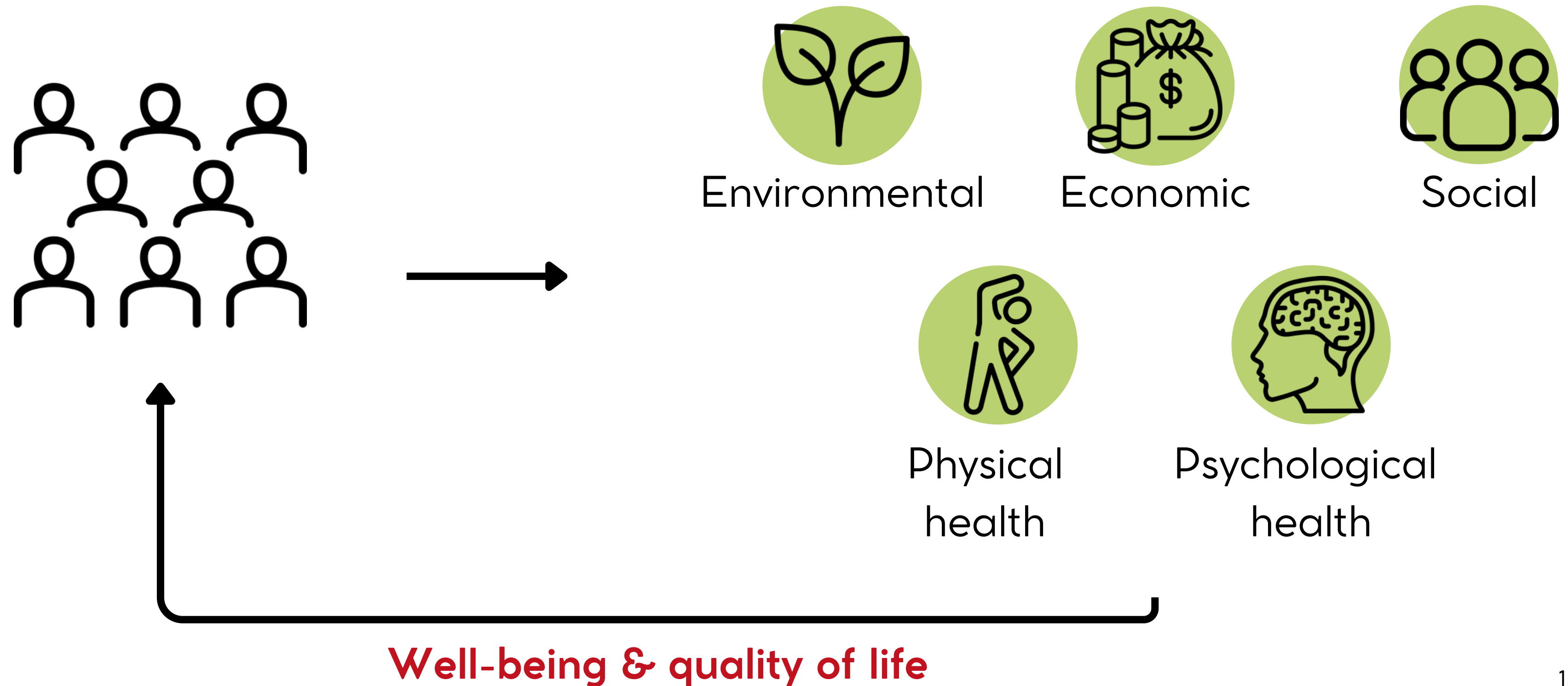


Public

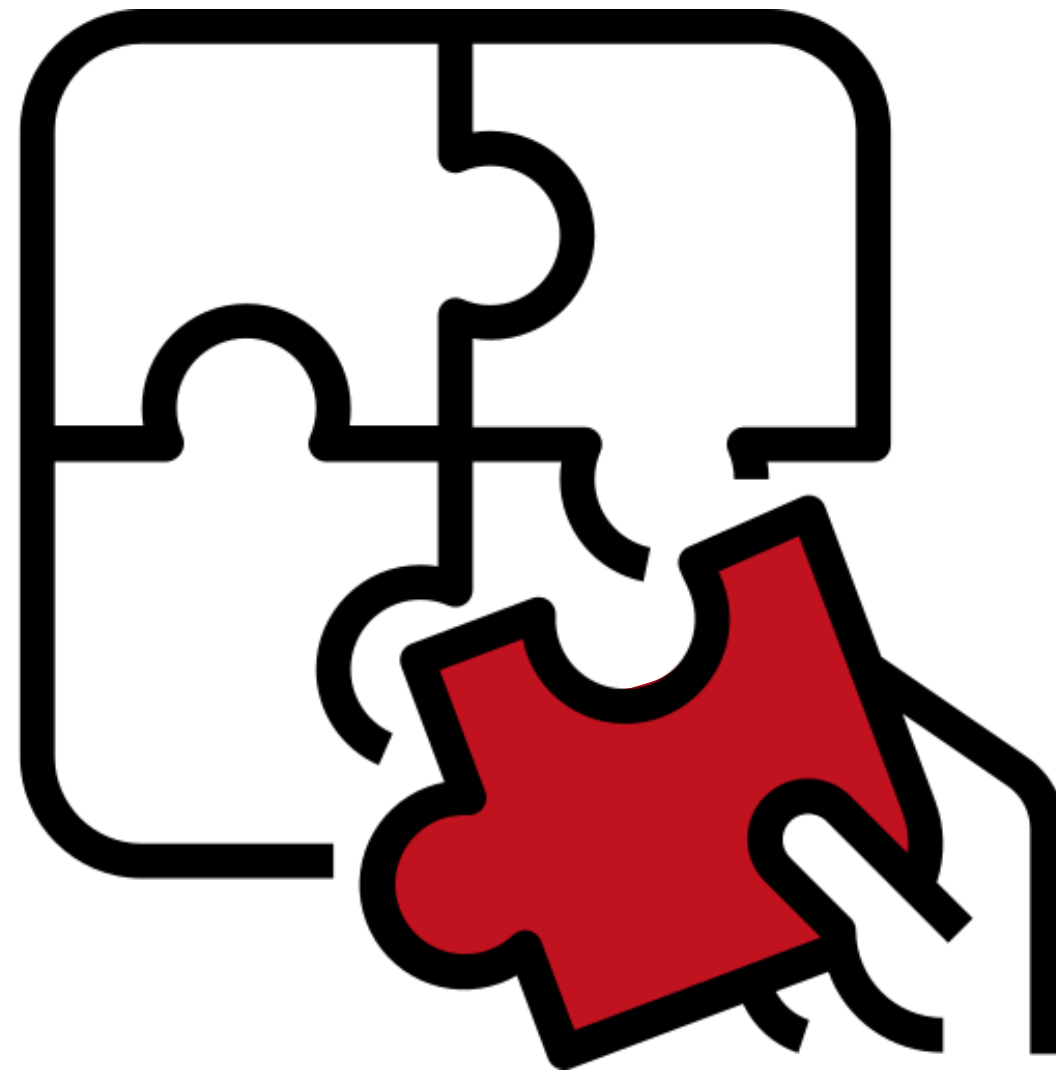


Private

URBAN GREEN SPACES **BENEFITS**

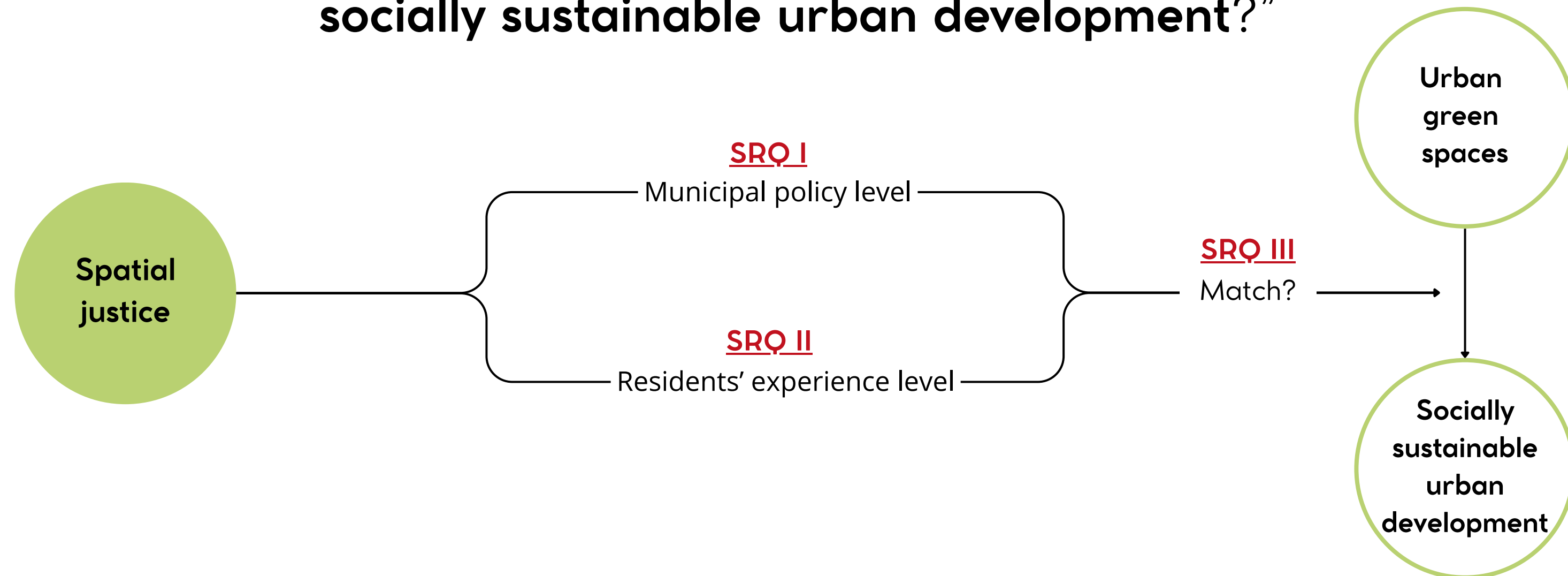


PUTTING ALL THAT TOGETHER...

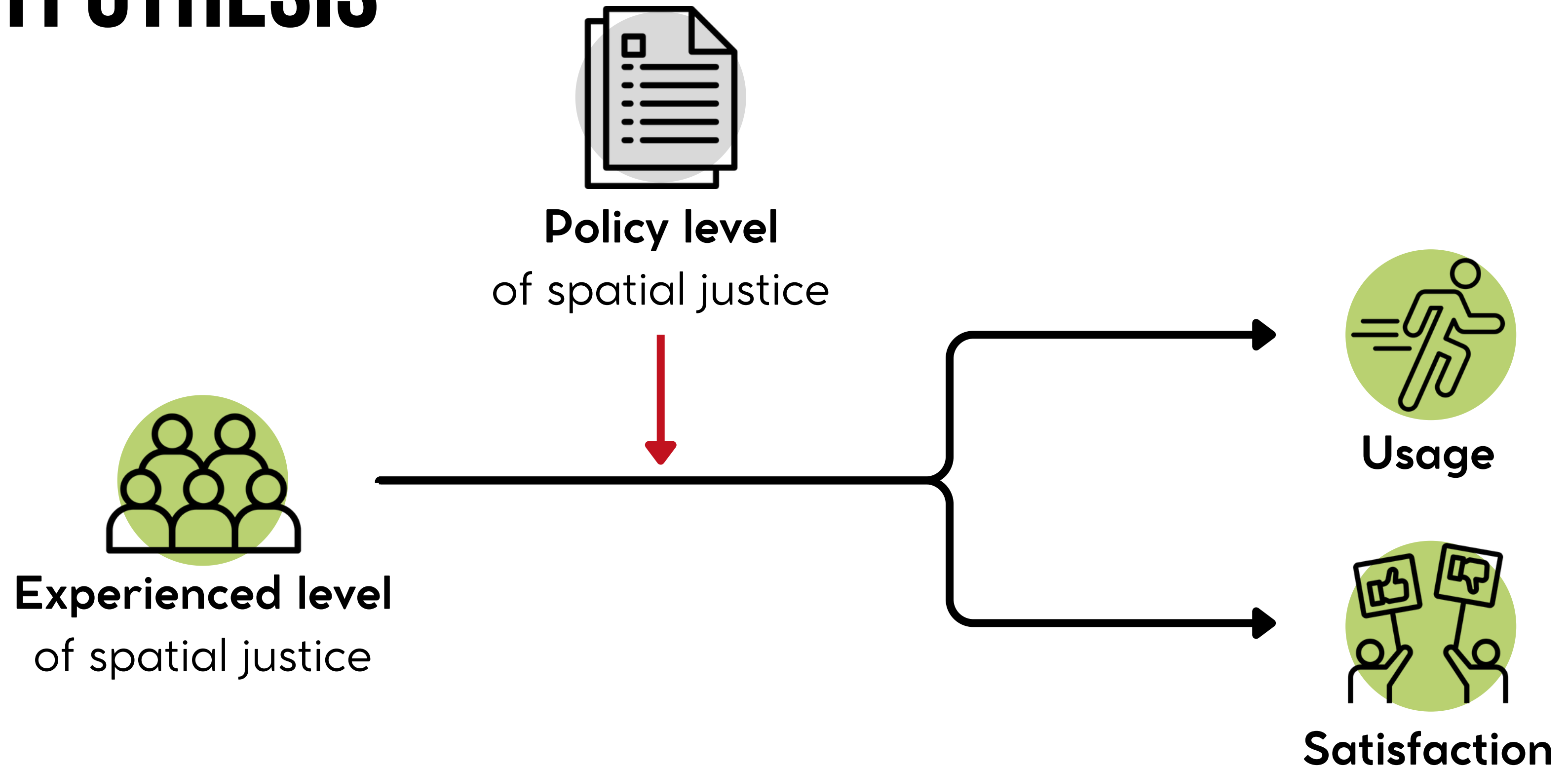


MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

“To what extent can **urban green spaces** be managed at the municipal level to ensure **spatial justice** within the built environment, thereby stimulating **socially sustainable urban development**?”



