

Title of assignment: Transformation Vulnerability

Long title: Transformation to a low carbon society and efficient energy systems: What are the perspectives and experiences of vulnerable groups? (Include No 2)

Short summary of project: This assignment aims, firstly, to **identify** groups in civil society in Norway that are often neglected in formal procedures and public discourses, for instance because i) their interests are not represented by organisations that are invited in consultancy processes/hearings; ii) the organisations of which they are members have limited power to negotiate the members' position or iii) because they belong to groups who in the literature have been identified as vulnerable and/or excluded from such processes. Secondly the aim is to **conduct in-depth interviews** with selected members of some identified groups to obtain their perspectives on the ongoing transformation to a low carbon society and efficient energy systems.

BACKGROUND

Taxes (toll roads, CO₂-taxes, avoidance of taxes for electric vehicles), and rush hours on electricity use are examples of top-down measures and incentives to stimulate a shift to a low carbon society and efficient energy systems. Voluntary actions (sharing services, promotion of vegetarian diets, attempts to reduce waste) are also becoming more common.

In this picture, costs and benefits of measures are not necessarily equally distributed among different groups in the population. People's degree of access to influencing processes that lead to new solutions may also vary. For example, not all groups rise their voice in public debates and consultancy processes. Furthermore, the groups who are vocal (for example protesting against toll roads) are not necessarily the ones to be most severely affected by the measures. This project directly addresses groups who are commonly not heard in the debate and will examine their experiences and perspectives on the ongoing transformation processes to a low-carbon and energy efficient society.

OBJECTIVES

To **a)** identify vulnerable groups in Norway that are normally not heard and/or represented in the public debate on transformation and the processes for implementing plans and measures **b)** to interview a selected number of representatives for some identified groups **c)** to analyse the results by pointing to differences and similarities in people's experiences and perspectives with the purpose of widening our knowledge on how the ongoing transformation affect and is perceived by different groups.

By denoting somebody as vulnerable one risks stigmatising people. Nevertheless, as an indication of which groups we seek to address in this project, the following may be relevant: individuals/householders with low income, little education, disabilities (physical, mental), origin from outside Europe, ethnic minorities (sami), elderly, young people, people with a criminal record, etc. Vulnerability can also be contextually determined (e.g. illness, breakup of marriage, loss of job) or caused by a geographical divide (e.g. urban – sub-urban groups)

The results will be relevant to Include's coming research as it provides a basis for understanding social-justice dimensions of measures to a low carbon society. The results are also expected to be of interest to policy makers with respect to showing how environmental measures and policy instruments may affect groups differently, how interests of different groups are unevenly represented in transformative processes and outcomes and how design of participatory processes for transformation may deter certain groups from participating.

SCOPE OF WORK

The application involves one student who will become attached to [Include](#)/Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM, UiO). If the Corona situation allows, the student will be offered a desk (shared student office) at SUM.

The interviews will be conducted physically (if the Corona situation allows), or digitally. Because interviews form a central part of this project, previous experience in conducting interviews is an advantage.

The work is to take place in the summer 2021, starting in May. The working document is to be submitted no later than 30th September. The scope corresponds to six weeks' fulltime work for one student, but the work can also be spread over a longer period according to the applicant's suited timeframe. Revision of the project will be made together with the student.

OUTCOME

The outcome will be a report/working document, that provides an overview of interviewees perspectives and experiences of the ongoing transformation illustrated by relevant quotes from the interviewees, and analyses the findings with reference to relevant, literature. Ethical questions will be discussed in advance with the supervisor. Because the empirical material will be in Norwegian, we welcome that the report is written in Norwegian or a Scandinavian language. We also encourage the candidate to publish a popular scientific article based on the work.

APPLICATION

The candidates must be fluent in Norwegian or another Scandinavian language. A social-science background and good analytical and writing skills are expected. Previous experience in conducting interviews/ethnography is desired. Interested candidates must submit a statement of purpose/motivation and an overview of their background and experiences with research methods.

The student will receive supervision by Include-leader Professor Tanja Winther (SUM).