

Shaping immigration for integration? The Dutch migration-integration nexus in perspective

Netherlands Country Report EIF Project PROSINT (Promoting Sustainable Policies for Integration of TCN's)

Prof.dr. Han Entzinger, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Prof.dr. Sawitri Saharso, University of Twente

Dr. Peter Scholten, Erasmus University Rotterdam

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	THE EVOLUTION OF THE MIGRATION-INTEGRATION NEXUS	3
2.1	Frames and frame-shifts in the Dutch migration-integration nexus	3
2.2	Institutional separation in the departmental organization	5
2.3	Admission-related integration provisions since 2000; a brief history	6
2.4	Current trends in the Dutch civic integration policy system	10
3	PRE-ENTRY INTEGRATION POLICIES	12
3.1	Policy design	12
3.2	Relation to and interaction with EU regulations	16
3.3	Policy implementation	19
4	POST-ENTRY INTEGRATION POLICIES	22
4.1	Policy Design	22
4.2	Policy implementation and the 'Deltaplan' for Civic Integration	26
5	NATIONAL DISCOURSES ON THE MIGRATION-INTEGRATION NEXUS SINCE 2000	28
5.1	Politicization of the migration-integration nexus	28
5.2	Issue-linkages; gender and securitization	31

5.3	Actors from the policy subsystem	33
5.4	Mediatization	34
6	PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF PRE- AND POST-ENTRY INTEGRATION PROVISIONS	37
6.1	Perceived impacts of pre-entry measures	37
6.2	Perceived impacts of post-entry measures	43
6.3	Methodological discussion	44
7	THE LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIC INTEGRATION POLICIES; THE CITY OF ENSCHEDE	47
7.1	Contextual factors	47
7.2	Local Migration-Integration Policy Frames. An overview	47
7.3	The local integration landscape. A mapping of integration courses	50
7.4	The (perceived) impact of integration courses on immigrants' integration trajectories	52
7.5	Conclusions	59
8	CONCLUSIONS	61
	LITERATURE	68

1 Introduction

The Netherlands is often considered a guiding country in Europe in linking up migration and integration policies. As the first country in Europe, the Netherlands developed a specific policy of civic integration ('inburgeringsbeleid') for the post-admission integration of newcomers already in the early 1990s. This reflected a clear recognition, well before the politicization of immigrant integration after the turn of the millennium, that if immigration was to be a permanent phenomenon in Dutch society, policies would also have to be directed at the ongoing arrival of newcomers rather than at specific minority groups already present in society.

Since the 1990s, 'inburgeringsbeleid' and the efforts to restrict family migration in particular have become central stakes in the sharp politicization of immigrant integration in Dutch politics. Beyond the Dutch case, the 'inburgeringsbeleid' became a model for various other European countries that also wanted to strengthen the connection between their migration and integration policies.

The Netherlands has remained a frontrunner in devising new policy measures, both in terms of post-admission measures as well as pre-admission measures. The Inburgeringsbeleid has become more obligatory, introducing a legally sanctioned 'integration exam' and also much more extensive in terms of its demands, for instance concerning the required level of knowledge of Dutch society. In addition, post-entry conditions have been scaled up, for instance by installing an income requirement to restrict family migration. Besides these post-entry measures, Dutch government also installed pre-entry integration measures including a pre-entry test. Thus, government stimulates migrants to prepare for their integration in the Netherlands already before their arrival, but it also explicitly wishes to help migrants to consider their migration to the Netherlands very thoroughly.

This report focuses on the development of the Dutch migration-integration nexus over the last decade (since 2000). It explores developments in post- as well as pre-admission integration measures, such as integration conditions and the pre- and post-admission integration programs. Furthermore, it analyses the development of these measures by looking at developments in public and political discourses on the migration-integration nexus. Which actors played a role in these discourses, what venues did they use for influencing policy-making and what frames were brought about in relation to the migration-integration nexus? Finally, we will analyse the influence of European policies and legal directives on the national policy frame of the migration-integration nexus. This will include the top-down influence of the EU on national policy-making, as well as more bottom-up efforts of Dutch government to influence EU policy-making. These questions will be answered through an analysis based on document analysis (policy memoranda, parliamentary treaties), literature review, interviews with key stakeholders in the policy process and several focus groups with academic experts, policymakers as well as with migrants themselves.

The objective of this analysis is to find out to what extent a sustainable frame has emerged of the migration-integration nexus, that is a frame that is shared by a broad network of actors, that is consistently implemented and that is seen as effective by the involved actors. This means that this study will not determine the real world effects of Dutch

pre- and post-admission integration measures, or determine the success or failure of such policies by any given yardstick. Accepting that civic integration policy forms an 'intractable policy controversy' characterized by uncertainty of knowledge (such as data on effects or even expertise on its legal acceptability) and contest on the political and social desirability and acceptability of this policy, our unit of analysis is rather the more fundamental level of problem framing itself. So, this is a policy-science study of how and why the Dutch migration-integration nexus evolved as it did and whether it is considered effective by involved actors themselves, rather than a social-scientific evaluation of policy effectiveness in itself.

2 The Evolution of the Migration-Integration Nexus

Although the strong migration-integration nexus for which the Netherlands has become internationally so renowned did emerge only recently, different forms of a migration-integration nexus have already been there for decades. However, this nexus has been framed and shaped very differently in distinct periods.

2.1 Frames and frame-shifts in the Dutch migration-integration nexus

Until the late 1970s, Dutch government framed immigration as a temporary phenomenon. The Netherlands did not consider itself an immigration country, and expected that most migrants would eventually return to their home countries. For instance, guest-labourers were expected to return as soon as demand for foreign labour would diminish. Therefore, Dutch government saw no need for developing a policy aimed at immigrant integration either. A two-tracks policy was developed in this period, which meant that in social-economic terms migrants were stimulated to participate in the Dutch economy, whereas in social-cultural terms the preservation of groups structures and cultural identities was as much as possible preserved. In fact, some migrant groups were even housed separately and migrant children were provided with instruction in their own culture and language, so as to prevent integration as that was seen as a possible obstacle to return migration.

This was clearly already a specific sort of migration-integration nexus. Facilities for migrants were aimed at preventing their (social-cultural) integration and facilitating return migration. In fact, studies of migratory policies in this period have shown that labour migrants were selectively recruited to diminish the risks of permanent settlement (Lucassen and Penninx, 1995); this meant that married migrants and low-educated migrants had greater chances of being selected than unmarried and highly skilled migrants. Also, Dutch employers were stimulated to allow migrants to occasionally return to their families in the country of origin, or to only temporarily employ foreign workers to prevent alienation from their countries of origin. It is, however, difficult to speak in terms of an 'integration policy' in this period, particularly because integration presupposes permanent settlement and that was not the government's ambition in those days. Nevertheless, migratory policy and what we would now describe as integration policy were connected even in that period, although the objective of the latter was to prevent rather than to encourage integration and permanent settlement.

The relation between migration and integration was re-framed dramatically in the early 1980s. Following the radicalisation of Moluccan migrants in the late 1970s, the absence of significant return migration of labour migrants (primarily Turks and Moroccans), and even an increase immigration from (former) colonies (in particular from Suriname), the Dutch government was forced to recognize that the Netherlands had become an immigration country and that a policy aimed at integration of some kind was required. First of all, migrants were now re-framed as ethnic or cultural minorities in Dutch society. This frame stressed their permanent position as a minority within Dutch society, and also appealed to the Dutch legacy of pillarisation with its social and religious national minorities. Secondly, though these groups were now seen as permanent, their arrival was seen as a historically unique event. This meant that it was anticipated that no significant further immigration

would take place, and that the policy of integration was to be directed at those specific groups that had now settled permanently.

The new policy frame of the migration-integration nexus that was established in the 1980s thus linked up migration and integration policies in a very specific way. An Ethnic Minorities Policy was developed for specific 'ethnic minority groups' (foreign workers, Surinamese, Moluccans and Antilleans) whose arrival was seen as historically unique and for whom Dutch government felt it had a special historical responsibility. This Ethnic Minorities policy was aimed at promoting social-economic participation but also at social-cultural emancipation of the minority groups. Little known today is that the government had originally intended this to be a temporary policy; there was a widely shared positivist belief that when approached rationally and effectively, in a decade or so there would be no need for a further integration policy. At the same time, a restrictive immigration policy was developed; in order to promote the integration of the already present minority groups, further immigration would have to be halted. So, a restrictive immigration policy was aimed at promoting the integration of minority groups. Restrictive, however, did not mean that the main migration routes were to be blocked. Indeed, active labour recruitment in the Mediterranean countries had already come to a halt in 1973. Beyond restricting labour recruitment, government could do little to prevent family migration or asylum migration. In the mid-1970s, some debates did emerge about a 'return bonus' for labour migrants, which however never really materialized (though small-scale programs at promoting return migration did emerge, but were never used at any significant scale).

In spite of the Dutch government's expectation (or hope) that further large-scale immigration could be halted, immigration did in fact continue and even increase during the 1980s. In particular, the large scale family migration presented the government with a new situation. Immigration was now reframed as a permanent phenomenon in Dutch society (Scientific Council for Government Policy, 1989), rather than as a historically unique event. Thus, an integration policy would have to be developed that would be adapted to this reality of ongoing immigration. It was in this setting that, in the early 1990s, the idea emerged to introduce civic integration programs ('inburgeringsbeleid') not just for specific minority groups but for the ongoing arrival of newcomers. Though some disagreement existed at first whether these programs should be obligatory, a broad consensus did emerge that, if immigration is to be a permanent phenomenon, post-admission integration programs for newcomers have great priority in order to prevent the constant recurring of drawbacks in the integration process of migrant groups.

Thus, the migration-integration nexus was reframed once more in the early 1990s, from a restrictive immigration policy in order to facilitate the integration of specific groups, to a more elaborate integration policy so as to cope with the ongoing arrival of family migrants in particular. Ethnic Minorities Policy of the 1980s made place for an Integration Policy that focused less on specific migrant groups and more on individual migrants ('allochtonen') and on their integration in social and economic spheres such as labour, education and housing. The new Integration Policy, therefore, became much more generic than the previous group-specific Ethnic Minorities Policy. The main responsibilities for immigrant integration were shifted to generic policy domains such as labour market and educational policies, and no longer seen as a distinct policy domain in itself. Finally, in 1998 a law was enacted that regulated the integration of newcomers into Dutch society by obliging them to participate in civic integration courses (without an integration exam). This marked the formal beginning of the now so renowned Dutch inburgeringsbeleid.

After the turn of the millennium, once again a new policy frame would emerge in relation to the migration-integration nexus. A sharp politicization of migration and integration made reinforcing the integration policy and adopting further restrictive measures in the domain of immigration into key policy priorities. In particular family migration from Islamic countries like Turkey and Morocco now raised broad public and political concern. This triggered new reforms in both integration and immigration policies, reforms that were mutually reinforcing. In the sphere of integration, a culturalisation of policy measures occurred. The need to acquire social skills and knowledge of national culture, for example, became strongly emphasised in the civic integration courses. In the sphere of immigration, new restrictive measures were developed, such as a 120% of the minimum wage level requirement for family migration and the introduction of pre-entry programmes that would not just have to further the integration of participants but that would also help migrants to 'consider' their migration to the Netherlands very thoroughly.

The new frame that emerged in this epoch not just restricted immigration in order to further integration, but also saw the toughening of integration programmes (such as the pre-entry programmes) as a means for limiting immigration among categories of migrants that were seen as hard to integrate, in particular family migrants from Turkey and Morocco. This meant that more than ever before the migration-integration nexus became of central importance to the development of both migration and integration policies. Immigration policies were adapted

to the culturalisation of integration policies (in particular in relation to family migration), while integration policies were now also regarded a means for restricting immigration (for instance by 'helping' migrants to consider their migration thoroughly, but also by attributing a high degree of individual responsibility to the individual migrant to organize their pre-entry integration programmes). It is on this most recent episode in the development of the Dutch migration-integration nexus that this paper will focus.

2.2 Institutional separation in the departmental organization

The preceding historical analysis shows that the recent Dutch framing of the migration-integration policy nexus follows out of a long history with very diverse frames of this nexus. What is more constant than this series of frame shifts would suggest, is the lack of an institutionalized migration-integration nexus in terms of departmental organization. This means that over the past decades immigration and integration policies have been almost consistently situated in different governmental departments. The responsibility for immigration policy has almost constantly been situated in the Department of Justice. Integration policy, by contrast, shifted various times, from the Home Affairs Department in the 1980s and 1990s, to the Department of Justice right after the turn of the millennium, several years later to the Department of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment and recently (2010) back again to the Department of Home Affairs. And even in the years when both immigration and integration were situated in the same Department, there was a clear separation between both groups within that Department.

In terms of ministerial responsibilities as well, there has almost constantly been a clear separation between both areas. In the 1980s and most of the 1990s, the coordination of the integration policy was the responsibility of the Minister of Home Affairs. For immigration policy there has almost constantly been a special State Secretary within the Department of Justice. In 1998, a special minister was installed for 'Urban Policy and Integration'. Only very briefly, from 2002 to 2006, a special minister for Immigration and

Integration existed within the Justice Department (Minister Nawijn and later Minister Verdonk). In 2006 immigration was transferred from the portfolio of minister Verdonk to the minister of Justice, and when the Balkenende IV government took office in 2007 integration was moved to the Department of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment. Within this Department a special minister for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration was appointed (at first Minister Vogelaar and later Minister Van der Laan). In 2010, the policy responsibility for integration shifted back again to the Home Affairs Department. The Minister of Home Affairs, became responsible for matters more directly related to integration. At the same time, immigration policy shifted from the Justice Department to Home Affairs, where a new minister was appointed for Immigration and Asylum. Once more, responsibilities for the two fields were in the same Department, though in the hands of different Ministers.