HYPOTHESIS



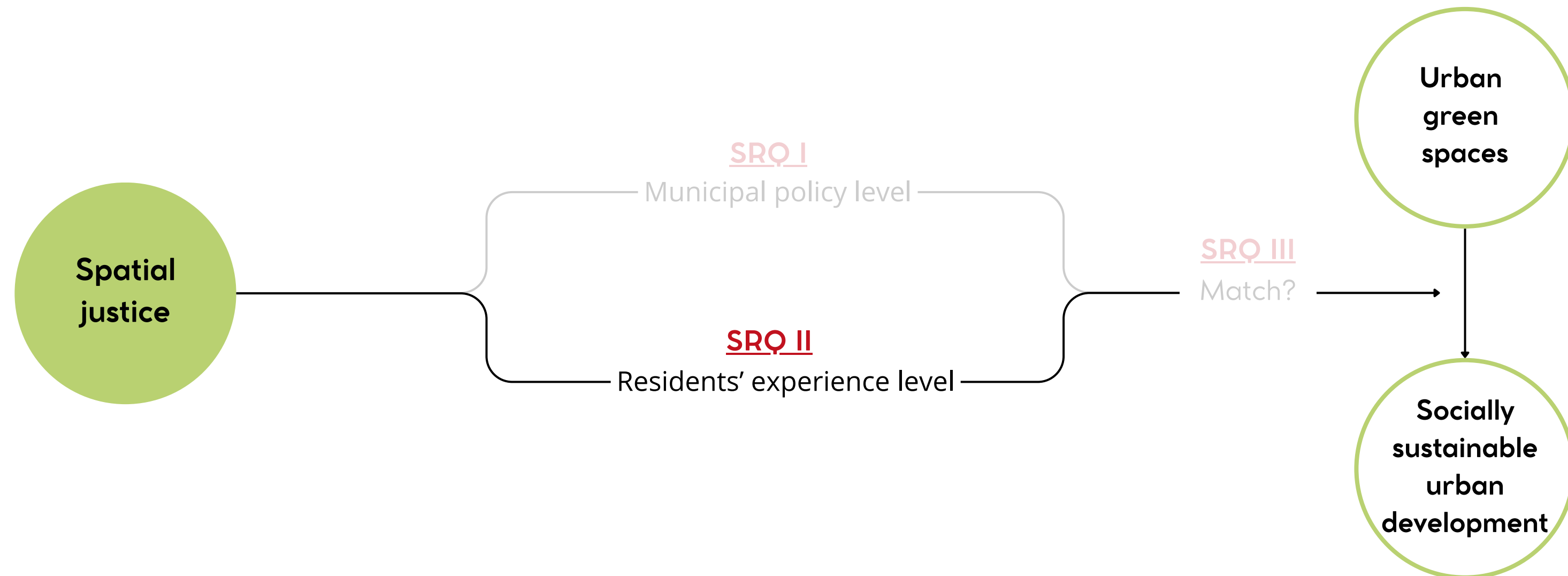
SUB RESEARCH QUESTION I

“How is spatial justice currently integrated into municipal management of urban green spaces as a means to support socially sustainable urban development?”



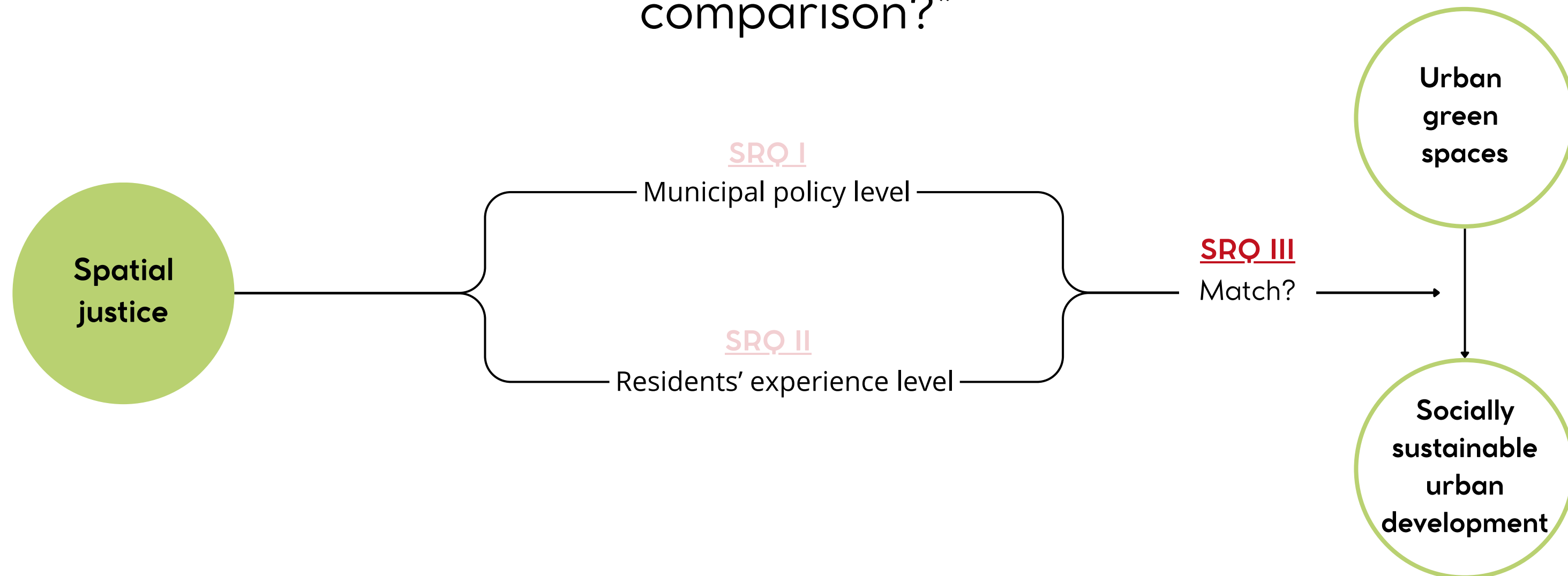
SUB RESEARCH QUESTION II

“How do people experience spatial justice at the neighbourhood level, and how does this affect their satisfaction with, and usage of urban green spaces?”



SUB RESEARCH QUESTION III

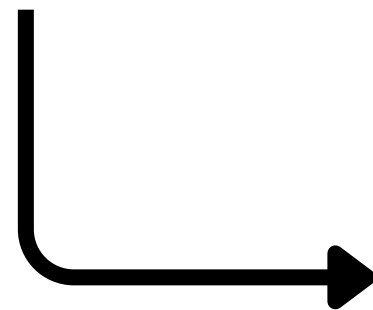
“How do the policy levels of spatial justice align with the experienced level of spatial justice in the neighbourhood, and what lessons can be drawn from this comparison?”



