

Chapter 5. Block 3. Local capacity for policy formulation and implementation

Build capacity and diversity in civil service, with a view to ensure access to mainstream services for migrants and newcomers (Objective 6)

Increasing diverse ethnic composition of the staff of all municipal institutions and companies at all levels serves two objectives: to reflect the characteristics of the city's population and to improve services' accessibility for migrants. Since beginning of the 1980s, the Amsterdam administration formulated a personnel policy providing that 17% of the municipal staff should have a non-western migrant background. Since 1991, the Regulation of the Legal Position of the Municipality of Amsterdam (Rechtspositieregeling van de Gemeente Amsterdam, RGA) includes an article on diversity policy, under the heading 'positive action' (CLIP, 2009^[8]). In 2017 the city started a programme to hire refugees with the aim on one side to further increase the diversity of its personnel while on the other to give the example to local employers. A group of 14 refugees from Iran, Egypt, Syria and Eritrea started working for the municipality for a three-year programme, and after two years, will receive a contract. A combination of learning the Dutch language and gaining work experience is at the core of the programme.

Further capacity is built by exchanging practices around migrant integration with other cities. The city of Amsterdam has several formal and informal ties with international cities, meant to express solidarity and responsibility sharing, to exchange knowledge and/or to support each other in various domains. Across these international city networks Amsterdam is an active hub for sharing knowledge around migrant integration, and advises several partner cities who are experiencing similar challenges. For instance the city of Athens has a regular communication flow on several projects with the city of Amsterdam.

One example of the key role that Amsterdam undertakes in international knowledge management and advocacy around migrant and refugee integration is the **Urban Agenda for the European Union Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees**. The city of Amsterdam and the Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) of the European Commission are currently co-ordinating this initiative. The focus of the partnership is to improve access to European funding, improve EU-regulations and promote knowledge exchange. Two of the eight actions that the partnership developed have a focus on funding, is considering the scope to create financing facilities through which AMIF, ESF and potentially other EU funds could be blended with European Investment Bank (EIB) loans and thus made directly available to cities and financial intermediaries to implement investments in specified areas concerning migrant and refugee inclusion.

Other actions cover: housing, integration, and the provision of public services, social inclusion, education and labour market measures. Members are the cities of Athens,

Barcelona, Berlin and Helsinki; the national governments of Denmark, Greece, Italy and Portugal; as well as EUROCTIES; the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR); URBACT; the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE); the European Investment Bank; the Migration Policy Group; and two Directorates-General of the European Commission: Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL).

Strengthen co-operation with non-state stakeholders, including through transparent and effective contracts (Objective 7)

The city recognises the added value in outsourcing services specifically targeting migrants and refugees to co-operatives, migrant associations or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who have specific experience with these target groups. For instance, the city uses external partners to put in place programmes for the emancipation of women and vulnerable youth. Furthermore, many civil society organisations are supported by the municipality in their efforts to provide language courses to migrants and refugees (e.g. the Meevaart).

Such co-operation is usually established through grant agreements or an open procurement process. Generally, grant agreements imply more autonomy for the partner organisation. The procurement department within the municipality handles procurement contracts and monitors their execution together with the relevant policy staff. Challenges for funding involve lengthy bureaucratic application procedures and the need to formulate proposals that require a certain experience and resources are often only available for established associations.

Box 5.1. Examples: Founding sources for integration

In the past Amsterdam used two important sources of subsidies: the **Integration and Participation Subsidy** as well as the **Good Ideas Centre (MGI)**. Providing grants to associations between EUR 15 000 and EUR 50 000, the MGI procedure is considered a good example due to its fast process and direct link to the Mayor's office.

With regard to the implementation of the Amsterdam Approach, the external partners involved were selected through public procurement or a direct assignment for the delivery of a service.

In the past the municipality funded ethic- and religious-based organisations, including supporting structural costs such as rental or building maintenance. There has recently been a shift and the municipality no longer targets migrant associations but rather funds projects through call for proposals, related to integration and participation. Most of the regulations for applying for funding are directly linked to the municipal policy's goals of stimulating participation, social cohesion and integration.

Intensify the assessment of integration results for migrants and host communities and their use for evidence-based policies (Objective 8)

Monitoring integration outcomes

An annual report on integration in the Netherlands called the [Jaarrapport integratie is published by Statistics Netherlands \(CBS\)](#). The monitoring includes indicators on: demography, education, labour, income, benefits, crime, health and social participation. The 2016 report collected specific data on refugee groups. A number of specific themes are analysed more in-depth in the report: the results of migrants in more flexible segment of the labour market, the regional origin and settlement of Polish migrants who arrived since 2004, and the score on the Central Final Test of students with diverse backgrounds.¹

The city produces a statistic report every two years “Amsterdam in cijfers”²- Amsterdam in numbers- which includes some information on the stock of migrant in the city. In 2004, 2007 and 2010 the city published the Diversity and Integration Monitor, to reflect the state of development of integration and diversity in the city of Amsterdam³. This has been expanded into the Scorecard Citizenship and diversity (see below) and for the first time a new version, the *Diversity Monitor*, has been published in 2017 as an interactive dashboard.⁴ Produced by the Information, Research and Statistics Department of the municipality - *Onderzoek, Informatie en Statistiek (OIS)* these reports contribute to the city *Human Rights Agenda* (see “City vision and approach to integration” in Chapter 3) to ensure that all citizens of Amsterdam are able to fully participate in society. The Diversity monitor compiles different sources, including local survey data, local registration data and national registration data, to describe the situation of different groups in the city through 30 indicators regarding participation and conditions for participation. These indicators are grouped into three themes: equality of opportunity (health, social networks, societal inclusion); (conditions for) participation (socioeconomic position, societal/political participation); and living conditions. The dashboard allows to compare these indicators for groups of inhabitants disaggregated by: gender, age, level of education, immigrant background and residential neighborhood.