2.3 Admission-related integration provisions since 2000; a brief history

As elaborated above, the Netherlands has developed various policy measures in terms of pre-admission as well as post-admission integration requirements. The Netherlands enacted a first act on the Civic Integration of Newcomers in 1998. Early indications of limited effectiveness of this act (TK 1999-2000, 27083, nr. 2: before Fortuyn) and a renewed agenda setting of immigration and integration by populist politicians after the turn of the millennium, led to a (non-incremental) redesign of the contours of the Dutch civic integration system (TK 2003-2004, 29543, nr. 2). This redesign was twofold, introducing a new approach to the post-admission integration programs as well as installing pre-admission measures. This resulted in a new Civic Integration Act being enacted in 2007 and an Integration Abroad Act being enacted in 2006.

In addition to these policy measures, the Dutch government also installed stricter (pre-entry) criteria for family migration, including an age requirement (both partners should be above 21) and a highly contested income requirement (the 'referent', or the partner in the Netherlands, should earn at least 120% of the basic minimum wage level). These pre-entry criteria serve a double purpose of limiting family migration as well as selecting family migrants in a way that should further the chances of integration into Dutch society. Therefore, these pre-entry conditions will be included in this analysis as well.

Civic integration on the agenda

The Netherlands first developed a policy aimed at civic integration of newcomers with the Civic Integration of Newcomers Act (which entered into force in 1998). This law was the product of years of debate on how Dutch integration policies could be adapted to the new reality of permanent immigration. Already in 1989, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy concluded that if immigration was to be a permanent phenomenon in Dutch society, then the integration of newcomers would also be a structural (rather than a temporary) policy in Dutch society (WRR, 1989: 10). Government should step up its efforts to cope with the ongoing arrival of newcomers and, at the same time, migrants also have a 'responsibility' to make an effort to integrate into society (ibid). Important is that the focus in this epoch was primarily on social economic integration (Scholten, 2010); the civic integration of newcomers should prepare migrants to participate in the spheres of labour, education and housing and prevent them from becoming 'welfare dependents' that would burden the welfare state.

This neo-liberal argument for a revision of the government integration policy was elaborated some years later by professors Van der Zwan and Entzinger. They framed the plans for a more individual and obligatory integration structure for newcomers in the context of 'a societal shift (..) in the character of the welfare state from soft compensatory in the direction of achievement performance' (Van der Zwan and Entzinger, 1994: 5). It developed a clear rights-and-duties perspective on the new integration courses; the migrants would be entitled to (and the government obliged to provide) civic integration programs to help migrants to participate on the Dutch labour market, whereas the migrants would have an obligation to participate in these programs and acquire the degree of language proficiency as well basic social skills to be able to participate on the labour market.

This advisory report was a major inspiration for the neo-liberal ('purple') government that came to power that year, including the Liberals, Social Democrats and Liberal Democrats. In response to this report, government adopted the idea for special programs for newcomers to acquire basic Dutch language proficiency and basic knowledge of Dutch society, as well as an obligation for specific groups of newcomers to take part (note: not to pass a test) in the integration programs (TK 1993-1994, 23684, nr. 2). Important was that this government continued to stress the social-economic rather than the social-cultural dimension of integration: culture was now considered less a dimension for government intervention, and focus was primarily on how to prevent migrants from becoming a liability to the welfare state and how to promote good or active citizenship on the part of these migrants (Bonjour, 2009: 198).

It was this neoliberal government that developed the outline of a Civic Integration of Newcomers act that was enacted in 1998. Already in 1996, government established civic integration programs in which migrants could participate on a voluntary basis. However, since 1998 (with the enactment of the Civic Integration of Newcomers law), migrants have an obligation to make the necessary efforts to participate in the civic integration programs. Moreover, on a limited scale, municipalities also involved so-called 'oldcomers', or migrants who have already settled permanently in the Netherlands, in particular when they have become dependent on government welfare aid.

However, this act became subject of political controversy very rapidly. In 2000, the Minister for Integration and Urban Affairs established a Taskforce 'Inburgering' to develop plans to cope with the waiting lists, how to improve the civic integration process of newcomers and how to ameliorate the information provision around these programs (Significant, 2010: 46). This taskforce provided a number of recommendations, including the opening up of a market for the provision of civic integration courses to a broad range of providers (Taskforce Inburgering, 2002). That same year (2002), another research institute recommended the introduction of integration tests and financial and/or legal consequences for the migrant if he/she does not pass this test (IBO, 2002). In addition, an evaluation of the Civic Integration of Newcomers acts states that implementation of the programs on the local level is often deficient and that the effects on bringing migrants to a higher level are limited (PwC and Regioplan, 2002).

The reform of the civic integration system

The new Civic Integration of Newcomers Act not only became immediately questioned in terms of its implementation difficulties, it also became a central part of a broad national debate on immigrant integration at large that emerged in 2000. This debate was triggered by a media article by the public intellectual Paul Scheffer who denounced the Dutch integration

approach in terms of a 'multicultural tragedy.'¹ This debate strongly contributed to a culturalisation of the tone of debate in the Netherlands; Dutch culture and history were to become key elements of the Dutch integration approach, marking a sharp difference with the individualist and social-economic approach of the 1990s and the multicultural approach from the 1980s.

Following this national debate on the 'multicultural tragedy', the long year of 2002, one of the most revolutionary years in Dutch politics since World War II (Andeweg and Irwin, 2005), would provide the immediate stage for a significant reform of the Dutch civic integration system. In the aftermath of the 11th September attacks in the USA in 2001 and the rise of the populist politician Pim Fortuyn on the Dutch political stage, immigrant integration had emerged as one of the key political topics. In 2002, before the elections of that year, the minister of integration and urban affairs presented a new policy memorandum (Integration in the perspective of immigration, 2002), that already contained some basic ideas for a more mandatory approach to civic integration.² After the sensational parliamentary elections in 2002, which made the Party of the late Pim Fortuyn the second largest in the country, the new parliament adopted a motion denouncing integration policy thus far as a failure (or 'insufficiently successful', TK 2002-2003, 28600, nr. 24). In addition, it asked for the establishment of a parliamentary investigative committee that should examine why it has had so limited success and in what way the policy could be reformed. In relation to civic integration, this parliamentary investigative committee would underline many of the conclusions from the 2002 report from the Taskforce Inburgering, of which many had not yet been adopted by government.

Also in 2002, in the context of parliamentary debates on the budget of the Department of Justice (then responsible for the civic integration of newcomers, under minister Nawijn for 'immigration and integration'), a group of parliamentarians (led by Mr. Blok of the Liberal Party, but also including Ms. Sterk of the Christian Democrat Party, Mr. Varela from the Fortuyn Party and Mr. Teeven of Liveable Netherlands) submitted a parliamentary motion supported by a parliamentary majority on November 7th 2002 that asked government to develop plans to 'involve the importance of essential Dutch values, norms and constitutional rights already during the application procedure for residence permits in the country of origin' (TK 2002-2003, 28600 VI, nr. 60). About a month later, in the context of parliamentary debates on the Civic Integration Act, a similar motion was submitted by a group of parliamentarians (this time led by Ms. Sterk from the Christian Democrat Party) that again asked the government 'to develop concrete plans to have the integration of newcomers in the context of family formation or family reunification already start in the migrants' country of origin (TK 2002-2003, 27083, nr. 25).

This idea for civic integration programs starting in migrants' countries of origin, but also the more general political pressure for a reform of the civic integration structure more at large, were included in the coalition agreement of the second Balkenende government that was formed in May 2003 (with Christian Democrats, Liberals and Liberal-Democrats). This government succeeded the Balkenende I government that was formed after the Fortuyn revolt in Dutch politics but imploded already in late 2002. This

¹ Many respondents refer to this debate (rather than for instance the 11th September attacks in New York or even the rise of Fortuyn in Dutch politics, as the starting point for political deliberation on a more culturalist approach to immigrant integration; for instance, interview with former Minister Verdonk, with researcher from SCP, with Ms. Sterk.

² Interview with former policy maker at Department of Justice

coalition agreement included a paragraph that contained the core of the reform of the civic integration structure that would follow in this decade:

'Who wishes to settle permanently in our country must participate actively in society, acquire proficiency in the Dutch language, be aware of Dutch values and abide to the norms. Every newcomer who comes to the Netherlands on a voluntary basis and is part of the target population for the Civic Integration of Newcomers Act, should first acquire a basic level of Dutch language proficiency in the country of origin as a condition for admission. Once in the Netherlands, that person should further familiarize himself or herself with Dutch society.' (TK 2002-2003, 28637, nr. 19: 14).

These plans were further developed in a government letter on the contours of an 'Integration Policy New Style' (TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr.1) and in a memorandum on the 'Revision of the civic integration system' (TK, 2003-2004, 29543, nr. 2), both presented by the new minister of immigration and integration, Ms. Verdonk. The 'Integration Policy New Style' codified a policy paradigm-shift in Dutch integration policy at large. Whereas the Integration Policy in the 1990s had focused primarily on social-economic integration (labour, education, housing), now social-cultural integration (or in social-scientific terminology 'assimilation') became a primary area of concern (Scholten, 2010):

'Integration Policy has always put great stress on the acceptance of differences between minorities and the native population. There is nothing wrong with that, but it has often been interpreted as if the presence of allochthonous minority groups in itself would have been a valuable enrichment tout court. One disregards that not everything that is different is also valuable. With the cultivation of the own cultural identities it is not possible to bridge differences. The unity of our society must be found in what the members have in common. That is (...) that they are citizens of one society. Shared citizenship for allochthonous and autochthonous residents is the goal of Integration Policy. (...) Shared citizenship involves that people speak Dutch, and that one abides to basic Dutch norms' (TK, 2003-2004, 29203, nr. 1: 7).

The plans that were presented by Minister Verdonk included pre- and post-entry integration programs, including a pre- as well as a post-entry test. Already before being admitted to the Netherlands, the migrants should be able to prove 'basic language proficiency and elementary knowledge of Dutch society' (TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr.1: 15). Subsequently, the acquisition of 'a more advanced level of language proficiency and social knowledge and skills' would be a condition for the acquisition of a permanent residence permit (ibid). Notably, these plans involved not only the newcomers (family formation and family reunification in particular), but also 'oldcomers' as target groups of the new civic integration programs: those migrants whose language proficiency was thought to be 'insufficient' or who were dependent on social security, should be obliged to participate and to pass the exam (ibid). Moreover, migrants should pay for their own courses, though a specific amount would be returned if they pass the exam. In the following years, these plans were to be elaborated into a new Civic Integration Act (passed in 2007) and an Integration Abroad Act (passed in 2006).

2.4 Current trends in the Dutch civic integration policy system

Ever since the enactment of the Civic Integration Abroad Act and the Civic Integration Act, the issue of integration of newcomers has remained high on the public and political agenda. There is a persistent political urgency surrounding this topic, driven by many political parties (not just anti-immigrant parties like the LPF and Wilders' Freedom Party). At the same time, there is a great urgency in getting a better understanding of how and to what extent both the pre-entry and the post-entry measures effectively promote the integration of the participants. The effects of the income and age level requirements as well as the pre-entry tests on the integration of these participants are difficult to establish and there are indications (e.g. Q&A, 2010) that this effect is only limited (especially given the amount of political attention and finances committed to these programs).

The new Centre-Right government coalition under prime-minister Rutte that took office in 2010 (with the Liberals, the Christian Democrats and with support from Wilders' Freedom Party) announced a further reform of the Dutch civic integration system in particular and Dutch immigration and integration policies more in general. In the coalition agreement of the Rutte cabinet, new measures have been announced to further restrict immigration to the Netherlands. Many of the proposed measures, such as reinstalling an income level requirement to immigrants, elevating the minimum age requirement for family migrants to 24 years, introducing a test that would have to measure whether a migrant is more strongly attached to the Netherlands than to his/her country of origin, and other measures to further restrict family as well as asylum migration in particular, require changes in the relevant European regulations (such as the Family Reunification Directive) and treaties. The coalition agreement explicitly mentions that the new cabinet will make strong efforts to change European migration regulations according to its preferences, as it is impossible for an EU member state to opt out of European directives that it had endorsed at first. The government will also attempt to modify certain migration-related articles in international treaties that it no longer supports, but it does not intend to withdraw from any of these.

The government has equally announced that it will discontinue any form of integration policy specifically targeted at people of migrant background, including subsidies for migrant organisations. Instead, general policy instruments should apply to everyone, including migrants.

Finally, in the field of civic integration properly, the government maintains its position that the integration of newcomers is primarily an individual responsibility of migrants themselves. This means that the government will no longer support the provision of post-entry civic integration courses; it will only establish a social loan system for those migrants who cannot afford paying for the courses. This has immediately led to critical responses from a number of stakeholders, such as the four major Dutch cities, which have expressed concerns about the negative impact of these new measures on the attendance of these courses.³ They reminded the government that exactly the same plan had been introduced in 2007. It had to be withdrawn within a year, as the introduction classes remained almost empty and newcomers no longer registered for the courses since they did not want to borrow the relatively high sums required for attending. Another major change is that anyone who fails to pass the exam within three years of residence will have to leave the Netherlands, except in cases where an exemption has been granted. It remains to be seen if this intention is

³ NRC Handelsblad, 30-11-2010, 'Grote Steden sturen brandbrief inburgering'.

in line with a number of international obligations to which the Netherlands is a party. Finally, in pre-entry testing no changes are foreseen, as the costs of these are already fully covered by the candidates.