RESEARCH DESIGN

Desk research

Literature review
Document review



Empirical research

Observations
Interviews
Municipal document analysis
Survey
Comparative analysis

Conclusions

Focus groups
Synthesis



Explanatory sequential mixed-methods design

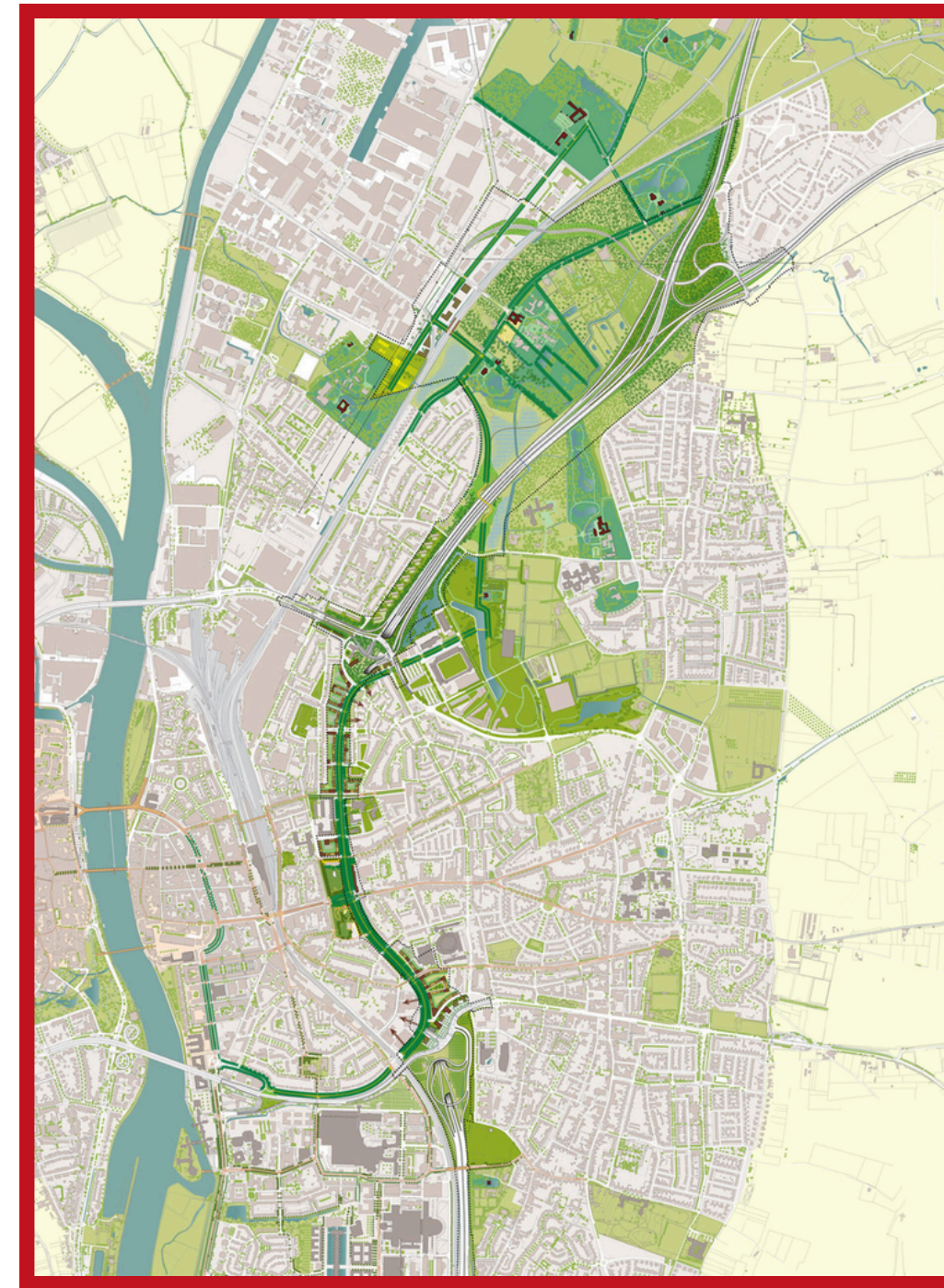
SINGLE CASE STUDY MUNICIPALITY

> Municipality of Maastricht



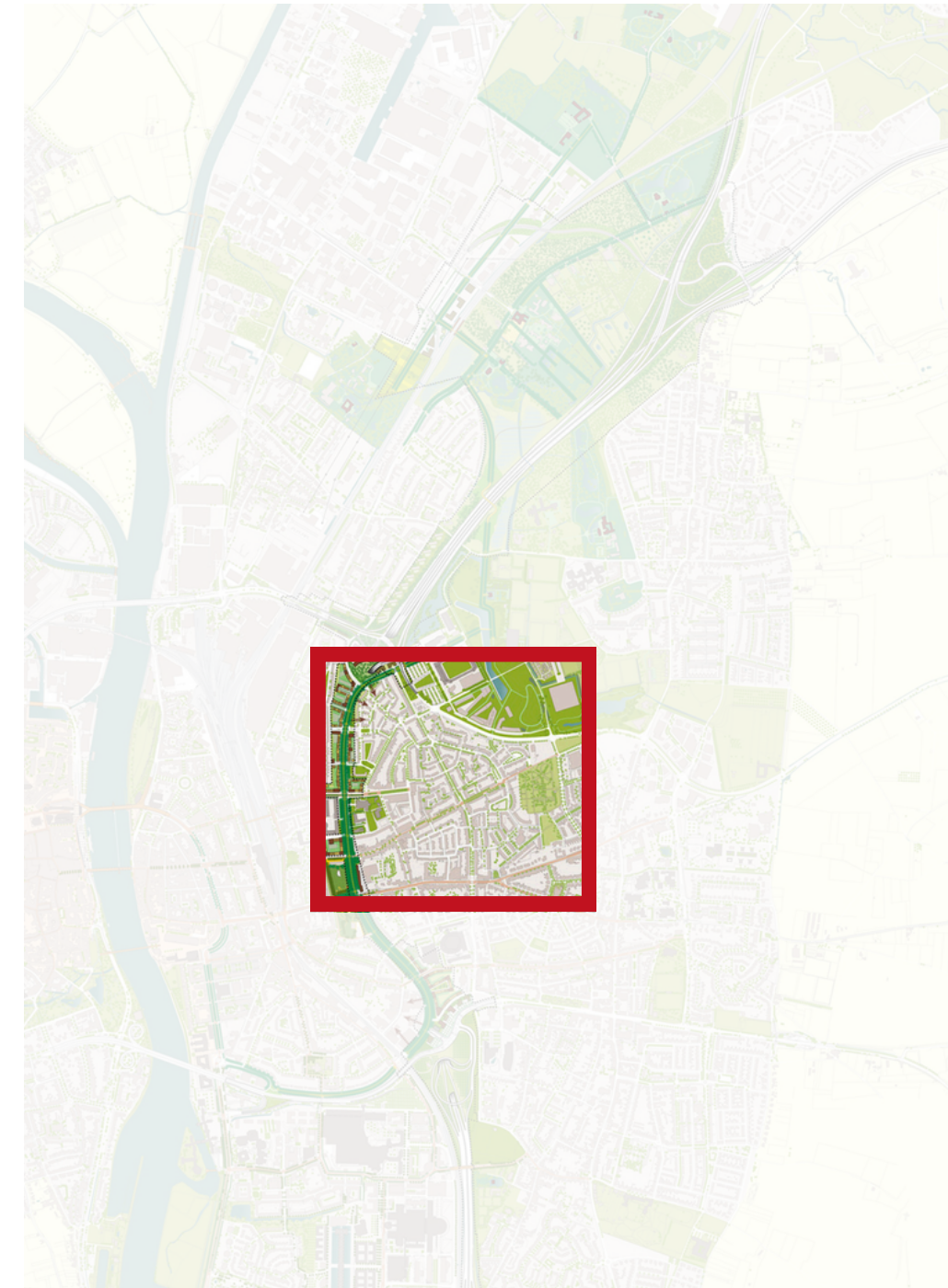
SINGLE CASE STUDY URBAN GREEN SPACE

- > Municipality of Maastricht
- > The Groene Loper



SINGLE CASE STUDY NEIGHBOURHOOD

- > Municipality of Maastricht
- > The Groene Loper
- > Wittevroutenveld



WHAT DID I FIND?



POLICIES ON PAPER

Research instruments



Municipal (policy)
document analysis



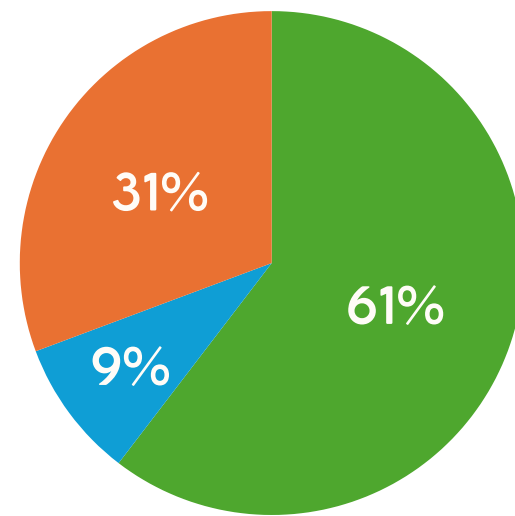
Semi-structured
interviews

POLICIES ON PAPER FOR THE GROENE LOPER

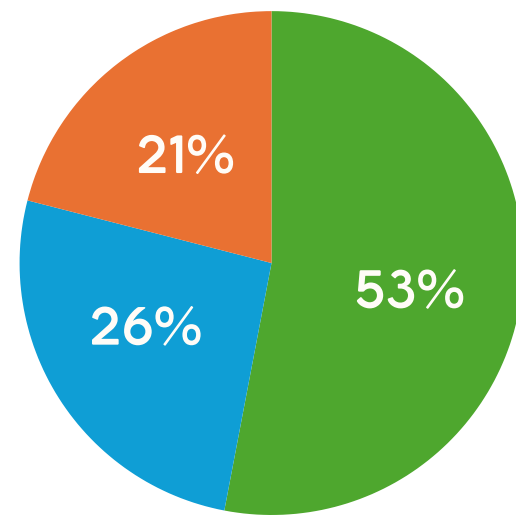
● Distributive justice

● Procedural justice

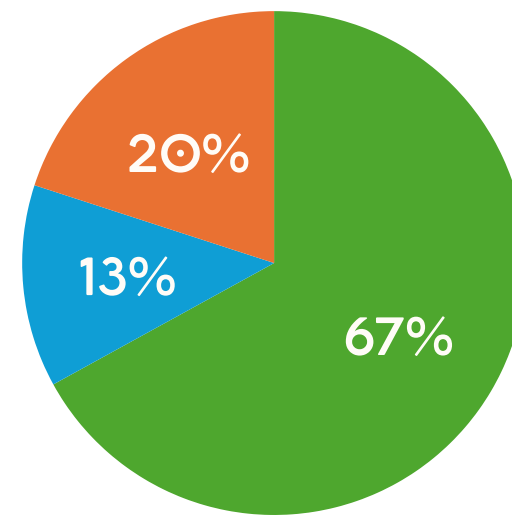
● Recognitional justice



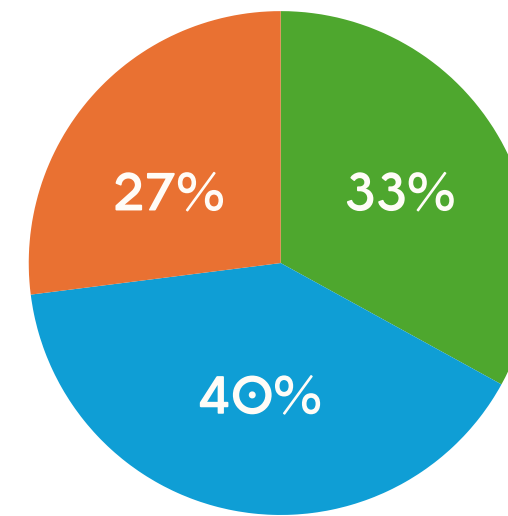
Document 1



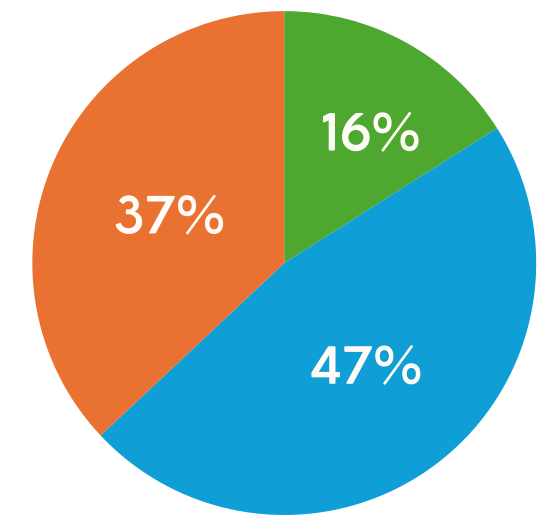
Document 2



Document 3



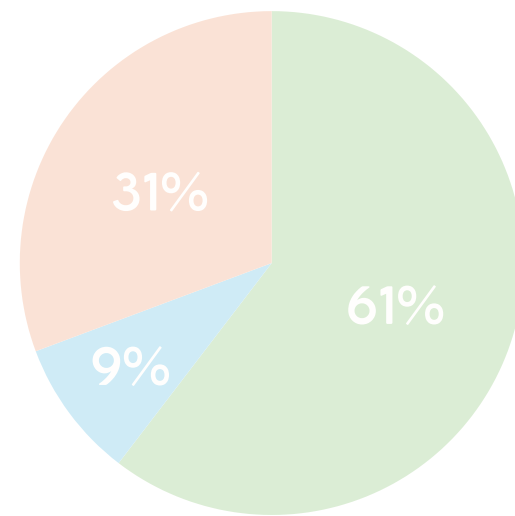
Document 4



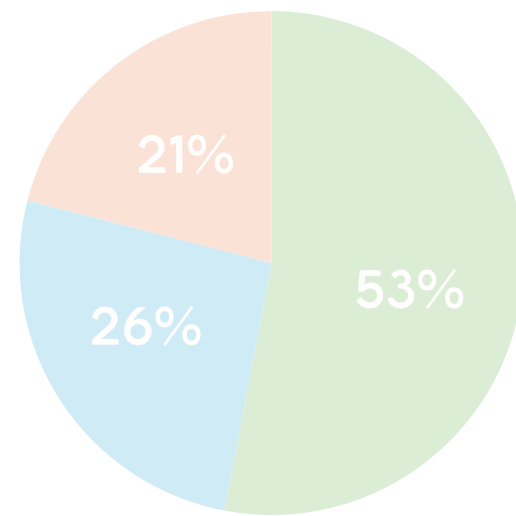
Document 5

POLICIES ON PAPER FOR THE GROENE LOPER

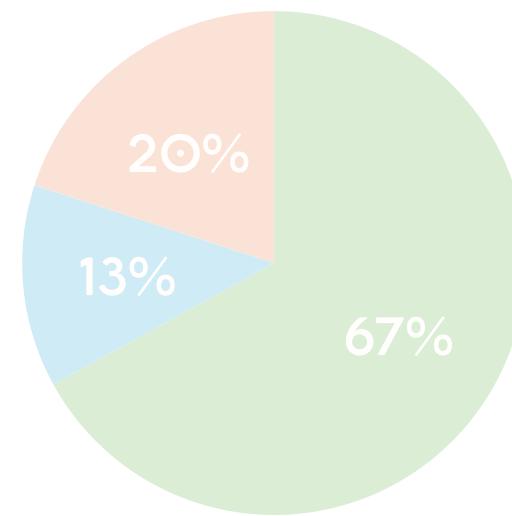
● Distributive justice ● Procedural justice ● Recognitional justice



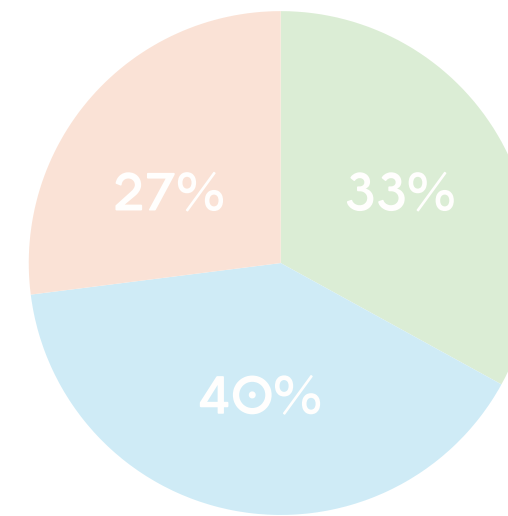
Document 1



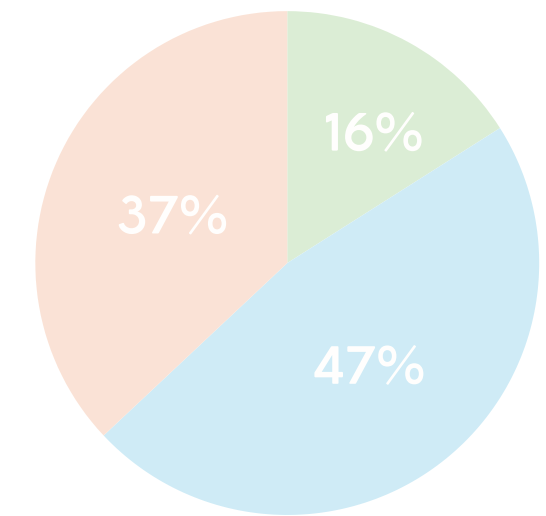
Document 2



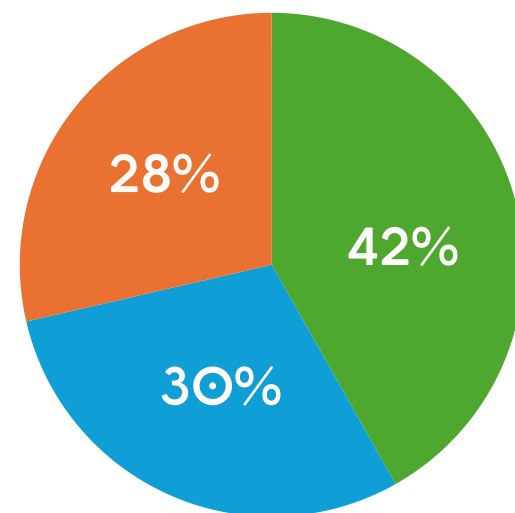
Document 3



Document 4

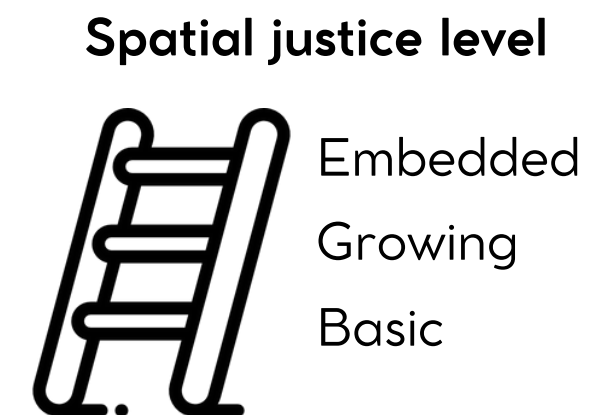


Document 5



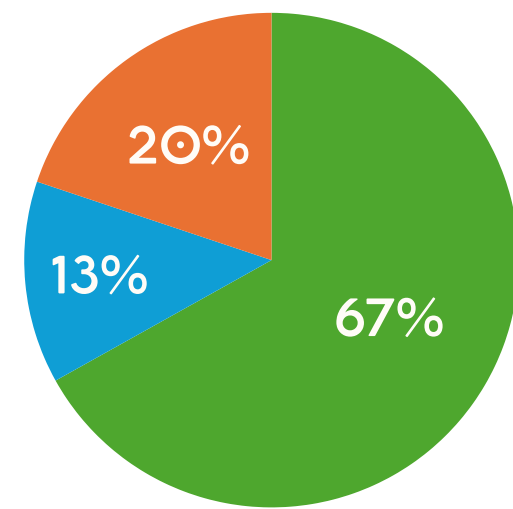
Accumulated results

- > **Imbalance** across dimensions
- > Distributive justice leads
- > **Growing** level of spatial justice