In addition since 2016 the city publishes every six months a specific monitoring on refugees the ‘Vluchtelingenmonitor’⁵ (Geemente Amsterdam, 2016b_[9]). Several outcomes are monitored including: demographical and socioeconomic indicators, participation, health and welfare, housing, and public support. A combination of registration and survey data is used.

The municipality also commissioned in the past specific studies for instance on gaps in migrant education. One of the concerns raised by some of the city functionaries met during the OECD field visit is around the use of the information produced by the political level of the municipality. Although most of research is commissioned to the OIS by a policy department, it seems that mechanisms to ensure that policy makers use the results of the research to inform policies could be strengthened.

Perception surveys

Surveys have been conducted every three months since 2015 by the Information, Research and Statistics Department of the municipality to monitor the support for the reception and housing of refugees in the city. In general, the surveys reveal a positive perception of the way the municipality handles the reception and accommodation of asylum seekers and refugees. Only 6% of the respondents were unsatisfied.

The city published in 2013 a Score Card Citizenship and Diversity for 2009-2011.⁶ This card includes indicators on how and to what extent residents perceive discrimination in the city. Data are provided on the degree to which non-western residents, women and youth are economically independent, trust in democracy, and feel part of the city (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016a).

Monitoring and evaluation of the Amsterdam Approach Status-holders

The city monitors how the Amsterdam Approach promotes integration of refugees in particular through the labour market, how these measures bring better results compared to the ones adopted in the past or to more bottom-up approaches, and if they could be replicated for other groups. As mentioned the implementation of the programme is closely measured through a monthly dashboard. In terms of impact evaluation, the municipality outsourced a research programme ‘Vakkundig aan het werk’ (skillfully at work) to Regioplan and the City of Amsterdam. ‘Vakkundig aan het werk’ is a joint programme of various government bodies and is aimed at providing municipalities (and practitioners) with evidence based knowledge on what works for whom and why in the field of labour market (re-)integration, poverty reduction and debt counselling. One of the target groups of this programme are refugees (i.e. beneficiaries of international protection).

The research grant allows for an in-depth study of the outline and content of the Amsterdam Approach Status-holders, the actual implementation of the programme and the effectiveness of the programme in terms of labour market insertion and enrolment in education. The study specifically focusses on the role of case-managers and job-hunters and on instruments such as the skills assessment, the intensive language training courses (Language boost) and the introductory programme (providing information on the city, the health care system and Dutch society).

To study the impact and results of the Amsterdam Approach Status-holders a realistic evaluation design is carried out⁷. In the first year the policy theory/intervention logic behind the Amsterdam approach was reconstructed and a process evaluation was carried out that will be public by January 2018. In 2018 a quantitative effect study will be carried out on the basis of register data with data on interventions and outcomes. This analyses will be followed by qualitative data collection among refugees and practitioners aimed at gaining insight into the explanatory factors behind the achieved results (what works for whom and why).

Finally, Amsterdam has contracted a specialised economics cabinet (LPBL) to produce a cost-benefit analysis every six months (see Box 5.2).

Box 5.2. Cost-benefit analysis of the Amsterdam Approach Status-holders

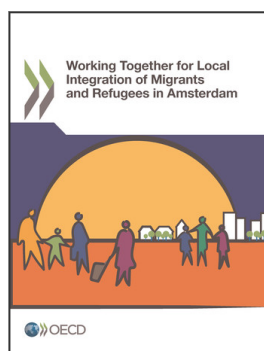
The municipality of Amsterdam uses cost-benefit analysis more often to evaluate and optimize policy, including policies for social care and welfare policies. The cost-benefit analysis takes in account all extra costs of the activities for refugees: client-management, extra activities (such as language boosts and internships) and programme management. It sets these against all the extra benefits, such as less unemployment-benefits, more taxes, more educational benefits (long term) and more quality of life. The results for the first year of the implementation (the new approach started as of July first 2016) were produced using a sample of

1 500 refugees (the so called 'Entrée-group'). The results of this group were compared with the results of a control-group (historical data) of over 3 000 refugees. The analysis shows that the employment rate after one year in the Entrée-group is 15% higher than in the control group (6%) and that employment comes earlier. The estimate of expected employment in the years to come is (according to the most ambitious of the three scenarios calculated) that 50% of the refugees doesn't need unemployment benefits within three years. Corrected for education, moving and other reasons for not needing unemployment benefits anymore, it means that within three years 25% of the refugees need to be employed. All costs and benefits considered the benefits exceed the costs by 50% in the basic scenario. It means that every euro invested leads to € 1.50 gained. In the potential scenario this is € 2.00 and in the ambition scenario € 3.00.

Source: Cabinet LPBL training en advies

Notes

1. www.cbs.nl/integratie.
2. www.ois.amsterdam.nl/pdf/2016%20jaarboek%20amsterdam%20in%20cijfers.pdf.
3. <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/diversity-and-integration-in-amsterdam-monitor-2010>.
4. www.ois.amsterdam.nl/visualisatie/dashboard_diversiteit.html.
5. www.ois.amsterdam.nl/nieuwsarchief/2017/vluchtelingenmonitor-voorjaar-2017.
6. www.ois.amsterdam.nl/nieuwsarchief/2013/scorekaart-burgerschap-en-diversiteit-2009-2011.
7. www.regioplan.nl/publicaties/slug/type/lopende%20projecten/slug/versnelde-participatie-en-integratie-van-vluchtelingen-de-amsterdamse-aanpak-deelrapport-i-w-erkwijze-en-beleidstheorie.



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