The preceding analysis shows that the Dutch pre- and post- entry civic integration provisions (and –conditions) have changed significantly over the past decade. The new system has become more mandatory in terms of tests and legal consequences and in terms of acquiring a residence permit, more inclusive in terms of target groups, more culturalist in terms of focus and much more geared towards the individual in terms of the allocation of responsibilities for attending the courses and for funding them.

3 Pre-entry integration policies

The Netherlands was the first country in Europe to have installed an obligatory pre-entry integration program. An Integration Abroad Act was enacted on March 15th 2006. This law meant that large numbers of migrants had to pass a pre-entry test in their country of origin before being granted a temporary residence permit. This temporary residence permit would enable them to participate in subsequent post-admission integration programs in the Netherlands and, if completed successfully, to obtain a permanent residence permit.

3.1 Policy design

Policy objectives and policy theory

The primary objective of the Civic Integration Abroad Act is to promote the integration of newcomers. It aims to prevent the process of successive reproduction of integration problems due to ongoing immigration. It stresses that 'ongoing immigration in combination with a lack of integration can lead to processes of marginalization of specific groups in the sense of declining capacities to social participation, weak chances on the labour market and structural dependence on income support'.⁴ Furthermore, the government also considers this act to be in the interest of the migrants themselves. The act stresses the 'successive reproduction of marginalization' because as immigration continues, especially in the form of family migration, this will have negative consequences for the established migrant as well; 'as many newcomers have child-nurturing tasks and in due course can also request the admission of a foreign family member, while the child will also form a family in the future, this process will be carried on from generation to generation'.⁵

The Civic Integration Abroad Act also has an objective in terms of migration control. First of all, the government expects that the new act will help migrants in making a more deliberate and a better informed choice before coming to the Netherlands. Moreover, government refers to pre-entry programs as a 'selection criterion'.⁶ Those who fail to pass the pre-entry tests will not be admitted to the Netherlands, and the restriction of immigration of 'non-integrationable' migrants will help 'reduce the integration problem'.⁷ Furthermore, it is mentioned as an 'expected side-effect', that 'potential migrants that are not directly willing or able to acquire the language proficiency and knowledge of society that is required for being admitted to the Netherlands, this law will mean delay or possibly even cancellation of settlement in the Netherlands'.⁸ If the pre-entry test in individual cases results in delay or cancellation of migration due to lack of motivation or perseverance, government states it 'prefers this situation to a situation where integration is already delayed after admission (..) which benefits neither the migrant and his/her family and (future) social position, nor Dutch society as a whole'.⁹ The government even expects a decrease of family migration of about 25%.¹⁰ However, the level of the pre-entry tests has been determined in a way that 'shall not select based on level of education but rather on motivation and perseverance of the migrant

⁴ TK 2003-2004, 2900, nr. 3: 4

⁵ Ibid.: 4

⁶ Ibid.: 6

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ TK2003-2004, 29700, nr.3: 14

⁹ Ibid.: 14

¹⁰ TK 2003-2004, 29700, nr. 3: 14-15

(..) as these are qualities that are of crucial importance to the further integration in the Netherlands'.¹¹

These policy objectives are legitimated primarily with reference to the position of family migrants; it is stressed that family migration from countries as Turkey and Morocco is the problem that the pre-entry tests are supposed to address. The Memorandum of Understanding provides a grim picture of the position of family migrants, especially from (explicitly mentioned) Morocco and Turkey.¹² In particular the number of family formation migrants (in contrast to family reunification migrants) was believed to have increased rapidly. The Memorandum observes that 'this group of migrants has characteristics that are unfavourable for a good integration in Dutch society'.¹³ They would have a weak starting position on the labour market because of their educational background, their levels of unemployment are much above average, they find mostly low-skilled jobs, and in terms of social-cultural integration 'family migrants are closer to the first generation than the second generation'.¹⁴ Moreover, the Memorandum observes that in particular women would be in weak positions, as they mostly become 'housewives, unemployed or unfit for labour'.¹⁵ Finally, the task of government to preserve 'public order' and to safeguard 'national security' as key arguments why it should be able to renounce the right of family life in specific cases¹⁶, thereby making explicit connections to potential radicalisation and anti-western sentiments of migrants.¹⁷

Target groups

The target population of the pre-entry programs includes all foreigners between 18 and 65 year that wish to settle permanently in the Netherlands and are not exempted from the obligation to acquire a temporary residence permit for being admitted to the Netherlands (Lodder, 2009: 8). In addition, religious servants have been addressed as a special category that is obliged to take part in pre-entry tests. Specific categories are exempted from taking part in the pre-entry programs. This includes foreigners with one of the nationalities that have been indicated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs as exemptions, members of the EU/EEA, persons that cannot travel due to health reasons, those who have been victim of human trafficking, those who already have a residence permit and those who have been appointed by general government measures as exemptions (Ibid.: 8). For asylum migrants and other categories that cannot be required to follow pre-entry tests due to international obligations or for humanitarian reasons, exemptions are made as well. Also, migrants coming for specific temporary reasons, such as for study, au-pair, exchange or medical treatment are exempt. Finally, migrants coming with a working permit, self-employed migrants and highly educated migrants are exempt (Strik, 2010: 12).

This way of selecting the target groups does not seem to violate the international legal principle of equality, as it does not involve selection based on origin, race, colour of skin, sex, language or religion. De-facto this categorization leaves only family migrants from non-western countries as target groups of pre-entry tests. Several 'developed and western (-

¹¹ TK 2003-2004, 29700, nr.3: 11

¹² TK 2003-2004, 2900, nr.3: 4

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.: 5

¹⁵ Ibid.: 5

¹⁶ TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 47

¹⁷ TK, 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 4

oriented) countries', that also provide family migrants, are exempted; this includes Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, the US and Switzerland. Migrants from these countries are exempted because they 'come from countries that are comparable to the European countries in social, economic and political respects and for that reason do not lead to undesirable and uncontrollable migration flows to the Netherlands and to substantial integration problems in Dutch society' (Ibid.: 19). Furthermore, government states that imposing pre-entry tests for migrants from these countries was found to be 'potentially harmful to our foreign and economic relations'.¹⁸ This shows that political-economic arguments also played a role in the selection of policy target groups.

Pre-entry integration measures and legal consequences

The pre-entry tests are conducted at Dutch embassies and consulates abroad through direct phone connections with a computer in the Netherlands. The level of the tests had been determined at A1minus according to the European Common Framework of Modern Languages. This level involves only very basic listening and speaking skills. Passing at A1 minus means, according to Strik (2010), that 'the examination candidate understands announcements and instructions, simple questions and answers which are related to his/her immediate personal life, can give elementary information on his/her identity and personal life and can express himself/herself to a very limited degree (with the assistance of isolated words and standard formulas). The test in itself involves a set of questions, involving exercises where migrants repeat sentences and short stories.

Dutch government has raised the required level to A1 starting from January 2011.¹⁹ This was motivated by the seemingly small effect on language proficiency of migrants after completing the pre-entry tests.²⁰ De facto, the testing level was already raised to A1 in March 2008, though the required level for passing the test had remained on A1-minus.²¹ In addition, the pre-entry tests were expanded with a literacy test. This test does not include writing skills, but does include reading Dutch, pronunciation of Dutch texts and understanding of Dutch texts.²² This also means that the current system of computerized examinations could be continued.

In addition to the language test, the pre-entry test also includes a test of elementary knowledge of Dutch society. This test focuses on 'abstract knowledge of the Netherlands and Dutch society', including 'values, norms and basic rights' such as 'equal treatment, ban on discrimination, respect for people's private sphere (..), respect, tolerance, integrity, responsibility', as well as on a number of more practical and concrete issues.²³ The following parts are included in this societal test: 'law and democracy, history and culture of the Netherlands, religion in the Netherlands, geography and people of the Netherlands, housing and transportation, education and nurturing, health care, labour and income, the first time of newcomers in the Netherlands and the proceedings during the pre-entry tests.' This part of the pre-entry test includes 30 questions, based on a movie that may be purchased as part of the training material that migrants can pursue as part of their preparation for the pre-entry tests.

¹⁸ TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 32

¹⁹ Staatsblad, 2010: 679

²⁰ TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr.1: 9

²¹ Ibid.: 4

²² Staatsblad 2010, 679: 7

²³ TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 2

Dutch government does not provide pre-entry courses in the countries of origin. Migrants are entirely free in choosing how they prepare for the pre-entry tests. Recent studies show that indeed a significant supply of courses has emerged in most of the migrants' countries of origin (Triarii, 2009: 16). The Dutch government does supply an information and training package that migrants may (but are not obliged to) buy, including a film on dvd ('Coming the Netherlands'), a booklet, and access codes for test exams. By providing the material, but not actively organizing courses, the pre-entry policy seeks to appeal to the individual responsibility of the migrants themselves for their migration to the Netherlands.

The pre-entry tests form a condition for admission to the Netherlands (with a temporary residence permit). Proof of successful passing of the pre-entry test has to be handed in at a Dutch embassy or consulate in order to be eligible for a regular temporary residence permit. There are no opportunities for legal appeal against the decision about passing or failing a test; there are opportunities for filing complaints.

Pre-entry conditions

In addition to the pre-entry tests, that mostly put demands on the family migrant himself or herself, the Dutch government has also stepped up pre-entry conditions that apply primarily to the 'referent' (or sponsor), i.e. the Dutchman or any other person residing in the Netherlands who requestse admission of the family migrant. Earlier, the Dutch government had already introduced an age condition (both the referent and the family migrant should be at least 18 years old) and an income condition for the referent, of 100% of the minimum wage level (basically meaning that the referent should not be dependent on social security). Important is that both criteria applied to instances of family formation migration (not to family reunification migration). In October 2004, the government decided to increase these criteria significantly. From then onwards, both the referent and the migrant should be at least 21 years old. The elevation of the age requirement would stimulate migrants to continue studying until a later age (Ibid.: 18). In addition, the income condition was increased to 120% of the minimum wage level. The higher income requirement would motivate the referent to participate on the labour market, also for women referents (WODC, 2010: 16). The improvement of the social-economic position of the referent would then also have an indirect positive effect on the starting position of the partners arriving from abroad (Ibid.). Furthermore, an issue-connection is made with the problem of forced marriages; 'the period of delay of migration (due to the age level requirement) will encourage the potential migrants to prolong their school studies and will encourage women in particular to make a more independent choice of marriage partners. This may help preventing forced marriages'²⁴. Finally, these pre-entry conditions were expected to lead to a limitation of immigration, in particular family formation.²⁵

However, on March 4th 2010, the European Court of Justice ruled against two basic premises in these Dutch pre-entry conditions in the so-called Chakroun-case.²⁶ The Court ruled that it was not allowed to differentiate between family formation and family reunification migration. This had concrete implications in particular for the age condition that the government had raised for family formation migrants. As a consequence, it decided

²⁴ TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr. 1: 16

²⁵ TK 2004-2005, 19637, nr. 873: 13

²⁶ C-578/08J

to raise the age requirement for both family formation and family reunification migration to 21 years, thereby toughening the criteria for family reunification in particular (though still within the legal boundaries set by the European Family Reunification Directive).²⁷ The European Court also ruled that the Netherlands was not allowed to pose a general income requirement of 120% in all cases of family migrants. It is not allowed to reject applications based on a general income requirement without any assessment of the circumstances of each individual application (Ibid.). Governments are allowed to pose income requirements to applicants, but the Dutch requirement of 120% of minimum wage level is too high to posit without assessing the individual consequences of this general rule. Consequently, Dutch government changed the income requirement to 100% of minimum wage level for families and 70% of minimum wage level for single parents (Ibid.). In addition, the Dutch government will assess for every individual case what the consequences will be if the application is to be rejected and a legal check will take place whether these consequences are in line with art. 8 ECHR.

3.2 Relation to and interaction with EU regulations

The Dutch case has been closely monitored internationally for of its relation to international and European law. In Dutch political and public discourse, this relation also played a central role. At times, the Dutch government has tried to push the boundaries of the international and European legal setting in which it operates (which has also been framed openly as such in national political and public debates). Also, the international setting has often been framed as an obstacle to the Dutch discretion in limiting immigration. At the same time, the Dutch have been very active as well in voicing their preferences at the European level. This way, Dutch government has been trying to expand the boundaries within which it can toughen its approach to immigrant integration and immigration.

Several key issues have played a central role in this intractable relationship between the Dutch and the EU in particular. First of all, the pre-entry tests have been closely watched in terms of their potential discriminatory effects on specific groups or categories. This involves in particular the relation between the selection of target groups for pre-entry tests and art. 8 ECHR on the right of family life. It is generally accepted, and in the Netherlands it has also been acknowledged by various institutions, such as the Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs (ACVZ, 2004), that imposing pre-entry conditions is in broad terms in agreement with art. 8 ECHR. Member-states have a broad margin of appreciation in striking a balance (a 'fair balance') between the interests of the applicant and the interests of the State in operating a restrictive immigration policy (Lodder, 2009: 38; De Vries, 2006: 8). However, the Dutch case has been closely watched precisely in how this balance is struck.