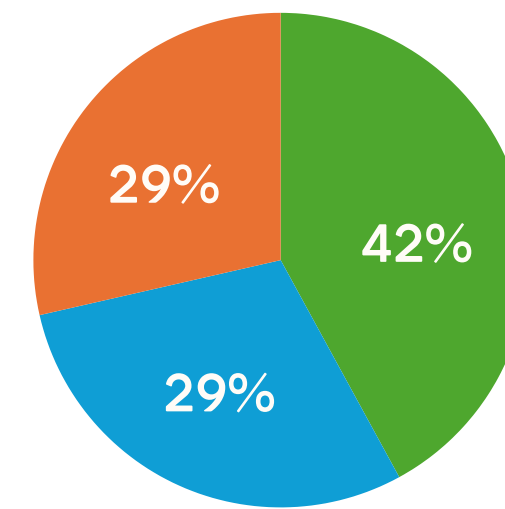
POLICIES ON PAPER FOR THE MUNICIPAL VISION

● Distributive justice ● Procedural justice ● Recognitional justice



Structural Vision
Maastricht 2030

‘Basic’ level
of spatial justice



Environmental Vision
Maastricht 2040

‘Embedded’ level
of spatial justice

REALITIES ON THE GROUND

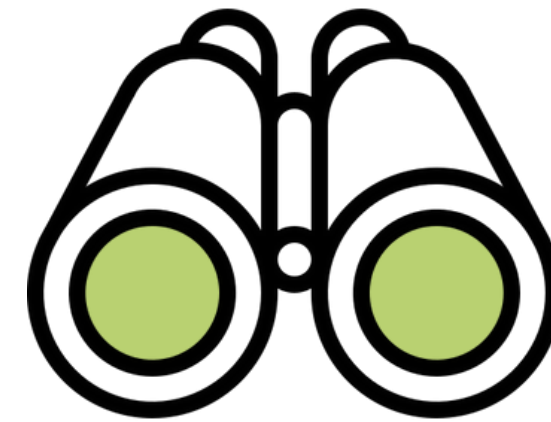
Research instruments



Document
analysis



Semi-structured
interviews

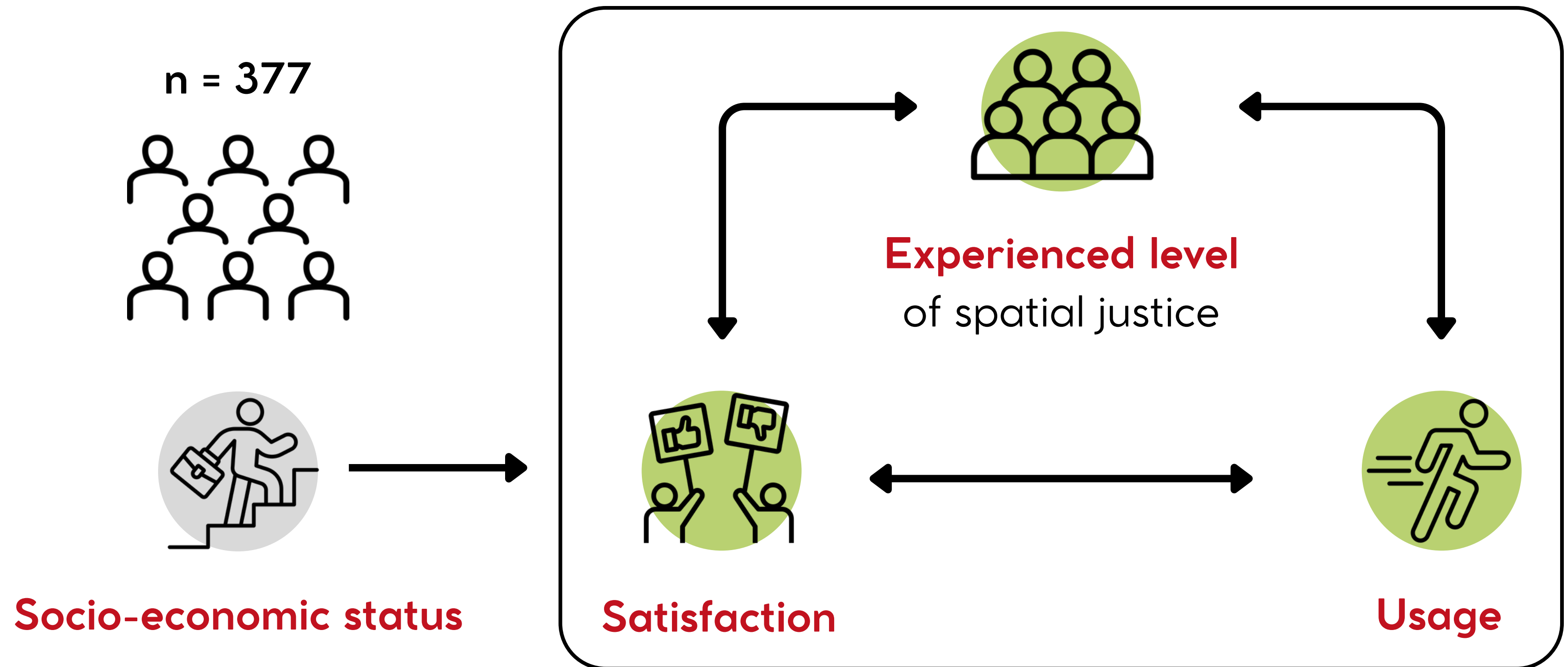


Observations



Surveys

REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

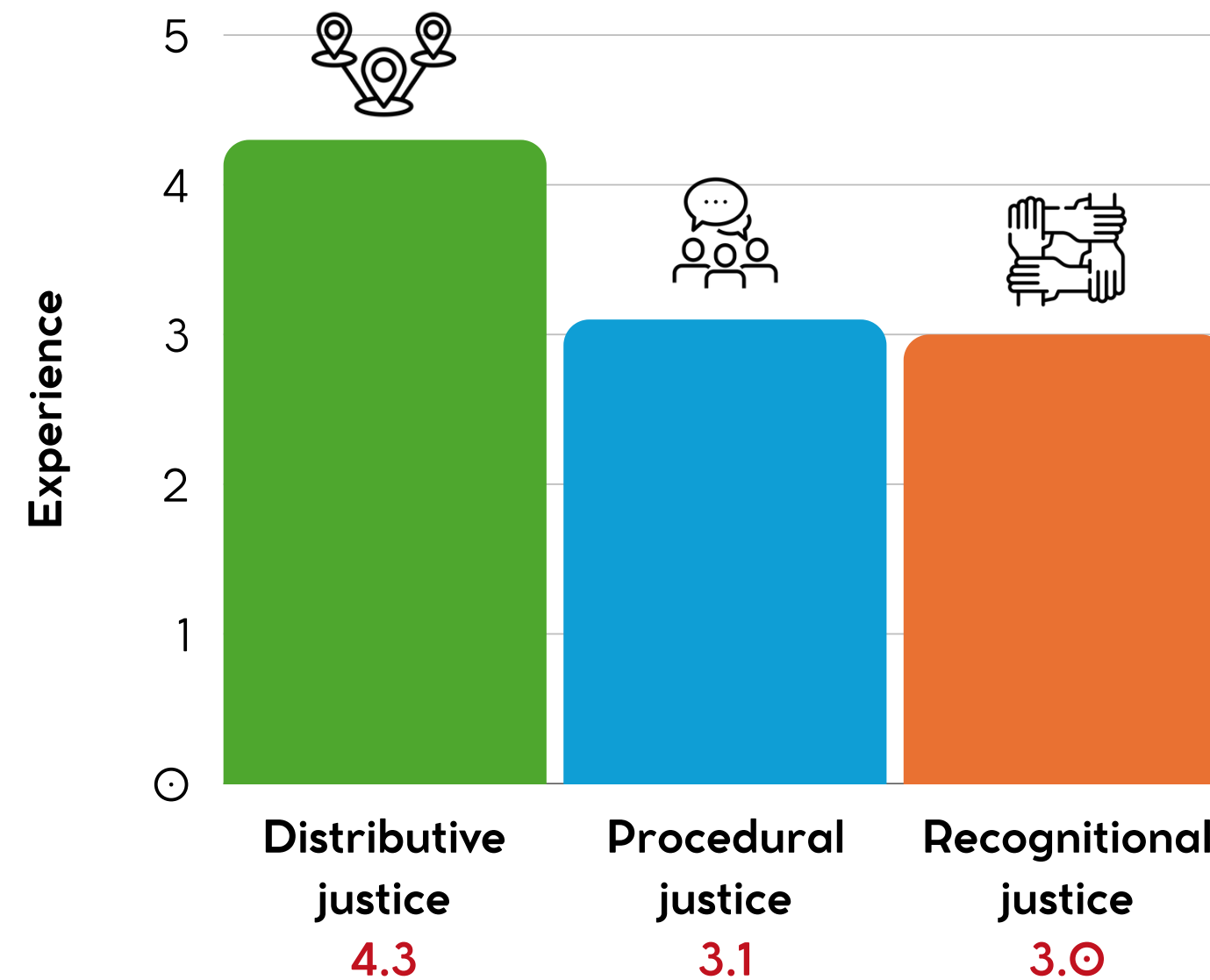


REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

n = 377



Experienced level
of spatial justice

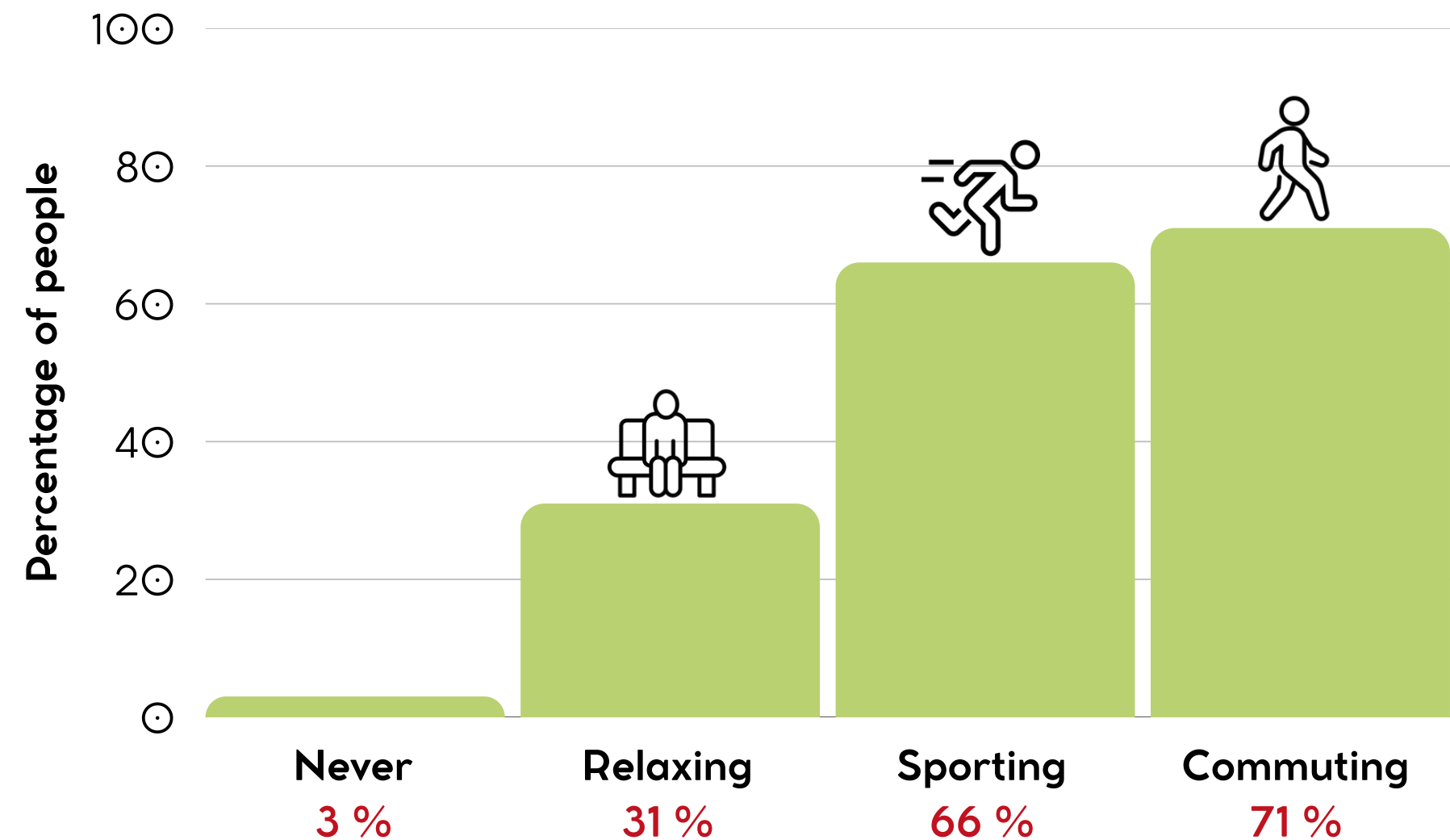


REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

n = 377



Usage

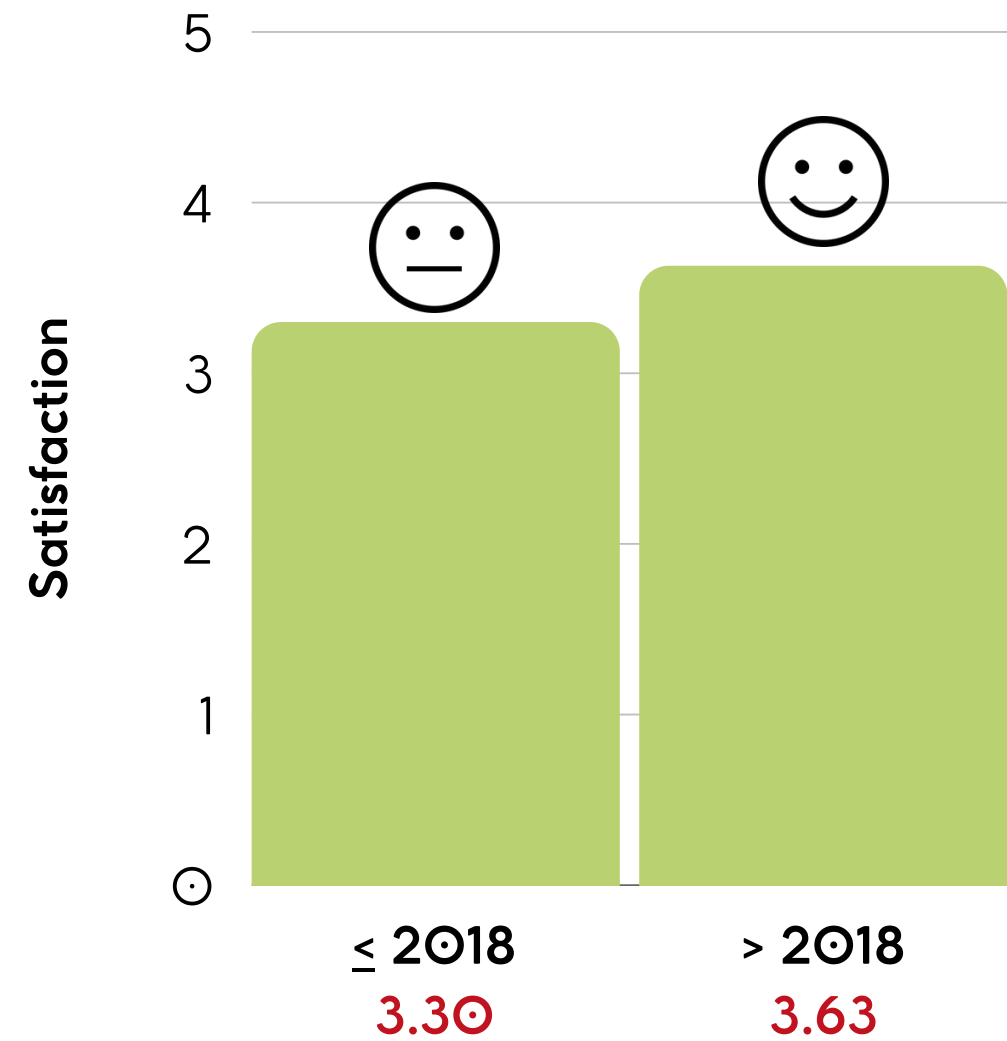


REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

n = 377



Satisfaction



REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

No significant correlation

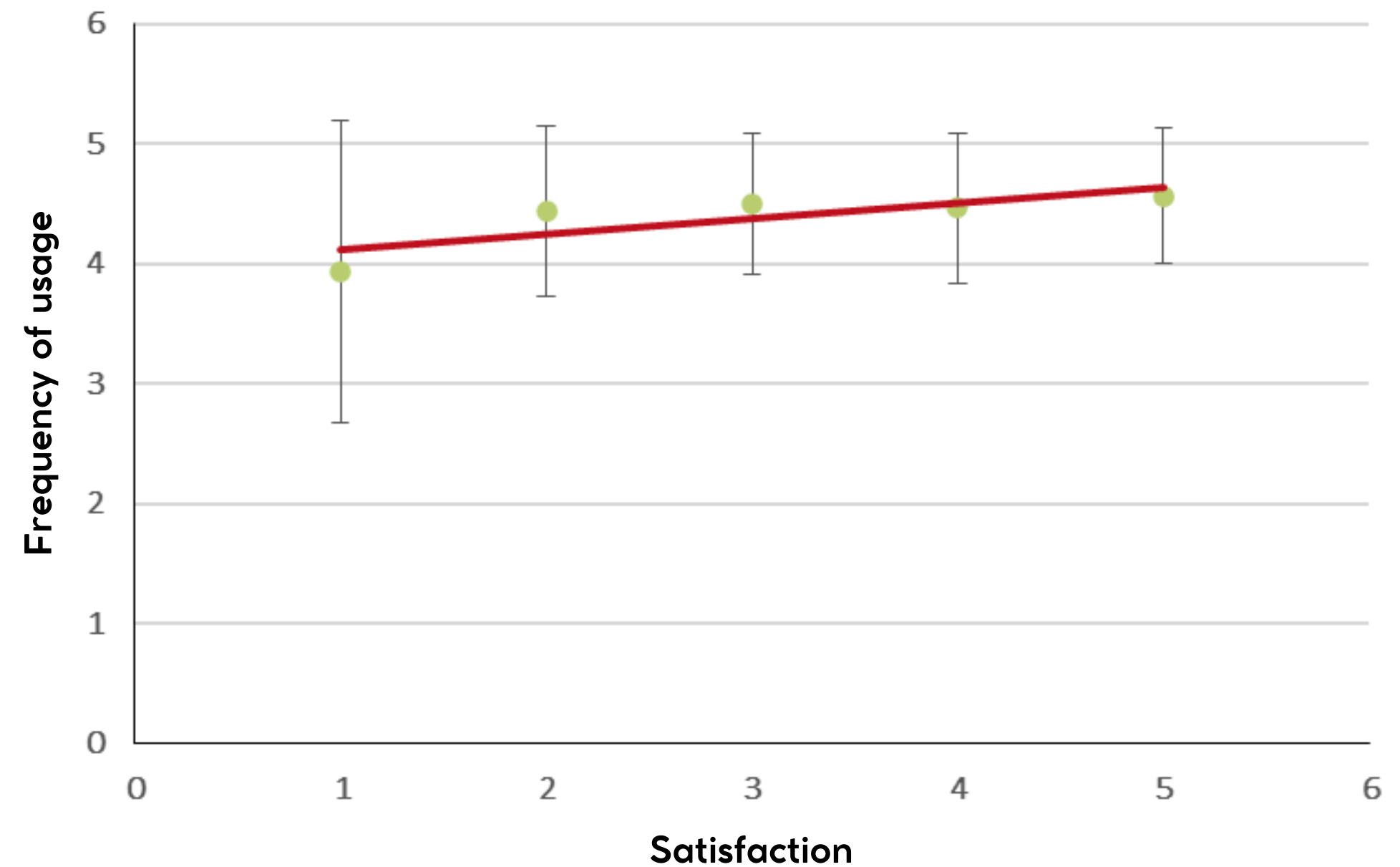
$$p > 0.05$$



Satisfaction



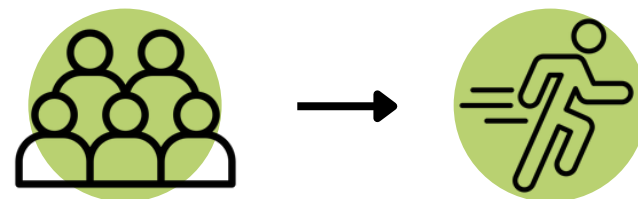
Usage



REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

Significant correlation

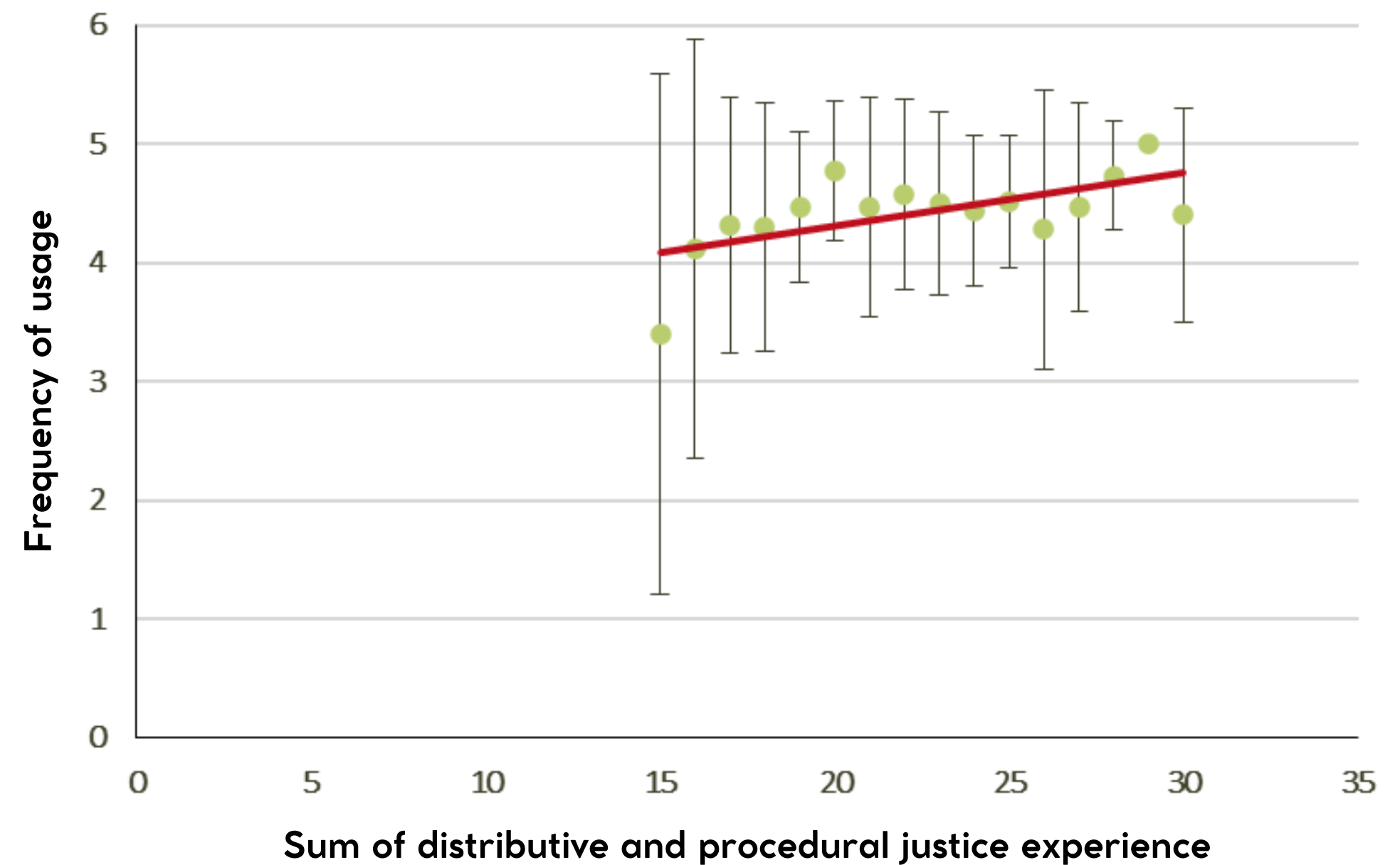
$$p = 0.018$$



Experienced level
of spatial justice

Usage

(No correlation with recognitional justice)



REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

Significant correlation

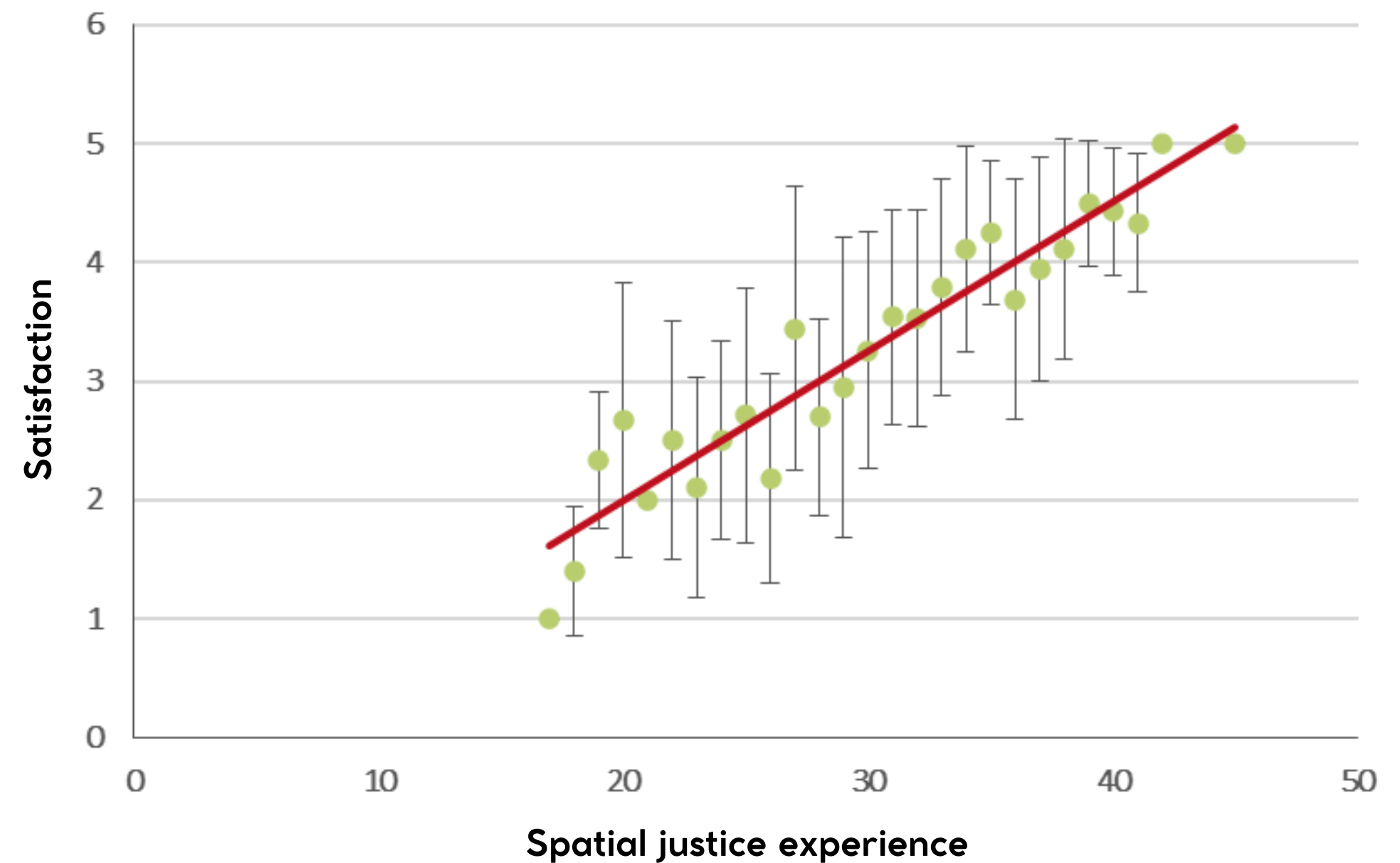
$$p < 2e-16$$



Experienced level
of spatial justice



Satisfaction



REALITIES ON THE GROUND THROUGH A SURVEY

Significant correlation

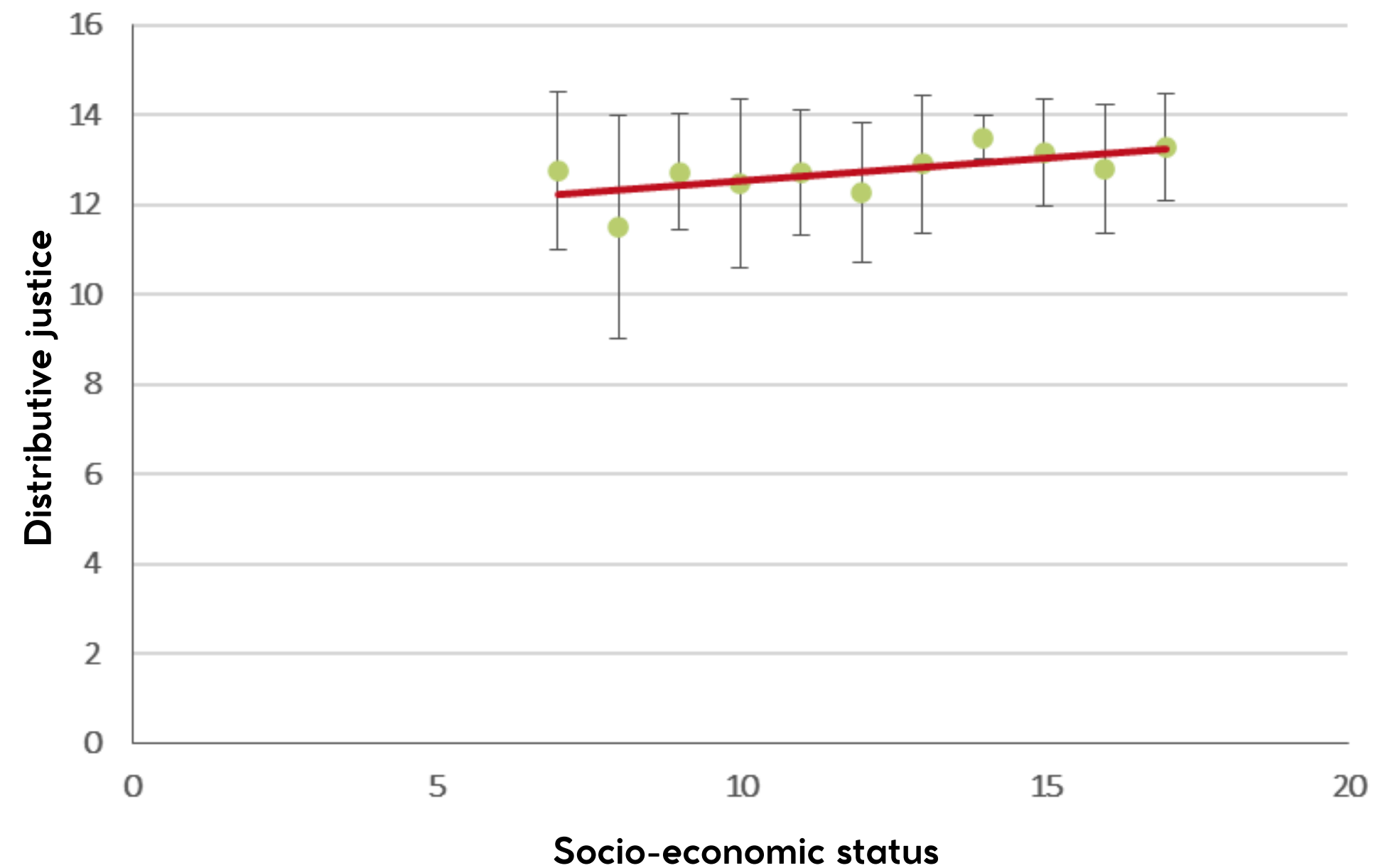
$$p = 0.013$$



SES

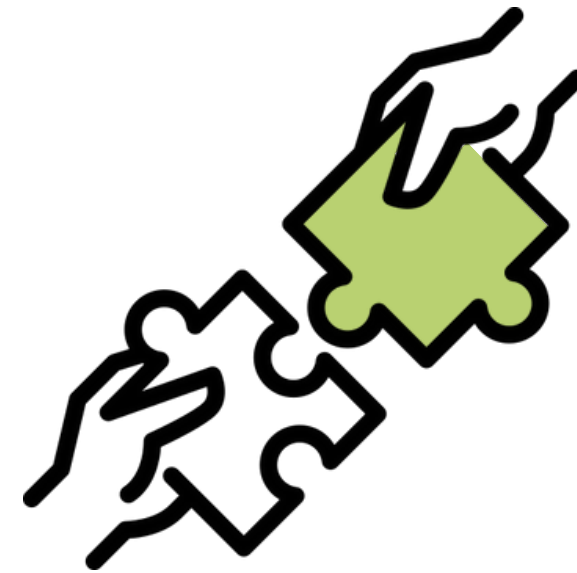


Experienced level
of spatial justice



ALIGNING POLICY AND REALITY

Research instrument

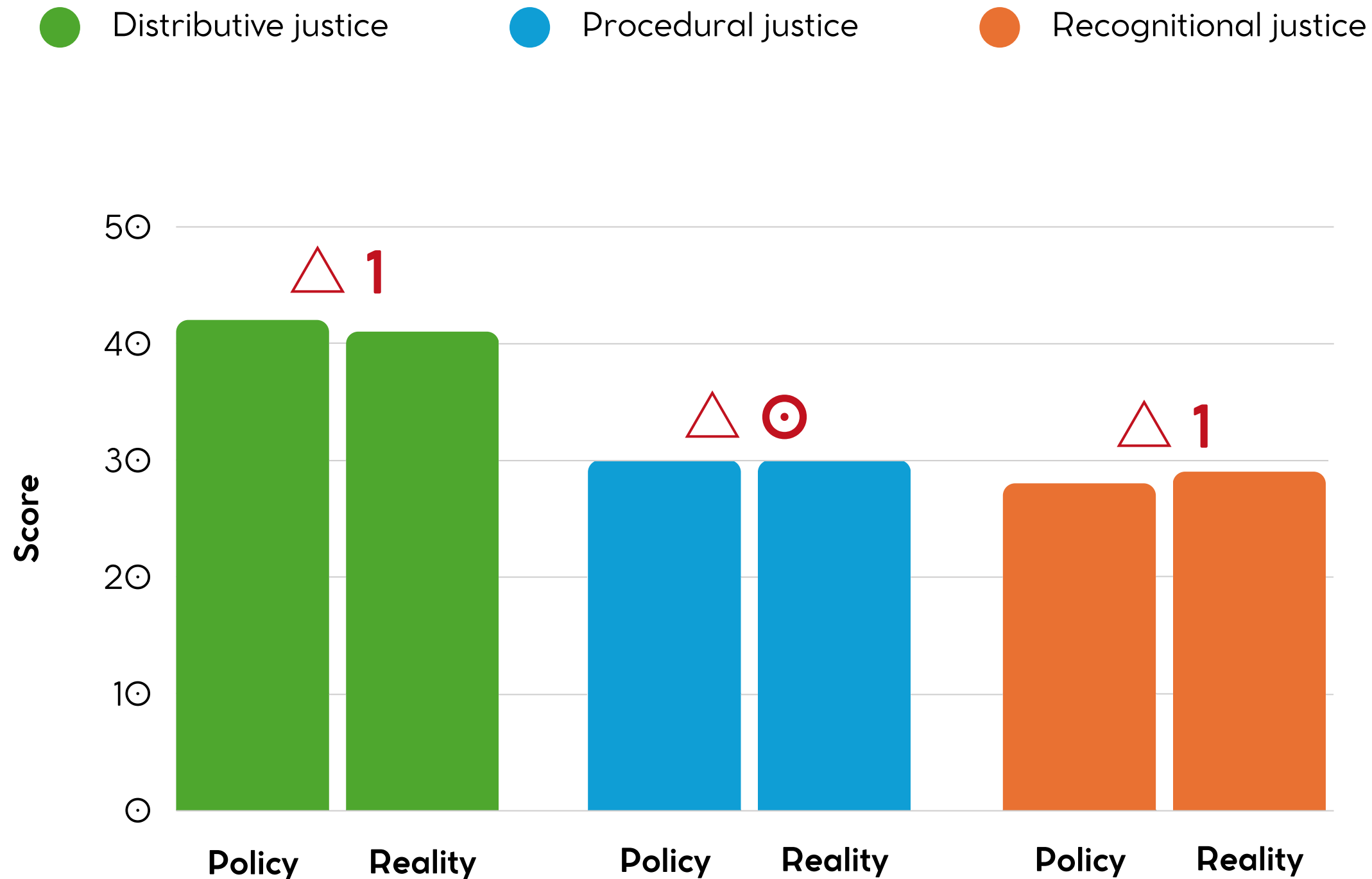


Comparative
analysis

ALIGNING POLICY AND REALITY

	Policy (-)	Policy (+)
Experience (-)	A (- -)	B (- +)
Experience (+)	C (+ -)	D (+ +)

ALIGNING POLICY AND REALITY



ALIGNING POLICY AND REALITY

	Policy (-)	Policy (+)
Experience (-)	A (- -)	B (- +)
Experience (+)	C (+ -)	D (+ +)