Perhaps one of the most distinct instances where Dutch policies were challenged not by EU legal agencies but by a European NGO, was in a report from Human Rights Watch (2008) that called for the abolition of the new Civic Integration Abroad Act. One argument was that it basically involved discrimination between Western and Non-Western migrants. In addition, HRW argued (2008: 33) that the preparation that is required for passing the pre-entry test may in some cases result in such a long period of separation of partners that a violation of art. 8 ECHR would take place. However, not long before publication of this report, a Dutch court ruled that Dutch policy was not out of bounds in this respect (Strik, 2010: 17), as the protection of economic relations with specific countries was a justified

²⁷ TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr. 8

reason for exempting specific categories from the general obligation of civic integration abroad.²⁸

In addition, experts like Groenendijk (2005) have argued that the lack of government involvement in preparatory courses for passing the pre-entry tests can also endanger this balance. If the preparation for the pre-entry tests would be too hard to organize for some, the test could become a disproportionate obstacle for the immigration of specific categories.

An important argument of Dutch government in this respect, is that the required level for passing the pre-entry tests is set so low that everybody who is seriously motivated to prepare the test and to take it, will eventually be able to pass (see also, Lodder, 2009: 39). If the test would be too hard for large categories of migrants, it would become an exclusion mechanism rather than a selection mechanism, and thereby potentially in conflict with international legal obligations (De Vries, 2006: 4). In addition, the government has made exemptions for those situations where it may be unreasonable to expect migrants to take part in the pre-entry tests (Lodder, 2009: 39). It is unclear what the consequences of the recent upgrading of the required level of language proficiency for passing the pre-entry tests (to A1) will be in this respect.

Another central issue is the relation between the pre-entry test and art. 14 of ECHR, which bans all forms of racial discrimination and art. 7 of the European Family Reunification Directive. If the pre-entry exams would form a much more severe obstacle for specific groups than for others, this could be a form of discrimination. A central concern here is the proportionality of the imposed measure in relation to the goal of the measure (Lodder, 2009: 40); in casu, this means that the severity of the measure in terms of for instance costs, time, consequences of failure) should be proportional with the aim of improving the integration of the selected categories. The ECHR seems to provide countries with a large margin of appreciation when it comes to differentiating between migrants with different residence statuses. Dutch government legitimates its selection of categories that are obliged to take part in the pre-entry tests without direct reference to specific nationalities (see above); at the same time, it explicitly singles out a number of western countries, based on the argument that these are social-economically, socially and politically similar to the Netherlands (see above).

In this respect it is again very important for the legal acceptability that the pre-entry tests do not disproportionately affect a specific category of migrants, or migrants from a specific nationality. In this respect, Human Rights Watch (2008: 29-30) has argued that the Dutch system of pre-entry tests discriminates against Turkish and Moroccan migrants, as they seem to have smaller passing-rates and since these categories have showed the largest decrease in number of applications for temporary residence permits (see above). In addition, Dutch government has slightly stepped up its efforts in helping migrants to prepare for their integration tests, for instance by ameliorating the information provision about potential language courses and by including a language training module in the training packages (which was primarily meant for the social knowledge training).²⁹

So far it has remained unclear if the pre-entry tests have an impact on the migrants' integration process after they have settled in the Netherlands. In principle, the imposed measures could be ruled as disproportionate (and in violation with art 7 of the Family Reunification Directive) if no significant positive effect is found on the integration of those

²⁸ *The Hague Court*, 23 April 2008, AWB 07/35128, JV 2008/282

²⁹ Tk 2009-2010, 32175, nr. 1: 22

who passed the test. However, thus far there seems to be too little data (due to the recent launch of the pre-entry tests) to determine such effects.

There have been only very few instances where EU court rulings actually led to the cancellation of specific policy measures. One of the most significant cases has been the Chakroun case, mentioned earlier in this chapter, in which the Dutch government was forced to abandon its 120% of minimum wage level condition for admission. Another regulation that has significantly curtailed the government scope of action in imposing a civic integration requirement to Turkish migrants in the Netherlands is the Associate Membership Treaty between the EU and Turkey and the so-called Standstill Agreement for Turkish accession to the EU. These regulations imply that government cannot impose new and stricter measures on the integration of Turkish 'oldcomers' in Dutch society (the regulation does not apply to newcomers).

The Dutch government has also become increasingly pro-active in voicing its preferences at the EU level. This applies in particular to the debates in the European Commission on changes in the European Family Reunification Directive. Even before new proposals are presented, the Dutch governments 'tries to encourage Europe to take measures in the harmonisation of immigration and integration criteria (..) so that already at an early stage, efforts can be made to create support for Dutch measures in the next stage of harmonisation of family migration'.³⁰

An important example of this pro-active attitude is the so-called The Hague program of the European Council on 'Freedom, Liberty and Law in the EU', which was for a large part based on a Dutch initiative. During the Dutch presidency of the European Union, Minister Ms. Verdonk presided a ministerial conference in November 2004, which focused on civic integration programmes. This set the contours for more European co-ordination of integration policies, which put much stress on the preservation of national competencies. This case clearly reveals how the Dutch government has actively tried to take the role of a guiding country when it comes to civic integration.³¹ This The Hague Programme laid the foundations for the Common Basic Principles for Integration which provided a basic set of principles to guide the development of immigrant integration policies in various European countries.³²

International policy learning

In the Netherlands, few comparisons have been made between the Dutch case and the situation in other countries. The obvious reason for this will be that the Netherlands was the first country in Europe to have adopted pre-entry programs. Furthermore, the strong embedding in Dutch political discourse also seems to have voided the demand for international policy learning.

More recently, specific comparisons do seem to have played a relatively minor role. In particular, in the context of the debate on raising the required level of language proficiency for the pre-entry tests from A1-minus to A1, reference was made to the German case. In Germany, the required language level had already been set at A1. However, this comparison does not seem to hold entirely; Germany has a well-established system of language institutes across the globe (Goethe Institutes) that play a central role in the provision of language

³⁰ TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr.1: 12

³¹ 'Dwang is Nederlands stokpaardje', in NRC Handelsblad, November 11 2004.

³² Interview with policymaker from Justice Department.

courses, whereas the Netherlands does not have a similar structure. Furthermore, Germany requires migrants to obtain a language certificate from these institutes that has to be submitted to the embassy in order to become eligible for a residence permit, whereas in the Netherlands the embassies organize the pre-entry tests themselves. .

3.3 Policy implementation

Implementation at the embassies and consulates

The pre-entry tests are implemented by Dutch embassies and consulates abroad. The pre-entry tests themselves are however organized from the Netherlands. A phone connection is made between the embassy or consulate where the examinee is situated, and an exam computer at the Department of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. This applies both to the test on Dutch language comprehension and the test on Dutch society. In spite of the initial cynicism about the possibilities to implement this test structure in all Dutch embassies and consulates, the 2009 evaluation by Regioplan shows that most embassies and consulates are rather satisfied with how the tests work in practice and with the instructions and the administrative support they receive from the Department of Foreign Affairs (Regioplan, 2009: 19-20).

Most examinees are also rather positive about the way the tests are conducted (Ibid.: 27-28). There have been only few official complaints, for example on waiting lists for participating in the exams and about difficulties in getting to an embassy or consulate (Significant, 2010: 29). There are also no known cases of fraud with the exams (Ibid.). From our own focus group, one immigrant from Cape Verde had had the experience that he could not conduct a pre-entry test in his home country, and therefore had to travel to Senegal.

Preparation by the immigrants

The Dutch government does not provide pre-entry integration courses. This means that migrants have to prepare for the pre-entry tests themselves; they have to find relevant courses, course material and also have to finance their preparation (and eventually the pre-entry test) by themselves. Also, migrants have to actively find information about the formalities and the preparation for pre-entry tests. In most cases (78%), the partner in the Netherlands plays a key role in finding relevant information (other important sources of information are the internet, the Dutch embassies and relatives and friends). For many migrants (40%), the total preparation for the tests takes less than 3 months (Regioplan, 2009: 27). However, for 20% of the participants the preparation took more than 6 months or even more than a year.

A recent study by Triarii (2009) shows that in all examined countries, independent course providers have emerged on the market (2009: 15-16). Furthermore, providers have emerged in the Netherlands as well, aiming at migrants who have come to the Netherlands on a tourist visa and who are planning to apply for a pre-entry test later (Ibid.). However, criticism has emerged concerning the quality of the provided courses (Tk 29700, nr. 40: 4; Regioplan, 2009: 25).

The Dutch government does provide official 'training material' that migrants can pursue in (of from) their home countries. This training material consists of a DVD 'To the Netherlands', a book with photos related to the film, an audio-cd with questions and answers related to the film, and a set of (so-called TIN-) codes that migrants can use to make test-exams through a phone connection.

This training material has sparked controversy, primarily because of the image it portrays about Dutch society. Specific parts of the film with gays kissing and with a topless woman on a Dutch beach, would even make the possession of this movie illegal in a number of countries. That is why Dutch government also provides an expurgated version of the movie in some countries. This version now amounts to about one-third of the total number of training packages sold in 2009 (Significant, 2009: 14).

In 2009, 87% of the participants used this training material, and 39% also used additional training material. Overall, the migrants evaluated the training material rather positively, though many migrants do consider the material insufficient for really effectively learning Dutch (Regioplan, 2009: 26). Only 41% indicated having followed language training in their home countries, with in additional 15% following language courses (on a tourist visa) in the Netherlands (Regioplan, 2009: 24). The percentage of participants following language courses seems to differ strongly between the countries; for instance, in China only 20% followed language courses either in China or the Netherlands, compared to 73% of Moroccan migrants.

Experiences with the test

There are important differences in how migrants experience the test on Dutch society and the language test. Most migrants consider the test about Dutch society 'not so difficult' (40%) or even easy (28%). The language test, however, is considered difficult by more than two thirds of the participants ('difficult' by 42%, 'very difficult' by 25%) (Regioplan, 2009: 28).

This is also confirmed by our focus groups with immigrants who did pre-entry tests before coming to the Netherlands. From these focus groups also emerged that many participants seem to have passed the language test without really understanding it. For instance, migrants simply repeated texts (which is part of the pre-entry test) without having a clue what the text was about. For the test on Dutch society, the focus groups show that memorization played an important role. The test contains a random selection from a pool of questions that is also included in the test material that migrants can pursue. Some participants indicated that they had simply memorized the answer to specific questions, without knowing what it meant. One respondent observes; 'we did not learn a lot from the test, as I didn't really know what I was learning, I just memorized the entire book. 'Furthermore, some participants stated that they experienced some questions as 'patronizing', for instance questions about whether it is permitted to hit your wife.

A surprising finding is that there is no significant difference in test results between those who used the training material and those who did not. (Regioplan 2009: 29). This is surprising, as most migrants positively evaluated the training material. This could mean that those migrants who did not use the training material were entirely confident that they would (or would not) pass the test anyway. It is not clear how many participants actually enrolled for (private) training programs. However, participants in the focus groups indicate that taking such courses is often seen as unnecessary;

The costs for the preparation and for taking the pre-entry test amount to an average of €719 (Ernst & Young, 2009: 40); this includes the costs for the exam (€350), for the training material (€41), additional material and test-exam codes, lessons in the home countries, lessons in the Netherlands and travel and hotel costs for going to the embassy. However the differences in costs made by individual migrants are great. About 50% % spend less than €480. However, in individual cases the costs may well exceed the average of €719. About one

in four spends more than this average, and in some cases (about 2-3%) the costs exceed €2,000 (Begeleidingscommissie, 2009: 8).

4 Post-entry integration policies

4.1 Policy Design

A mandatory approach to post-entry integration programs was introduced already in 1998. However, this part of the integration policy was also reformed in the context of the 2003 Memorandum on the 'Revision of the civic integration system' (TK, 2003-2004, 29543, nr. 2). The central change in the post-entry admission policies as proposed in 2004 was to make the 'inburgeringsbeleid' more obligatory, more result-oriented and more prone to individual responsibility of the 'new- and oldcomers' themselves (Tk 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 3: 2). Therefore, the new policy included a civic integration obligation for 'oldcomers' (ibid: 3-4). For newcomers, such an obligation had already been in place, but for oldcomers the participation in civic integration courses had thus far remained voluntary. Since 2010, the post-entry integration test has also substituted the naturalization test; passing the post-entry test is therefore a legal requirement for naturalization.

The new policy exchanged the obligation just to take part in the integration courses (the so-called effort obligation, or 'inspanningsverplichting') for an obligation to effectively pass the civic integration exam (the so-called result obligation, or 'resultaatsverplichting') (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 3: 5). The government saw this as an important means for increasing the effect of the civic integration courses on the integration of migrants, which was, as several studies (see above) had shown, one of the weak points of the previous Civic Integration of Newcomers Act. For newcomers, a permanent residence permit will not be granted as long as the integration exam is not passed (however, the temporary residence permit can, under conditions, be prolonged, though this can be very expensive for the applicant) (ibid: 30-31). Moreover, if a migrant does not successfully pass the integration exam within the required period of 3,5 years (or 5 for migrants who have not taken part in pre-entry tests, i.e. refugees), the municipality may impose a fine (maximum 500 Euros, but up to 1000 Euros when after two more years the exam is still not passed) (ibid: 25). The integration exam includes a central part and a practice-oriented part, where the migrants can apply the lessons from the central part in their own settings, such as at work, in parent caring or in other social contacts (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 7: 7).

In addition to the obligatory and result-oriented nature of the new post-entry programs, the new system also puts much more stress on the individual migrant's own responsibility for his/her civic integration program. This means that migrants have to make individual choices how to prepare for the post-entry integration exams (the 'inburgeringsexamen'), such as choosing course material and selecting providers of integration courses. Also, migrants have to carry the financial responsibility for these integration courses; the government however provides specific loan facilities and a specific reimbursement if the post-entry integration exam is passed successfully (ibid: 6).