ALIGNING POLICY AND REALITY

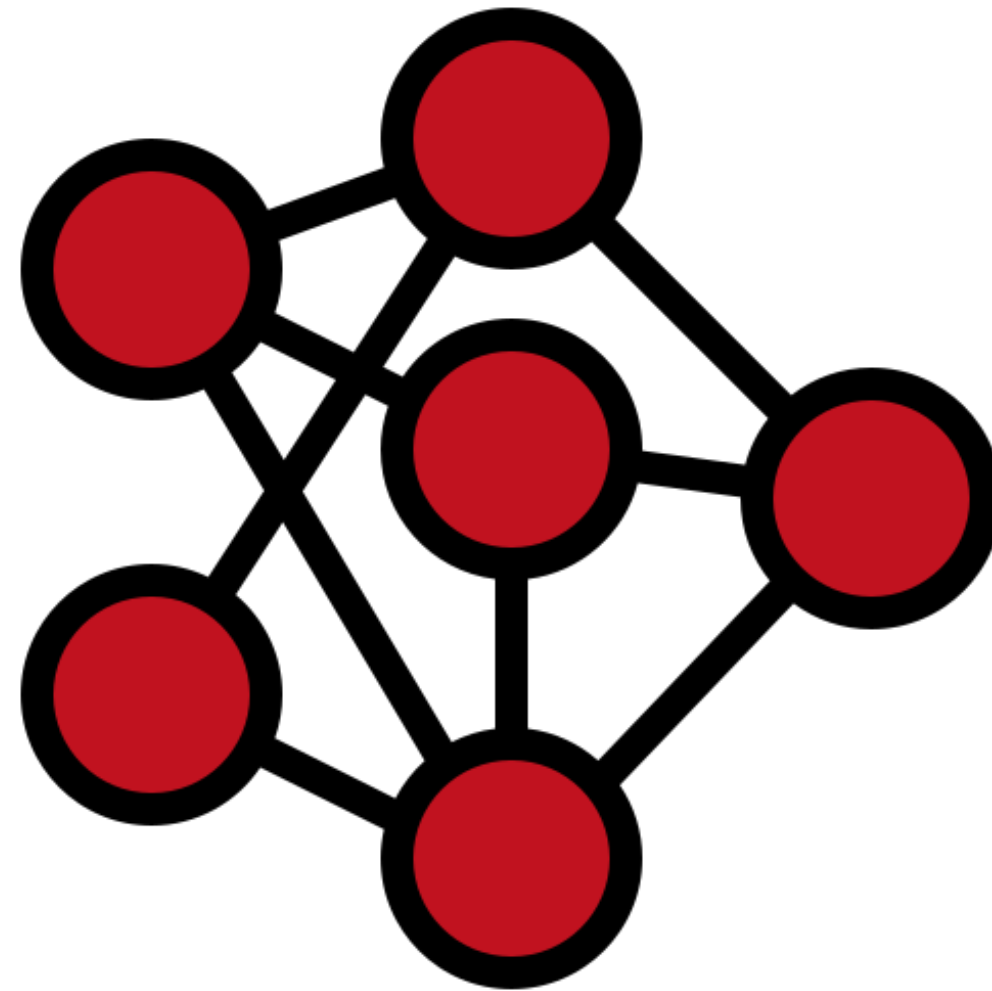


Imbalance across dimensions of spatial justice

ALIGNING POLICY AND REALITY

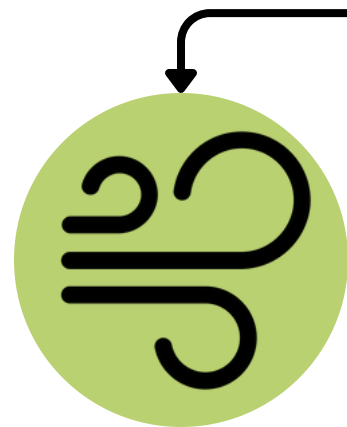
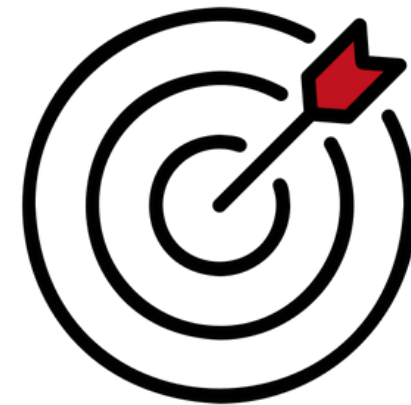
	Policy (-)	Policy (+)
Experience (-)	A (- -)	B (- +)
Experience (+)	C (+ -)	D (+ +)

LETS DISCUSS THAT...

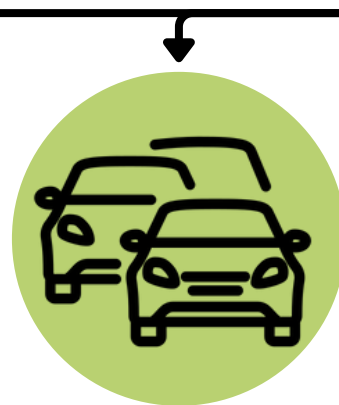


SPATIAL JUSTICE AS A LIVED REALITY

Original goals of the Groene Loper



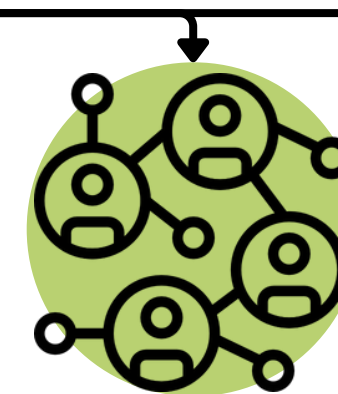
Improve
air quality



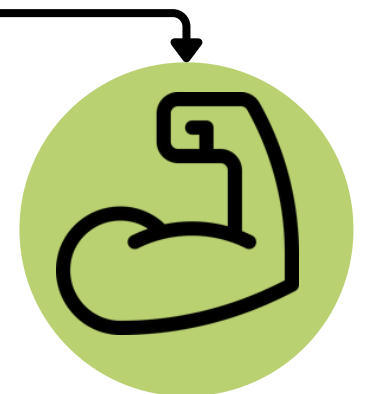
Lessen
traffic noise



Prioritise
greenery



Foster
social connections



Strengthen
neighbourhoods

Spatial justice

SPATIAL JUSTICE AS A LIVED REALITY

Distributive justice



Public ownership

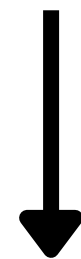


High accessibility
& fair allocation

Procedural justice



No strong sense of place or community connection



Feeling marginalised
& not listened to

Recognitional justice



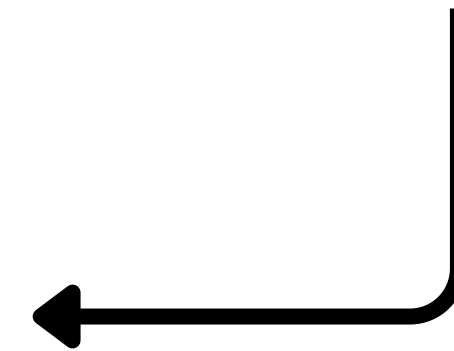
Wishes and needs
are not realised

SPATIAL JUSTICE AS A LIVED REALITY

Distributive justice

Procedural justice

Recognitional justice



Satisfaction with & usage of
urban green space



Better well-being & higher quality of life

SPATIAL JUSTICE AS A MUNICIPAL OBJECTIVE

Policy revision?

	Policy (-)	Policy (+)
Experience (-)	A (- -)	B (- +)
Experience (+)	C (+ -)	D (+ +)

SPATIAL JUSTICE AS A MUNICIPAL OBJECTIVE

Policy  vision?

Old
municipal vision



“Growing” level
of spatial justice



Current
municipal vision



“Embedded” level
of spatial justice

SPATIAL JUSTICE AS A PILLAR OF S.S.U.D.

Procedural justice

Go beyond symbolic measures
& build real trust / involvement

Recognitional justice

Tension between the pursuit of
public interest & individuals



→ **‘Perfect’ spatial justice is impossible** ←

Recognise its importance

+ integrate it in a balanced manner

= **more tolerable outcomes**

CONCLUSION SRQ I

Spatial justice is becoming increasingly important, but full balance faces challenges



Policy level
of spatial justice



Experienced level
of spatial justice



Usage



Satisfaction

CONCLUSION SRQ II



Policy level
of spatial justice



Experienced level
of spatial justice

Experience of spatial justice
shapes how satisfied residents
feel, and how often they use the
urban green space



Usage



Satisfaction

CONCLUSION SRQ III



Policy level
of spatial justice



Experienced level
of spatial justice

Policy and residents' spatial justice views aligned, with policy being improved in the current municipal vision



Usage



Satisfaction

CONCLUSION MRQ

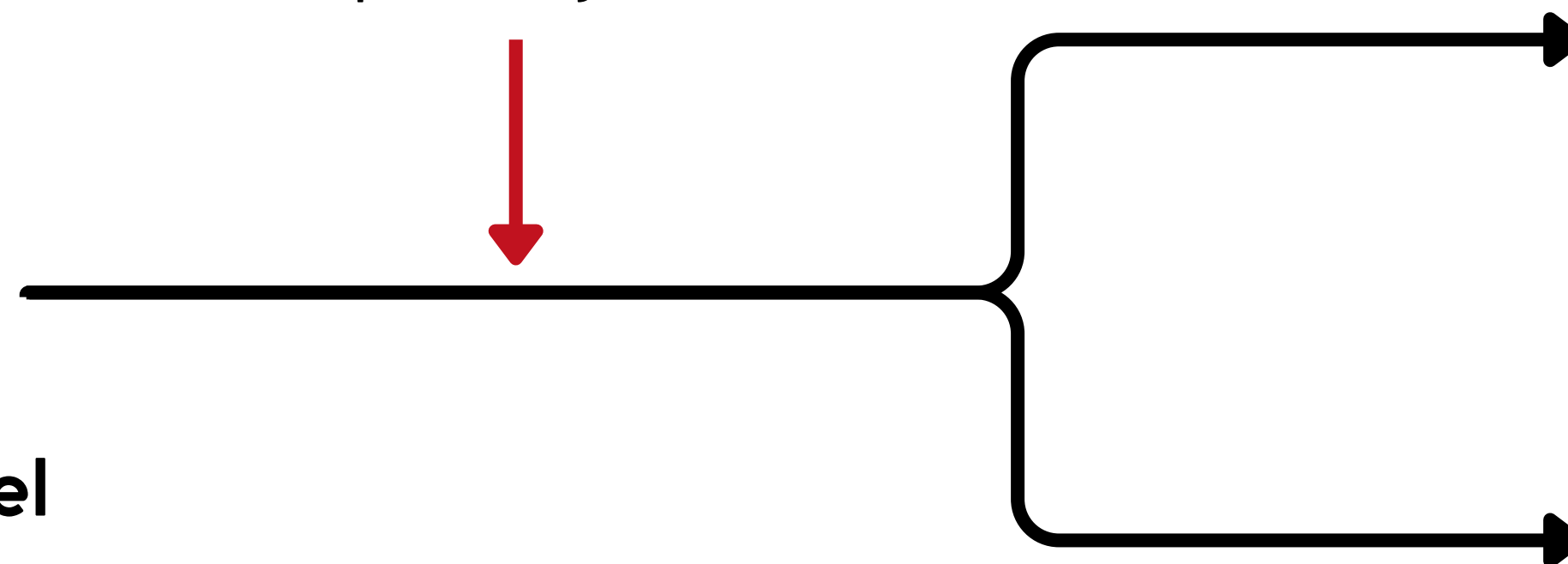
Translating procedural and
recognitional justice from policy
to action



Policy level
of spatial justice



Experienced level
of spatial justice



Usage



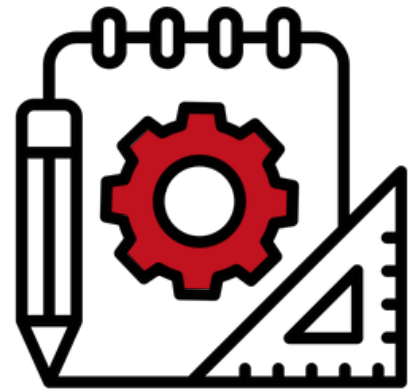
Satisfaction

HOWEVER...



LIMITATIONS

Research design



Single case study

Coding analysis



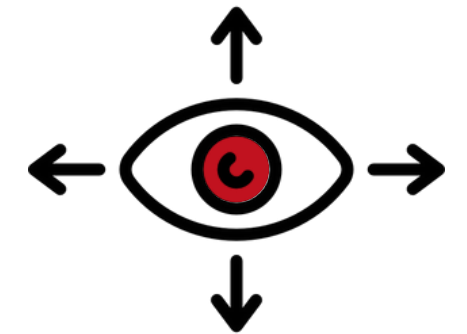
Subjective

Survey



Design & sample

Perspective



Limited

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MUNICIPALITY



Start with **early involvement**

Engage genuinely with residents

Ensure clear **feedback loops**

Re-evaluate the space continuously

Take responsibility for outcomes

CONTRIBUTION & GENERALISABILITY

- > **Connects** spatial justice theory & green space usage
- > **Translates** theory into residents' lived experiences
- > Provides an **understanding** for municipalities
- > **Insights** from Maastricht case, relevant beyond
- > **Method adaptable** to other public spaces and cities
- > Public spaces should be **shaped by** and **responsive to** the **diverse communities** they serve



Contribution



Generalisability

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?