The post-entry integration program consists of a practice part (oriented at language comprehension) and a theoretical part (oriented at basic knowledge of Dutch society).³³ The part on language proficiency means that migrants have to use the Dutch language in real-world situations. Depending on their own situation, they can choose specific 'profiles'; education and health, work, entrepreneurship, citizenship or social participation (such as work as volunteers). The final assessment of this part is done by submitting a portfolio or by

³³ For an in-depth discussion of post-entry tests, see Strik (2010: 31-32).

taking part in a separate assessment. A portfolio involves a collection of proofs (about 20) about written and oral language skills as proven in real-world situations (Strik, 2010: 31). The proofs have to be signed by involved persons, for instance by school teachers or colleagues with whom a specific conversation has taken place.³⁴ Once the portfolio is completed, a final conversation has to take place with the examiner and a written language test has to be completed as well. The separate final assessment involves re-enacting four separate situations that might take place in reality, through a diversity of role-plays (ibid: 32).

The second part, testing knowledge of Dutch society, involves central examinations that are held at various locations throughout the Netherlands. It consists of three parts; an electronic practice situation, a test in spoken Dutch language and a written examination of knowledge of Dutch society (Ibid: 32-33). The electronic practice situation test is just a check on the language skills as tested in the practice part of the pre-entry test. The test in spoken Dutch is conducted at a minimum level of A2 of the European Common Framework of Modern Languages. This test is conducted through a computer connection with voice recognition software. Finally, the test on knowledge of Dutch society involves a computerized test in which the migrant has to answer about 43 questions. The test covers the following topics: 'work and income; manners, norms and values; housing; health and health care; history and geography; authorities; polity and the constitutional state; and education and upbringing' (Strik, 2010: 33).

A key issue in the development of the new Civic Integration Act was whether a general civic integration obligation could be applied to newcomers as well as to oldcomers (TK 2003-2004, 28689, nr. 8-9). A key argument raised by the government in this respect, was that 'the imposition of an obligation to oldcomers would also support women migrants who due to other cultural circumstances had thus far not been able to participate in civic integration courses (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr.3: 4). This idea to impose an integration obligation on oldcomers reveals the culturalist conception of citizenship of Minister Verdonk. Rather than a legal conception of citizenship (no differentiation between categories of naturalized citizens), a more culturalist conception has emerged that stresses the actual cultural adaptation (measured by passing integration tests) as a condition for becoming a full citizen.³⁵ In this respect, Minister Verdonk has been very explicit in stressing adaptation to Dutch '*Leitkultur*' as a condition for full citizenship.³⁶ However, she also argued that once a newcomer has met the civic integration requirements, there should no longer be a distinction between natives and newcomers, or between 'autochthonous' and 'allochthonous'.³⁷

Both the Council of State and the Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs advised against this idea, especially because it would discriminate against naturalized Dutchmen by differentiating between them and those who were born Dutch. This would violate article 1 of the Constitution, the so-called anti-discrimination article. The Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs considered the original plans 'partly unfeasible and partly highly problematic' (De Vries, 2006: 12). It advised government to adopt a criterion that would be less discriminatory

³⁴ Strik (2010: 31) lists a number of situations for which such proofs can be collected: "registering a child's birth at a municipality (citizenship), looking for vacancies (looking for work), talking to a client about work that needs to be conducted (having a job), talking to a parent of a school friend of one's child to make an appointment for the children to play together (education, health care, raising children), talking to other participants in an activity in the neighbourhood (social participation), completing an intake form for voluntary work (looking for voluntary work), and talking to an advisor from the Chamber of Commerce (entrepreneurship)."

³⁵ Interview with former Minister Verdonk.

³⁶ 'Na inburgering niet langer allochtoon', in NRC Handelsblad, December 22 2004.

³⁷ Ibid.

based on 'birth, descent or race', which involved looking at the period (8 years) that the applicants have resided in the Netherlands while being legally obliged to schooling (in the Netherlands, there is a general schooling obligation for all citizens until the age of 16). This advice was at initially also adopted by the minister (De Vries, 2006: TK 2004-2005, 29543, nr. 4: 14).

These plans meant that the new policy was to be targeted on all newcomers, non-naturalized oldcomers and specific categories of naturalized Dutchmen from 16 to 65 years old who wish to reside permanently in the Netherlands. Exemptions would be made for those who have resided in the Netherlands for at least 8 years during their years of mandatory schooling, and those who have specific diplomas, certificates or other proof of relevant skills (ibid: 11). This would mean that the new policy applies to new migrants as well as to (non-naturalized) migrants who have already resided for some time in the Netherlands (ibid: 13). For oldcomers, exemptions would be made in terms of the required level of language proficiency for passing the integration test (A1 instead of A2) and for the fine that can be imposed if the exam is not successfully completed.

Specific categories of 'naturalized Dutchmen' would, in the initial plans, be required to take part in the civic integration courses. Firstly, this would include naturalized Dutchmen who are dependent on social security benefits (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 3: 15-16). Secondly, naturalized Dutchmen who are parent carers. Here, the argument was repeated that these parents play a key role in preventing the successive reproduction of marginalization. The goal would be to punctuate this process by imposing an integration obligation on these parents (ibid: 16). Finally, religious servants would be included as a special category as these servants often play a key role in social-cultural and social-economic as well as religious processes within specific minority groups (ibid). An exemption would be made for those who have successfully passed the naturalisation test that was introduced in 2003 (ibid: 15); those who had been naturalized before 2003, and belong to one of the three identified categories, would be obliged to pass the integration exam.

This new Civic Integration Law, including newcomers, non-naturalized oldcomers as well as specific categories of naturalized Dutchmen amongst its target population, was accepted in the Second Chamber of Parliament in July 2006 (on the very same day that the third Balkenende government, with Christian Democrats and the Liberals came to power) with a very broad support (149 votes in favour and only 1 against). However, pending the review of the proposals in the First Chamber of Parliament, the Council of State still had to give its advice on the new law. The Council of State ruled that this new way of selecting the target population of the new post-entry programs also violated international legal obligations that prohibited countries from discriminating against their own citizens in relation to other citizens, in this case other EU and EEA citizens (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 106). In particular, it would differentiate naturalized Dutchmen from other EU/EEA citizens, and would thereby violate the legal principle of equality. The grade on which Dutch government wanted to select naturalized Dutchmen for participation in the post-entry programs, for instance because they were parents or dependent on social security, were ruled as being insufficiently distinguishing from native Dutchmen in similar positions, or other EU citizens. The Council of State therefore recommended to exclude all Dutch citizens, as well as EU and EEA citizens, from the civic integration obligation.

Consequently, the government was eventually forced to abandon the civic integration obligation for the three categories of naturalized Dutchmen (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 106). This effectively meant that about half of the original target population of the new law (about

500.000 persons) could not be obliged to participate. Instead, it proposed a voluntary structure for the civic integration of mostly naturalized oldcomers (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 110). The three mentioned categories of 'naturalized Dutchmen' were identified as 'priority groups' for the provision of these civic integration courses on a voluntary basis. Only in limited cases, for instance when a migrant receives social security benefits, municipalities can oblige these migrants to participate as a condition for receiving these benefits (see also, Significant, 2010: 67).

It is unclear to what extent budgetary arguments have also played a role in this limitation of the target population of the new post-entry measures. It is clear however, that already in an early stage of formulating the new policy plans, minister Verdonk exceeded the original budget for extra measures (250 million euros). In particular for the integration of 'oldcomers' there would simply be too little budget.³⁸ These budgetary constraints may of course also have formed a consideration in favour of more (financial) responsibility for the individual migrants themselves.

Specific categories are exempted from the obligation to pass post-entry tests as well, or have to complete only a short post-entry test. This includes persons who cannot do such tests because of physical or mental reasons, as well as migrants over 60 years old. Furthermore, a migrant can declare that he or she is incapable to pass the test, when he or she has made serious effort to pass the test but was unable to pass it successfully until 6 months before the final period at which the test should have been passed (3 ½ years). The Minister can then release this applicant from the obligation to pass the test (see: Strik, 2010: 33). In addition, migrants who can prove that they have already integrated sufficiently into Dutch society, can be exempted; this includes migrants with primary or secondary school diplomas from the Netherlands, or for instance Surinamese migrants or migrants that for instance went to school in Flemish-Belgium and completed primary or secondary education in Dutch there as well (ibid).

Furthermore, Turkish nationals could in the near future be exempted from the obligation to pass the post-entry test, based on European case law. In particular, the EEC-Turkey association treaty stipulates that Turkish migrants cannot be subjected to an integration obligation (ibid). However, the Dutch government has appealed against this decision at the Council of State.

As long as a newcomer (or oldcomer) has not passed the post-entry test, they can be refused access to a permanent or independent residence permit. This means that these migrants can stay on the basis of a temporary residence permit as long as the legal ground for such a permit holds. This brings insecurity to their position, in particular so for asylum migrants. If for an asylum migrant the home country is suddenly considered safe enough for repatriation, the temporary residence permits of asylum migrants from this country can be repealed (see Strik, 2010: 35).

In addition, the government can impose a fine to migrants for whom the post-entry integration programs are mandatory, if the post-entry test is not completed within the given time frame. This fine can even be repeated every two years. Migrants can be exempted from this fine if they can prove their failure to pass the test was outside their own scope.

³⁸ See also: 'Verdonk komt geld te kort voor cursussen inburgeren', De Volkskrant, October 26, 2004; 'Verdonk stuit bij inburgering op grote problemen', De Volkskrant, October 27, 2004.

4.2 Policy implementation and the 'Deltaplan' for Civic Integration

The new Civic Integration Act was finally enacted on January 1st 2007. However, the fourth Balkenende government that came to power in February 2007, considered it necessary that additional measures should be taken in order to ensure that the new act was also effectively implemented. The new law would have had a strong 'ideological'³⁹ and a 'macro' character (TK 2006-2007, 31143, nr. 1), requiring additional measures to ensure that the law could also be put into practice. There were large problems with the implementation on a municipality level; many cities experienced bureaucratic difficulties in identifying and reaching the new target groups of the Civic Integration Act.⁴⁰ Initially, only a dramatically low number of migrants actually enrolled for civic integration courses. Municipalities now had lost most tools to force or attract new- and oldcomers to participate in courses, and many of these migrants apparently felt no immediate need to enrol for courses.⁴¹ Also, the development of a private market for civic integration courses occurred only very slowly. Finally, the results of the civic integration courses in terms of elevation of the level of language proficiency was considered insufficient (VROM, 2007: 9). For instance, more than half of the 'oldcomers' did not experience any significant raise in language proficiency (*ibid*), and the results for newcomers were only marginally better.

Therefore, the new government (Cabinet Balkenende IV) with Minister Vogelaar of Integration and Neighbourhood policies, decided to launch a 'Deltaplan' for civic integration (TK 2006-2007, 31143, nr. 1). This Deltaplan⁴² was aimed primarily at enhancing the quality of the civic integration programs, the simplification of the rules concerning the post-entry programs, and the strengthening of policy practices (in particular the relation local-national government). The aim is to enhance the 'sustainable effects of civic integration' or more precisely to promote the interaction between civic integration on the one hand and participation on the other (*ibid*). The Deltaplan clearly reflected a more practice-oriented approach to civic integration programs, carrying little reference to the culturalist motivation behind the newly installed Civic Integration Act. Clearly, the Deltaplan tried to raise a different tone in the debate on civic integration: 'A more positive tone of the debate is required (..), civic integration is not just an obligation that needs to be fulfilled (..) but also a means for helping people to achieve their ambitions' (*ibid*). The plan even referred to the 'bonding' function of the civic integration courses, perceiving integration as a 'mutual' process (VROM, 2007: 11).

Rather, the Deltaplan stressed the relation between civic integration and participation in more social-economic terms.⁴³ An important measure in this context is to give the civic integration courses increasingly a dual character, meaning that the courses are to be combined with at least one out of several practice-oriented elements (work, re-integration, entrepreneurship, education, voluntary work and parenting). This would help participants to make the leap from completing the courses to actual social participation. The focusgroup with experts revealed a broadly shared feeling that this shift in focus meant a downtuning of

³⁹ Interview with former Minister Vogelaar.

⁴⁰ 'Inburgering stukt door bureaucratie', in de Volkskrant, October 6 2007.

⁴¹ Interview with researchers from SCP.

⁴² The term 'Deltaplan' is a reference to the Dutch government program of the 1950s that aimed at preventing the flooding of major parts of the Netherlands by constructing large dams. It was a very costly programme that lasted for several decades. Nowadays, in Dutch politics the term is used as a metaphor for a 'very large and ambitious project'.

⁴³ Also: interview with former Minister Vogelaar.

the culturalist elements of the civic integration act as developed by Verdonk. Instead, a more modest aim seems to have emerged, that is to support the self-sufficiency of the migrants in Dutch society.

In addition, the Deltaplan reinstalled the central role of municipalities in the implementation of civic integration programs. A series of simplifications in the Civic Integration Act were meant to facilitate policy implementation by municipalities. In addition, it gives the municipalities more means and more policy discretion in fulfilling their central directive role in the local implementation of civic integration courses. Though migrants' individual responsibility for their civic integration remained a central policy goal, the more active role for municipalities and the provision of additional state funds (about 40 million euros) signal that the government was not entirely confident that this individual responsibility would be the best condition for a successful integration.⁴⁴ In this respect, the Minister states that 'it is central to find a good balance between individual responsibility and the social importance of having as many people as possible integrated, (..) in the Civic Integration Act that balance has been insufficient' (TK 2007-2008, 31143, nr. 9: 6).

A key change with the Deltaplan involved the financing structure of the post-entry integration programs. The initial plans of the Civic Integration Act involved an individual responsibility of the newcomers and oldcomers themselves for financing both the preparatory courses and the post-entry test. Government could however, in these plans, provide a loan with specific conditions to migrants, and would partially reimburse the costs when the post-entry test has been concluded successfully. This financial insecurity became an important hurdle for migrants to actually subscribe to the post-entry programs (Strik, 2010: 36). Therefore, in the Deltaplan the municipalities once more took the financial responsibility for the provision of courses and tests. Municipalities can however demand that the migrant co-finances at least part of the post-entry program or test him/herself.

However, also after these changes it remained difficult to effectively reach all target groups and get them to participate in integration courses. In 2009, the major Dutch cities managed to provide less than half of the expected integration courses for newcomers and specific groups of oldcomers.⁴⁵ Therefore, the new Minister for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration, Mr. Van der Laan, raised further (minor) reforms (in the context of the Deltaplan Inburgering) to enhance the practice of civic integration programs.

⁴⁴ See also parliamentary debates on this point, TK 31143, nr. 9: 2.

⁴⁵ 'Forse achterstand op inburgering, in NRC Handelsblad, August 25 2009.

5 National discourses on the migration-integration nexus since 2000

The chapters above have mapped the development of the Dutch civic integration system, in terms of pre- as well as post-admission measures. This chapter will focus on several factors that seem to have driven the development of this system, including Dutch political as well as public discourse.

5.1 Politicization of the migration-integration nexus

Immediately after the turn of the millennium, political discourse still framed immigration and integration as two largely separate areas. This seems to have been, at least partly, a consequence of path-dependency of past policies (see also Bonjour, 2009). However, after the turn of the millennium, it became increasingly manifest that there was political demand for a stronger connection between immigration and integration policies.⁴⁶ The idea of starting the integration process already in the migrants' countries or origin emerged on the agenda already in 2002. This year constituted one of the most controversial years in Dutch politics since the Second World War (Andeweg and Irwin, 2005), following the 9/11 attacks in New York in 2001, the rise and murder of the populist politician Pim Fortuyn in Dutch politics, and the dramatic electoral turnover toward Fortuyn's populist party (LPF) in the 2002 parliamentary elections. This provided the political stage for a revision of the 1998 Civic Integration Abroad Act. Specifically, this led in 2002 to two parliamentary motions that asked government to develop plans for an Integration Abroad Act (see part II). This motion was shared by the Fortuyn Party, two centre-right parties (the Liberal Party and Liveable Netherlands) and the 2002 elections winner the Christian Democrat Party.

Underneath these political developments, there was by 2002 already a more broadly shared feeling that the prevailing civic integration was not entirely satisfactory in terms of furthering the integration of newcomers. Various studies emerged in 2002, showing that the civic integration policies that had been installed in the late 1990s were insufficiently successful (such as Taskforce Inburgering, 2002; Regioplan, 2002). Also, the policy memorandum by Minister Van Boxtel in 2002 on 'Integration in the Perspective of Immigration' already planned for a more direct connection between integration and immigration policies. However, these plans did not yet include any ideas for integration abroad: also in the report from the Temporary Parliamentary Investigative Committee on Integration Policy, no mention is made of an idea for pre-entry programmes. Rather than an idea from the realm of research, this idea seems to have emerged from the political arena; which is also confirmed by the interviews.

Undoubtedly aided by the events around the turn of the millennium and the feeling that prevailing policies were inadequate, a broad political consensus emerged on the need for a more obligatory approach with a stronger individual responsibility for the migrant themselves. Most political parties shared the idea that the civic integration policies had to become more obligatory, that there should be a stronger appeal to the individual responsibility of the migrants' themselves, that the pre-entry tests should also have a selection effect in terms of selecting only those who are sufficiently motivated and determined to pass the tests, and that Dutch national values, norms and history should be an important part of the citizenship-ideal on which the new policies are based.

⁴⁶ interview civil servant from Home Affairs Department

The premise that acceptance of Dutch norms and values, for example concerning the relations between the sexes and homosexuality, should be a condition for admission of newcomers, was broadly shared across the spectrum of political parties. This became very clear in parliamentary debates surrounding the film, mentioned earlier, that was produced by the government and distributed in various countries to allow potential migrants to prepare themselves for the pre-entry tests. This tape included pictures of openly gay men and topless women, which means that the sheer possession of this tape is considered illegal in a number of (Islamic) countries. In response to plans of the minister to develop a special edition of the tape for these countries, the main political parties responded with indignation, arguing that 'these aspects are part of Dutch society' (Social Democrats), 'a liberal perspective on sexuality is part of the Netherlands' (Green Left), and that 'it should be made evident that these things are normal in the Netherlands and that one is not immediately a whore when you're topless on the beach and that homosexuals and heterosexuals enjoy equal rights in the Netherlands' (Christian Democrats) (Spijkerboer, 2007: 34-35).

Only at specific instances a more fundamental and normative debate emerged on elements of the admission-related integration programs. For instance, the Dutch Green-Left party questioned the degree of government intervention in family migration. In fact, the (immigrant) parliamentarian Ms. Azough of the Green Left party, questioned whether it was desirable that 'a situation in which the free choice of partner was constrained by family members was replaced (..) by a limitation of free choice of partner by the government' (Treaties of 2nd Chamber of Parliament, March 16th 2005, 60-3899; see also Spijkerboer, 2007: 33).

However, the political debates on the reform of the civic integration system (including the pre- as well as post-admission policies) focused primarily on issues of who should be targeted, how the measures can be best implemented and how legal and financial constraints can be met, rather than on why there is a need for a different type of policy approach (see also: Spijkerboer, 2007: 33). For instance, the debate on the inclusion of specific categories 'naturalized Dutchmen' that should be obliged to take part in the post-entry integration programs, was mostly framed in legal terms, questioning whether this would be in agreement with European and international law, rather than whether it would be politically desirable to do so.⁴⁷ In fact, the constraining effect of European and international law on the policy plans of the Dutch was a key element throughout the parliamentary debates.

In addition to this political urgency for furthering integration, the interviews reveal that politicians are also rather explicit in mentioning the limitation of immigration as one of the key objectives for the plans for an Integration Abroad Act. Both in policy documents and in the interviews, this is also reflected in the problematization of family migration in particular. This seems to explain the focus on family migrants from specific (non-western) countries of origin as target population for the Civic Integration Abroad Act. For instance, the Social Democrat Party, once it had decided to support the new government plans, also considered it legitimate to ask family migrants to start prepare for their migration already in the country of origin. Though this may erect obstacles to immigration of low-educated migrants, as evaluation studies indeed showed, this was still seen as legitimate, since

⁴⁷ In an earlier stage, a parliamentary majority did however successfully argue against a generic integration obligation for newcomers who had not enjoyed a specific period of education. For instance, see: 'allen inburgering oogst alom kritiek', Volkskrant, December 8 2004.

education was considered primarily a responsibility of the migrants themselves and their home countries, rather than a responsibility of the country of destination.⁴⁸

Besides the legal constraints, political discourse also tended to focus on financial constraints on the new civic integration system. Political parties differ in terms of their perceptions of the financial feasibility of the new system. In line with for instance the findings of the Franssen Committee, parties like the Social Democratic Party and the Green Left Party argued that the ambitions of Minister Verdonk to raise the demands of civic integration and to make it even more obligatory were out of balance with the available budget for realizing these plans (about 270 million euros).⁴⁹ Other parties stressed that government would not have to put in much effort itself, as newcomers have an individual integration obligation and as the provision of courses had been privatized. This reflected a generic division between leftist and rightist political parties in terms of their conceptions of the role of the state. In addition, the absence of a significant budget was a key stake in debates with the municipalities in the Netherlands, who questioned the feasibility of the new plans.⁵⁰

At least partly, the broad consensus about the reforms on the integration policy can be explained by the various studies that emerged in 2002 that showed that the civic integration policies that had been installed in the late 1990s were insufficiently successful (such as Taskforce Inburgering, 2002; Regioplan, 2002). However, these studies do not seem to provide a full explanation for the path that Dutch integration policies have taken since the turn of the millennium. For instance, the idea for pre-entry tests was in itself not included in the studies that were presented in 2002. Furthermore, the new policy measures are often legitimated in reference to the so-called Blok committee, or the parliamentary investigative committee on integration policy. However, this committee was established in 2002 and presented its findings in 2004; this means that the proceedings of this parliamentary committee were parallel to the preparations by the minister of immigration and integration (Verdonk) of the plans for both the new pre- and post-entry policy measures. Also, the Blok committee concluded in fact that the integration policy had been, at least partly, successful (Blok, 2004: 105), whereas the government constantly turned this conclusion around in stating that the integration policy had been, at least partly, unsuccessful (TK 2003-2004, 28689, nr. 17; see also, Scholten and Van Nispen, 2008).

Rather, the new political momentum generated by the politicization of immigrant integration seems to have driven much of the changes in this period. This politicization originated already before the rise of Pim Fortuyn, in particular with the national debate on the Multicultural Tragedy that was triggered by the public intellectual Paul Scheffer in 2000 (Scholten, 2010). This put immigrant integration firmly back on the political agenda and set in motion a sharp culturalisation of the political discourse on immigrant integration. Crucially, this culturalisation also led to changes in the attitudes of the Dutch Social Democrat party, which had until then been reluctant to step up civic integration policies.⁵¹ Though the Social Democrat Party had initially not supported the parliamentary motions

⁴⁸ Interview with member of social democrat party, mr. Dijsselbloem.

⁴⁹ 'Allen inburgering oogst alom kritiek', in *De Volkskrant*, December 8, 2004. In fact, a parliamentarian from the Green Left Party (Ms. Azough) compared the budget with the costs for constructing a stretch of only 5 kilometers of highway.

⁵⁰ 'Geïsoleerde migrant regelt inburgering niet zelf', in *NRC Handelsblad*, June 12, 2006.

⁵¹ Interview member of social democrat party.

that asked for policies on civic integration abroad, it did become an important supporter of these plans after their defeat in the 2002 elections.

The assimilationist turn in Dutch immigrant integration politics thus seems to have taken effect in the recent changes in the civic integration system as well (see also, Spijkerboer, 2007: 36). In particular the role of Minister Verdonk as a key policy entrepreneur for revising the Dutch civic integration structure should not be underestimated. Though the need for a revision of the system had already become manifest before her rise on the political stage⁵², she was a key driver in effectuating the changes, often in spite of the many legal, financial and practical constraints and thanks to the broad political consensus identified above. This is also confirmed by statements by Ms. Vogelaar, who had been chair of the Taskforce Civic Integration from 1998 to 2002, was a member of the Franssen committee on integration tests and became minister of Integration and Neighborhood policies in 2007. With reference to the policy plans initiated by Ms. Verdonk, Ms. Vogelaar stated that these were primarily driven by ‘ideological viewpoints’, which would often be out of touch with the intractable reality of civic integration courses.⁵³ However, Ms. Verdonk also received criticism for being too firm and political in her ideas about policy revisions. For instance, she received criticism from political parties (even within her own cabinet) and from her own department, that she had held on too long to the idea of imposing a generic civic integration obligation to (often naturalized) oldcomers, in spite of the obvious legal constraints on discriminating between different categories of immigrants. During parliamentary hearings, Verdonk had even urged her colleagues to show ‘political courage’ in realizing the new plans.⁵⁴

5.2 Issue-linkages; gender and securitization

Besides the politicization of immigrant integration, a number of issue-linkages seem to explain the broad political support for the new policy approach. First of all, there was a strong connection between the issue of reinforcing civic integration demands and the emancipation of immigrant women.⁵⁵ For instance, during parliamentary debates on the proposals for the pre-entry programs, the minister stated that she had ‘begun with the Integration Abroad Act precisely to reinforce the emancipation of women’ (in: Spijkerboer, 2007: 36). When passed to the First Chamber of Parliament, the Minister again stated that ‘the goal of the proposal is to avoid social, cultural and economic isolation of newcomers, in particular women’ (EK 2004-2005, 29700, B: 1; see also, Spijkerboer, 2007: 36). The role of the Christian-Democrat parliamentarian responsible for this issue, Ms. Miriam Sterk, seems of particular relevance in this context. During parliamentary debates, she clearly claimed that civic integration programs were especially important for migrant women (‘it’s important that women know their rights before they come to the Netherlands, for instance in relation to honour-related killings, work or education’; Treaties of Second Chamber of Parliament, 60-3889; see also, Spijkerboer, 2007: 34). This is also confirmed by the interviews with policy-makers from the Department of Justice. One respondent says: ‘the protection of women was an important factor <in the development of the civic integration abroad act>, as it was considered undesirable that women in the cities were suppressed after having entered arranged marriages from their country of origin, often at a young age, being illiterate, having no education, etc.’ This respondent adds that the only way to target this category without

⁵² Interview with policymaker from Home Affairs Department.

⁵³ Interview with former Minister Vogelaar.

⁵⁴ ‘Waar blijft de inburgeringswet’, De Volkskrant, June 21, 2006.

⁵⁵ Interviews Ms. Vogelaar, Ms. Verdonk, Ms. Sterk, Mr. Dijsselbloem.

discrimination, is to impose a general law and a general obligation for civic integration abroad.