ADDITIONAL SLIDES

RELEVANCE

Societal



Just and sustainable society
→ higher quality of life

Scientific



Municipal context &
translation from policy to reality

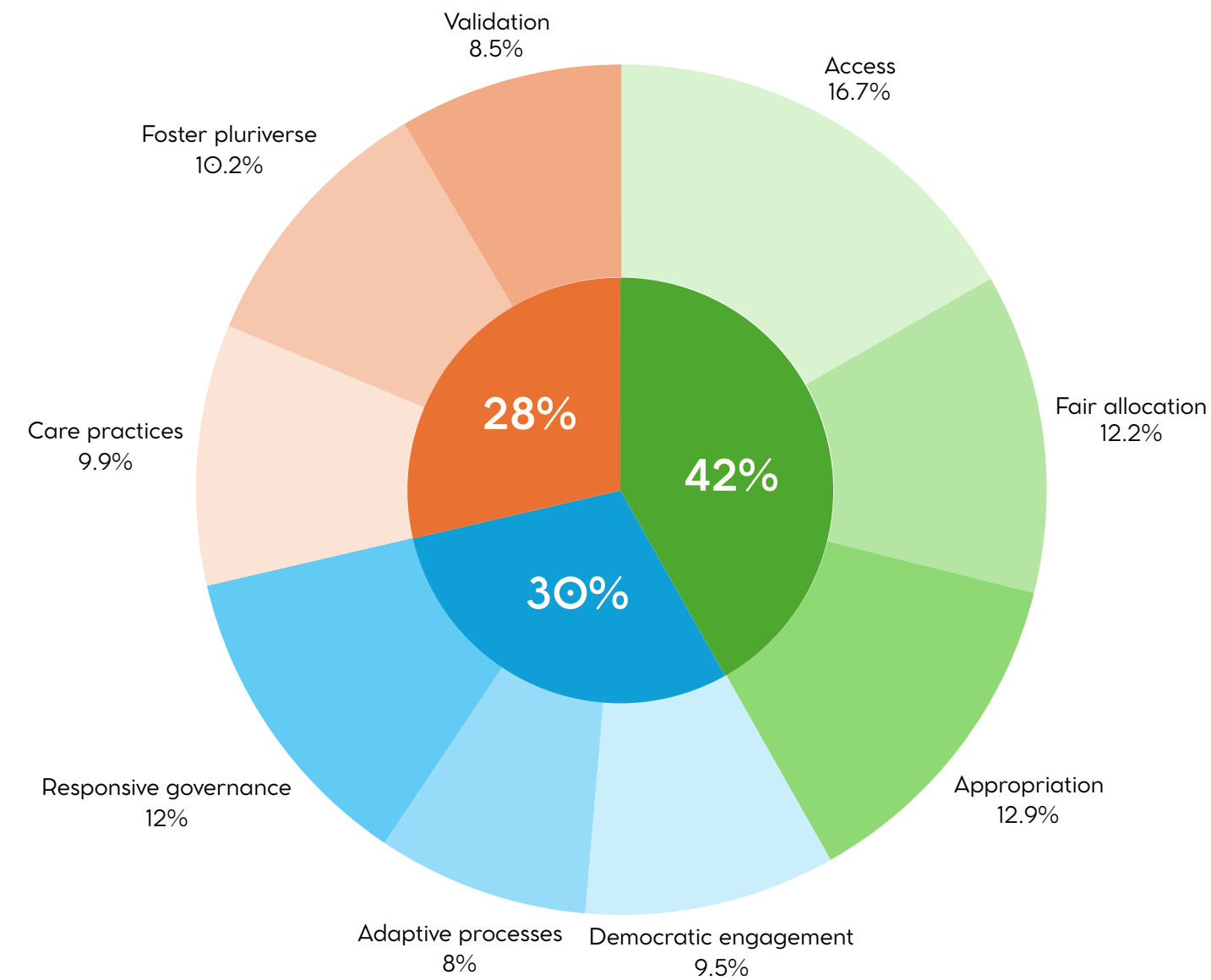
PERSPECTIVES ON JUSTICE

Perspective	Principle	Aim
Utilitarianism	Maximise well-being for the largest public	Create general growth
Egalitarianism	Reduce relative inequality	Close the gap
Sufficientarianism	Guarantee minimum standards of living for everyone	Bring up to standard
Prioritarianism	Advance the least well-off	Support the left behind

CASE SELECTION CRITERIA

The municipality	Dutch municipality with an emerging interest in spatial justice
	Policy engagement in inclusive urban development and green accessibility
	Experience in citizen participation
The urban green space	Multifunctional public space
	Open space with greenery
	Unpaved/paved trail(s), walking/cycling routes
The neighbourhood	Lower socio-economic status than average in the municipality
	Proximity to the chosen urban green space
	Known challenges with the spatial justice of the chosen urban green space

POLICIES ON PAPER FOR THE GROENE LOPER



Distributive justice

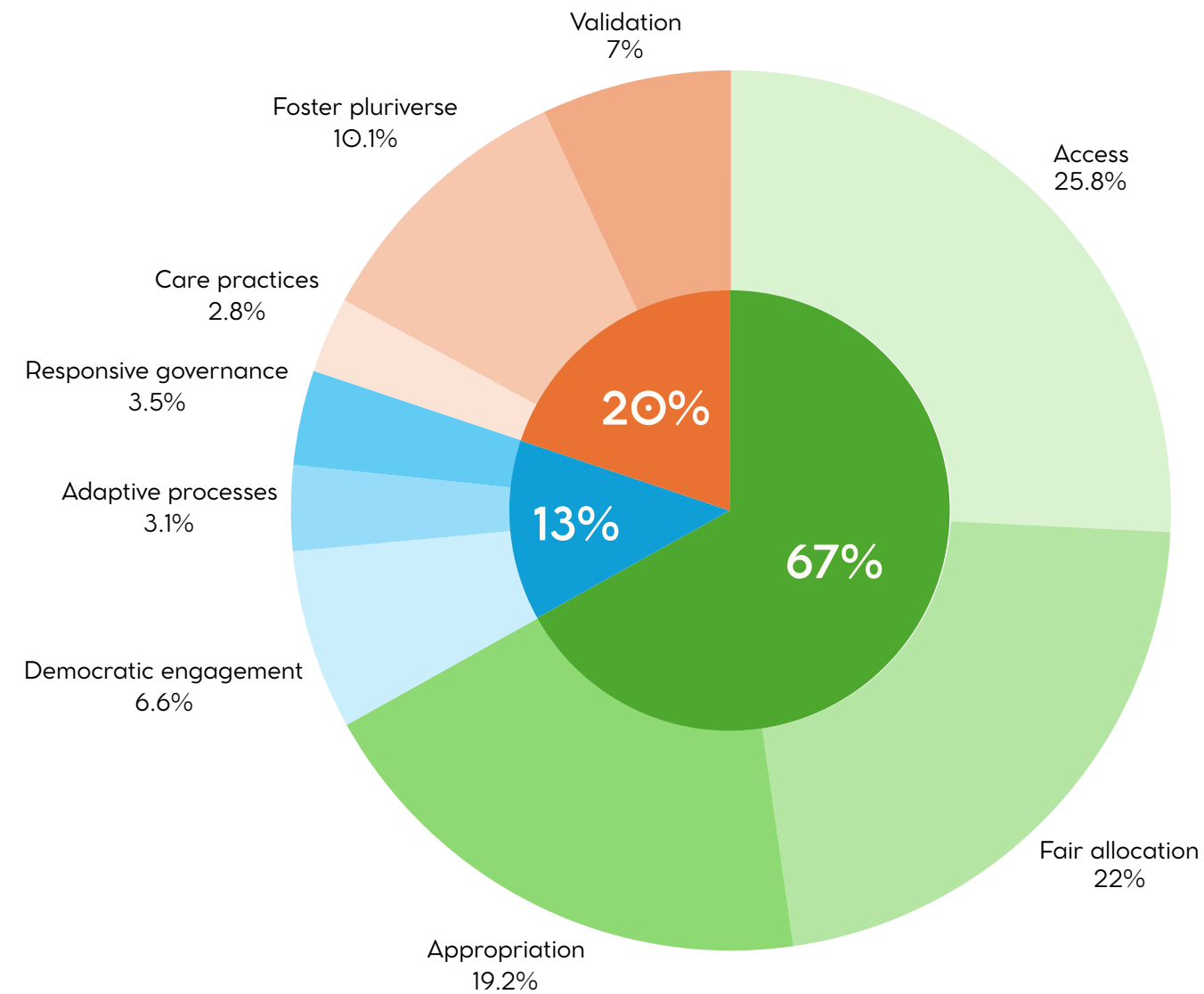


Procedural justice

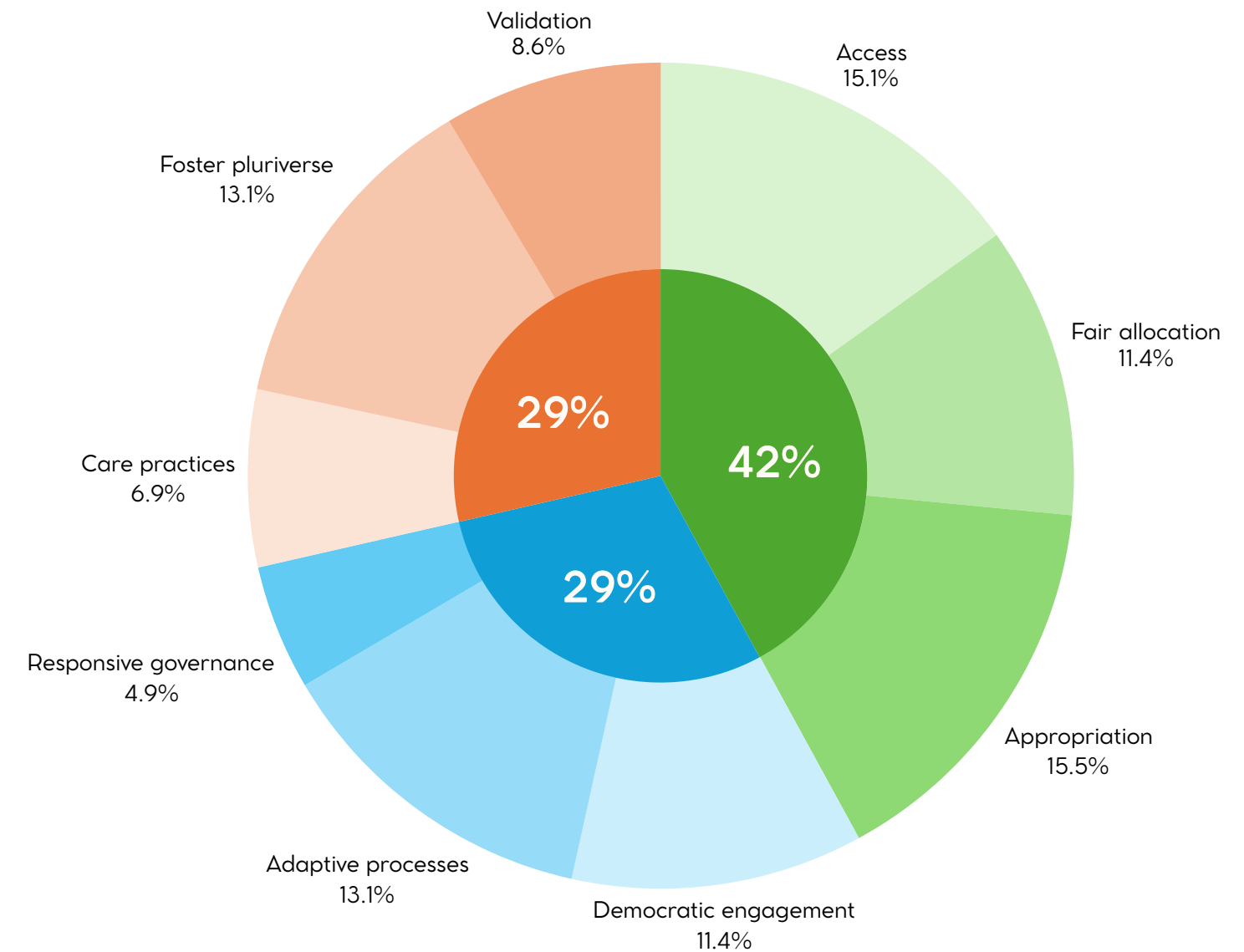


Recognitional justice

POLICIES ON PAPER FOR THE MUNICIPAL VISION



Structural Vision Maastricht 2030



Environmental Vision Maastricht 2040

● Distributive justice
 ● Procedural justice
 ● Recognitional justice

FUTURE RESEARCH

- > Expanding the scope
- > Refining the survey and statistical methods
- > Improving the dimensions of spatial justice