This issue linkage with women emancipation seems reinforced by a very specific stereotype of immigrant women (see also Kirk, 2010). A recent parliamentary document on family migration (TK 2009-2010, 32175, Nr. 1: 1) even starts with a reference to an actual case of forced marriage (Fayza Oum'Hamed, also published in her book 'The Chosen', or 'De Uitverkorene'); 'the story of Fayza Oum'Hamed bares witness of the terrible circumstances that women can face as a consequence of forced marriage'. In the policy memorandum on the new pre-entry programs, the position of migrant women is described as follows:

'The position of women from these categories (Turks and Moroccans, PS) seems to be especially weak. (...) they are clearly less educated (...) their level of labor market participation is very low, (...) they are mainly housewives, unemployed or disabled (...) they barely have any contact with natives and have relatively the most traditional ideas in relation to emancipation. The ongoing and radically increased immigration of family migrants has a limiting effect on their integration, emancipation and amelioration of their position in the Netherlands. Their (...) position is much worse than that of second generation women that went to school in the Netherlands. (...) In addition, the fact that many Turks and Moroccans of the second generation marry a relatively low-educated partners from the country of origin, with weak Dutch language skills, will not have a positive effect on the acquisition of a better position of the third generation' (TK 2003-2004, 29700, nr. 3: 5).

Interviews reveal that this issue connection has played a central role in establishing a broad political coalition in favor of the new civic integration plans of Minister Verdonk.⁵⁶ More specifically, it supported the obligatory nature of the civic integration programs; 'the group in the worst position, that often finds difficulties in getting out, will be helped by an obligation to participate'.⁵⁷ In other words, a civic integration obligation would be required in order to effectively reach the migrant women. The increase of the age level requirement would also be meant to protect women in particular from entering into forced marriages (interview with civil servant from Department of Justice).

This view that the mandatory character of integration programs would be particularly relevant to women was also shared by for instance by Ms. Vogelaar, who later became minister, and by the government committee on Participation of Women from Ethnic Minorities (PaVEM).⁵⁸ The PaVEM saw mandatory tests as an important way to enhance language proficiency amongst migrant women in particular, thereby furthering their integration into Dutch society.

Another issue-connection was made with radicalisation and potential anti-western sentiments of migrants: 'integration problems can lead parts of immigrant groups to marginalize, in the sense of declining capacities to participate and increasing chances of turning their backs to society, anti-western sentiments, segregation and delinquency' (TK, 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 4). In particular, mention is made of Muslim-terrorism as a possible

⁵⁶ Interviews with Ms. Verdonk, Ms. Vogelaar, Ms. Sterk.

⁵⁷ Interview with expert from the Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs: also, interview with Ms. Sterk.

⁵⁸ Interview with Ella Vogelaar in Volkskrant, October 28 2004, 'Verdonk loopt te hard van stapel'. Concerning PaVem: 'Inburgeringsexamen voor 240000 vrouwen in Nederland', NRC Handelsblad, December 17 2004.

threat related to immigration from non-western countries: 'Muslim terrorism is a realistic security threat, now it has become clear that also in our country recruitment occurs for the Jihad and a small part of the Muslim youth appears sensitive to anti-western propaganda of these recruiters (..), far-reaching radicalisation carries the risk of non-integrated foreigners developing anti-western attitudes and affecting broadly accepted values and norms as equality of the sexes, non-discrimination of homosexuals and freedom of expression' (TK 2004-20005, 29700, nr. 6: 48). In fact, Dutch government uses its right to preserve 'public order' and to safeguard 'national security' as key arguments why it should be able to renounce the right of family life in specific cases (TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 47).

5.3 Actors from the policy subsystem

The politicization of the migration-integration nexus triggered a broad political consensus in favor of the new pre- as well as post-entry integration measures. However, several actors can be mentioned who did raise their voice against (parts of) the new civic integration policies in the context of the broader policy subsystem, also addressing what they saw as more fundamental objections to the new policy measures.

The Dutch Association of Municipalities, or VNG, was very critical of the large degree of individual responsibility that the new system accorded to the individual migrant, in terms of financing as well as preparation for the integration tests.⁵⁹ Also, VNG made strong reservations to the short period of time that the municipalities had to prepare for the implementation of the law. In particular, VNG predicted serious difficulties in reaching the 'oldcomers' that are to be invited for voluntary participation in the civic integration programs (VNG, 2007). VNG also argued that the political tone of the debate and the mediatization of civic integration programs would make it more difficult to reach out to categories that cannot be obliged to participate under the new Civic Integration Act (ibid: 13-14). Political and public discourse would drive hard-to-reach groups (like migrant women) into isolation, thereby increasing the difficulties for involving them in civic integration programs. Therefore, VNG argues for a more 'result-oriented' integration policy.

Migrant organizations did not play a very central role in the political not in the public debates on the new civic integration system. One aspect that was brought to the fore by migrant organizations, concerned the financial repercussions for migrants who had to take responsibility for their own civic integration programs.

The Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs (ACVZ) played a key role in safeguarding that the new civic integration policies remained in agreement with international and European obligations. In particular, ACVZ fulfilled a central role in defining the target population of the new law by basing it on the number of years of residence in the Netherlands during compulsory schooling years. In addition, ACVZ remained critical of the obligatory nature of the civic integration measures; rather, it suggested developing a structure that would be tempting rather than obligatory.⁶⁰

The interviews suggest that there is a more broadly-shared hesitation amongst civil servants from the Home Affairs as well as from the Justice Department about the need for an obligatory approach to civic integration, or more specifically an approach that not just requires migrants to attend courses but that also includes an integration test. In some

⁵⁹ See also: 'VNG: inburgeringsplannen riskant', De Volkskrant, March 24, 2004.

⁶⁰ Interview with expert from ACVZ

interviews questions were raised whether an obligation would be needed in order to reaching out to the target populations, but also whether it would be desirable.

Finally, in an unprecedented unified response, 18 Dutch academics from various universities and various disciplines, questioned a number of key assumptions of the new Civic Integration Act as proposed in 2006. In an open letter to the Dutch Senate, they explicitly asked to reject the new Act.⁶¹ They warned (like VNG), for the administrative implications of the new law, in particular its complex structure of loans, reimbursements, sanctions, differentiation of target groups, etc. This would, according to the professors, significantly increase the costs of implementing the new Act. In addition, they raised economic arguments against the new Act, especially because of its potentially discouraging effect on the immigration of high-skilled migrants. Thirdly, they raised moral reservations against the new act, especially as the financial responsibility of the participants and the higher threshold for passing the integration exams, would disproportionately affect the weaker immigrants. Finally, they argued that the legal constraints on imposing an integration obligation on various specific categories are so many, that in fact only a relatively small group can be obliged to take part.

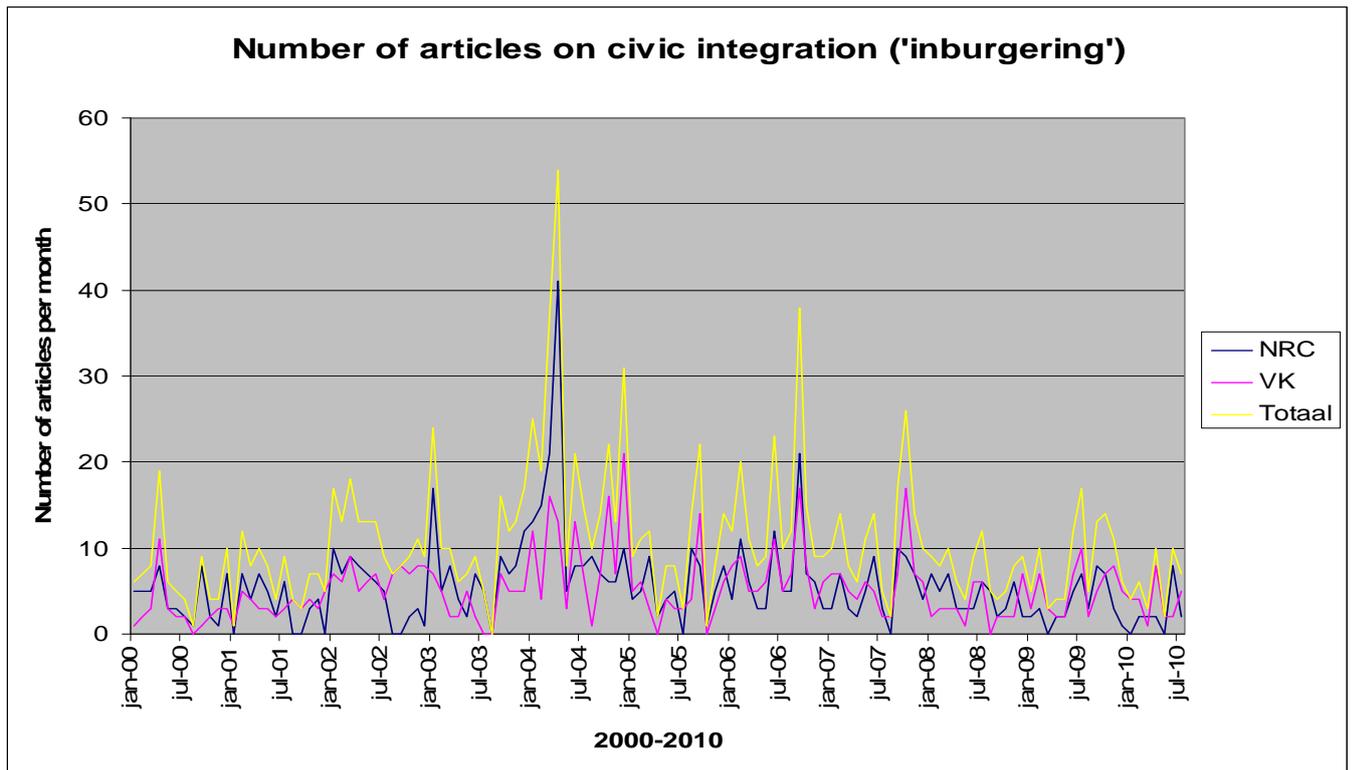
Several years later, the two initiators of this letter (Entzinger and Groenendijk, February 13th, 2009) again questioned three fundamental assumptions of the civic integration system in an open letter to parliament. Firstly, they questioned the assumption that migrants would not be willing to learn the Dutch language if they were not obliged to do so. In fact, immigrants who declined to take part in the programs often did so for reasons of incompatibility with their (paid) jobs or for the lack of sufficient day care facilities. Secondly, they questioned the assumption that immigrants could be obliged to pass the integration exams. In fact, such an obligation cannot be imposed on many migrants because they have Dutch or another EU-citizenship. In addition, threatening with sanctions and fines may effectively discourage rather than encourage migrants to take part in the exams. Thirdly, they questioned whether failing to pass an exam would always be attributable to the individual migrants. In fact, they claimed that the course programs were often too short and that their starting level was often too low to enable them to reach the high threshold for passing the (post-entry) integration exams.

5.4 Mediatization

Besides the politicization of civic integration since the turn of the millennium, there has also been a clear mediatization of civic integration in that period. From 2000-2010, civic integration has remained almost constantly on the media agenda (see figure 1). However, several 'peaks of attention' can be discerned, around the 2002 and 2003 parliamentary elections, the presentation of the conclusions of the Blok committee and Verdonk's first launch of her reform plans for the civic integration system in 2004, the introduction of the Integration Abroad Act and the parliamentary debates on the Civic Integration Act in 2005 and 2006, the Deltaplan Civic Integration in 2007 and the first evaluation of the Integration Abroad Act and the announcement of additional plans for limiting family migration in 2009.

Figure 1: monthly number of articles on civic integration ('inburgering') in two leading national newspapers (NRC Handelsblad and De Volkskrant)

⁶¹ Also published in: NRC Handelsblad, October 11th, 2006.



Whereas in terms of political discourse there was a strong consensus supporting the new government plans, the arena of public debate provided more occasion for more fundamental debates on civic integration programs. For instance, in 2004, the media picked up immediately on the criticism of the Franssen Committee of the new plans for pre-entry integration measures.⁶² The committee raised the fundamental matter that if the main objective of the pre-entry tests was to promote integration, then ‘government should be willing to pull its wallet’.⁶³ This triggered a fierce response from various parliamentarians; for instance, Ms. Hirsi Ali, then a Member of Parliament for the Liberal Party, argued that one of the goals of the new pre-entry test was to prevent illiterates and low-educated people from coming to the Netherlands.⁶⁴ She claimed that the goal of the pre-entry tests would indeed be to limit immigration rather than to promote integration (in line with her party’s statements). The media coverage about this debate at least reveals (rather than questions) that limiting (family) migration was indeed one of the objectives of the new policy proposals and that this goal seems to be broadly shared in Dutch politics.

In this same period, the media also explicitly addressed the lack of political willingness to accept advisory reports such as the ones of the Franssen Committee and the Blok Committee (the parliamentary investigative committee on integration policy). With regard to the latter, the media concludes, given the immediate (and in some cases even premature) rejection of this committee’s findings, that for the first time a parliamentary investigative committee had turned out to be a complete failure.⁶⁵ Concerning the Franssen committee

⁶² For instance; ‘Integratie kost veel geld’, NRC Handelsblad 3 March 2004; ‘Coalitie snel met neerhalen van kritisch rapport’, NRC Handelsblad 5 March 2004; ‘Commissie twijfelt aan inburgering in herkomstland’, Volkskrant, March 4 2004;

⁶³ ‘Integratie kost veel geld’, NRC Handelsblad 3 March 2004.

⁶⁴ NRC Handelsblad, March 4, 2004.

⁶⁵ ‘Integratierapport komt politiek niet uit’, NRC Handelsblad, January 20, 2004.

report, media reports again address the lack of political will to respond to recommendations that were momentarily not opportune, and the swiftness of politicians to denounce the committee findings as being too political.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ 'Coalitie snel met neerhalen kritisch rapport', March 5th, 2004.

6 Perceived impacts of pre- and post-entry integration provisions

6.1 Perceived impacts of pre-entry measures

Integration effects

The Dutch pre-entry tests have been extensively evaluated (Begeleidingscommissie, 2009: 8). These evaluations show that implementation of the pre-entry tests has been mostly effective. However, the results in terms of the integration effects of these tests are more differentiated. First of all, most migrants do appear to be able to pass the test. On average, 89% of the participants manage to pass the test (with the language test at the level of A1minus). Only 11% do not manage to pass the test (unsuccessful result, or quitting the test). Even when the required level for passing the language test will be raised to A1, the pass rate would still be 74% (Significant, 2009). Also, the number of retakes is very limited, on average 1,12 exams are required for passing the exam (Ibid.: 20).

There are however clear differences in pass rates. These differences reflect the level of schooling, sex, age and nationality. On average, men (90%) are slightly more successful than women. On average, young adults (18-35) are also much more successful (87-91%) than migrants over 45 (78-74%). These differences in terms of sex and age are related to the even larger differences in terms of level of schooling: highly educated are much more successful (95%) than low educated (82%). Furthermore, the differences in terms of country of origin also seem significant (Ibid.: 24-26). Especially migrants from Ukraine, Indonesia, Brazil, Tunisia and Thailand appear very successful (with pass rates over 94%), whereas Afghans, Vietnamese and Iraqis, in particular, perform much worse (with pass rates under 80%).

Participation in a pre-entry test appears to have a limited impact on the migrant's integration process once he or she has settled in the Netherlands. There is a very moderate but positive relationship between the score in the pre-entry tests and the scores of these migrants at the intake for the post-entry integration programs (as compared with the cohorts before the introduction of the pre-entry tests) (Regioplan, 2009). This involved in particular a slight amelioration in the level of understanding Dutch language; no amelioration was discovered in terms of speaking abilities (Regioplan, 2009: 70). Remarkable is that the level of writing and reading Dutch also increased slightly in comparison to immigrants who arrived in the Netherlands before the introduction of the pre-entry programs; this is remarkable because these qualities are neither trained nor tested in the country of origin (Ibid.).

The Begeleidingscommissie (2009: 9) argues that these effects can be only limited, given the fact that the level of language proficiency required for passing the pre-entry test is set very low. There was, unfortunately, still too little data available for determining the effect of the pre-entry tests on the subsequent integration of these participants into Dutch society (Regioplan, 2009: 20). However, spokespersons from municipalities involved in post-entry programs indicate that there seems to be a slight amelioration in preparation, motivation and language proficiency of those who arrive in the Netherlands for post-entry programs after having completed the pre-entry programs (Ibid.: 20). The participants in the pre-entry tests (about 85%) themselves also seem to agree that the pre-entry tests help them prepare for their integration in the Netherlands (Ibid.: 33).

Table 9: Pass/fail rates for pre-entry tests after and before the raise of required level to A1 (Significant 2009)⁶⁷

Category	Passed (now)	Failed (now)	Passed (after raised to A1)	Failed (after raise to A1)
<i>Average</i>	89	11	74	26
Sex				
Men	90	10	79	21
Women	88	12	71	29
Education				
Literate	89	11	73	27
Low educated	82	18	65	35
Average educated	90	10	74	26
High Educated	95	5	84	16
Age				
18-25	87	13	71	29
26-35	91	9	78	22
36-45	87	13	72	28
46-55	78	22	63	37
56-65	74	26	60	40
Nationality				
Turkish	87	13	68	32
Moroccan	91	9	83	17
Thais	93	7	73	27
Chinese	81	19	59	41
Brazilian	93	7	83	17
Other	89	11	75	25

However, both the personnel at embassies and consulates and the examinees in the countries of origin themselves are very critical of the required level of language proficiency. This level is so low (about 500 words) that one can hardly speak of a significant increase in language proficiency that would enable the migrant to be self-sufficient in the Netherlands (Regioplan, 2009: 18). Examiners indicate that they are startled by how some examinees with hardly any apprehension of Dutch language were able to pass the test (Ibid.: 19). This is also confirmed by our own focus groups. Migrants clearly indicate that they passed the language test by repeating texts that they did not understand. Furthermore, both the 2009 evaluation

⁶⁷ Note that these figures, based on pass rates in pre-entry tests before the required level was actually raised, do not incorporate the potential effects of introducing the reading part in the pre-entry tests. It should be expected that the fail rates, especially for particular categories, will increase further due to this test.

by Regioplan (p. 18) and our own focus groups confirm the role of memorization as a factor explaining the successful pass rates in the test on Dutch society.

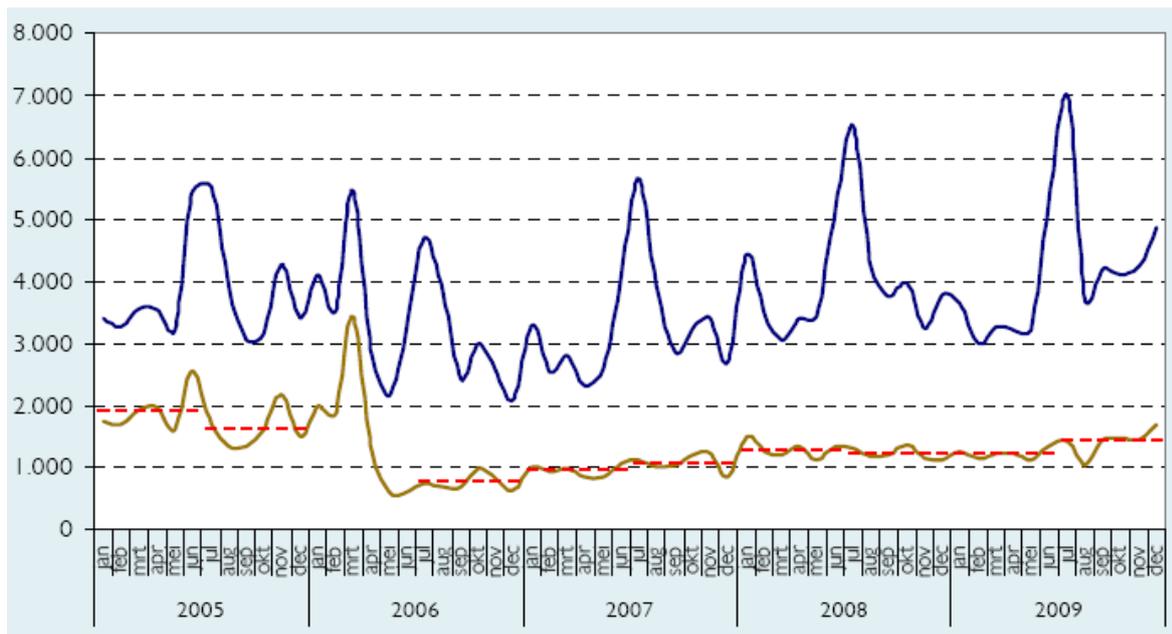
Finally, concerning the Dutch pre-entry conditions (that several years ago were raised to a minimum age level requirement of 21 and an income level requirement of 120% of the Dutchy minimum income), an evaluation by the government agency WODC indicates that the effects of these criteria on the integration of both partners have been limited (WODC, 2010). In particular, there have not been any effects on labour market participation of the referent, that is the partner who already lives in the Netherlands. Moreover, in some instances it was observed that referents stopped their studies in order to meet the income requirement. There was a small positive effect on the labour market position of the newly arrived partners, in particular in the case of male partners. This effect seems to be situated in particular in the period before and during the application for family migration, but seems to fade away in the period after family migration has been achieved (WODC, 2010). In particular the age requirement seems to have had little to no effect on the integration of newcomers, as compared with the income requirement. However, according to the evaluation by WODC, the measures did have a significant lowering effect on the number of applications for family formation migration (a decrease of 37%) (WODC, 2010: 3-4). This decrease was strongest amongst Moroccans, Turks and Surinamese. In particular women seem to apply much less than before as a referent for family migration, possibly due to the fact that many women work part time.

Immigration effects

A strong negative effect was found on the number of applications for temporary residence permits for those categories obliged to take part in pre-entry tests (Lodder, 2009: 22). Although it is difficult to determine to what extent this (sharp) decrease in some countries is an actual effect of the pre-entry tests or, rather, of other newly introduced pre-entry conditions, such as those imposed in November 2004, the fact that this decrease occurred fairly 'immediately' after the enactment of the pre-entry tests, makes it reasonable to assume that this is largely the effect of these pre-entry tests (see also, Begeleidingscommissie, 2009: 10, Lodder 2009: 33).

Figure 1 clearly shows that the number of applications for temporary residence permits has declined sharply since the enactment of the Integration Abroad Act in 2006 (there was also a peak in applications in the period immediately before the introduction of the pre-entry tests. This decrease was very significant for those groups that were obliged to take part in the pre-entry test. This figure also shows that since 2008 and in particular since 2009, the number of applications has been increasing again, though still at a lower level than before the enactment of the Civic Integration Abroad Act.

Figure 2: Number of applications for temporary residence permit (blue line for entire population, brown line for those required to pass a pre-entry test)



Source: Significant, 2009: 38.

Though the effects differ little for different categories of applicants, the decrease was slightly larger for elderly persons and for low-educated persons. This seems to point at a degree of ‘self-selection’ amongst migrants (Regioplan, 2009: 60-62); migrants who fear not being able to pass or who are not motivated to take part in the pre-entry tests, do not apply for family migration. It is also possible also that the partners selected for family migration are more highly educated than before. In terms of countries, in particular the number of applications from Turkey, Morocco, Brazil and Indonesia seems to have decreased relatively strongly (Ibid.: 70). An important finding in relation to European regulations, is that pre-entry tests seem to bring about little selection effects in terms of pass or fail-rates; almost 96% of the participants who take part in the pre-entry tests eventually manage to pass the test. Therefore, Lodder (2009: 34) concludes that ‘the imposition of the pre-entry tests has posed a more severe obstacle to low-educated, family reunification migrants, specific nationalities and in particular Turkish and Moroccans than for other categories of migrants (..), but for none of these groups is this obstacle so severe that it results in the exclusion of specific groups.’

In various reports, the effect on the levels of immigration of specific groups is defined as ‘self-selection.’ This would mean that the pre-entry tests themselves, because of the high passing rates, do not so much select migrants, but that migrants determine for themselves whether they consider themselves capable of passing a pre-entry test and based thereon they decide whether or not to engage in such a test. This is also reflected in the changing composition of the group of applicants for temporary residence permits in the concerned countries (see table 2): the percentage of female applicants has increased (further) to more than two-thirds, the applicants have on average become more highly educated (increase of percentage of highly educated from 20 to 33%) and they have become younger on average (from 33 to 31 years of age). Furthermore, differences in terms of countries or origin were detected (Moroccans and Ghanians, for example, have scores below average, while Chinese, Thai and Brazilians score above the average). Of course, these trends cannot be simply causally related to the pre-entry tests alone.

Table 10: Characteristics of applicants for temporary residence permits before and after effectuation of the Integration Abroad Act (in %) (Significant 2009: 61-62).

	Before effectuation of the Integration Abroad Act	After effectuation of the Integration Abroad Act
Sex		
Men	38	33
Women	62	67
Education		
Low	34	28
Average	46	39
High	20	33
Age		
Average age	33	31
Nationality		
Turkish	18	18
Moroccan	18	14
Chinese	4	7
Thais	2	5
Brazilian	3	5
Ghanians	10	3
Other	46	48

However, Regioplan (2009: 62) assumes that these figures do indicate a certain degree of 'self-selection', meaning that 'especially the elderly and the lower educated are more often discouraged to apply for a temporary residence permit than others because of the mandatory pre-entry tests.' The Begeleidingscommissie (2009) also describes this self-selection effect, as it concludes that 'the Integration Abroad Act does influence the choice of partner by the partner in the Netherlands... who is more inclined to choose a more highly educated partner with a greater chance of passing the exam' (p. 11).

Perception by TCN's

The evaluation by Regioplan (2009) reveals that migrants do not perceive the pre-entry tests in a particularly negative manner. Most migrants consider the information that is provided on the pre-entry tests as sufficient (78-81%), the material provided as adequate and the tests as doable. As argued, in particular the language test is however seen as difficult or for a large group (25%) as too difficult.

The focus groups reveal that migrants do question the added value of the pre-entry tests. The test in basic knowledge of Dutch society is seen as simple, but many migrants also seem to pass this test through the memorization of example-questions. An often mentioned positive effect of this part of the pre-entry test was that it did provide migrants basic knowledge for finding one's way into Dutch society: for instance, knowing how things work in relation to general practitioners in the Netherlands.

Many migrants also indicated the presence of questions that they did not consider very relevant for their participation in Dutch society. Especially questions about Dutch culture and history (such as about Rembrandt's 'Nightwatch') were referred to in this respect. Moreover, some migrants also perceived the test as patronizing, especially in the case of migrants who had already obtained an adequate level of knowledge of Dutch society and Dutch language proficiency in another manner.

Finally, both the applicants themselves and the representatives of Dutch embassies and consulates indicate that the level of language proficiency required for passing the tests is too low for actually being able to find ones way in Dutch society. This is also confirmed by the focus groups with immigrants in the Netherlands.

Perception of TCN's

It is very difficult to single-out the effect of the government policies on pre-entry programs or the public and political discourse on the pre-entry tests, on the images of TCN's. However, it is clear that in these policies and in public and political discourse, distinct images are portrayed of migrants planning to migrate to the Netherlands.

First of all, much can be said about the gendered images of family migrants in this respect. As discussed above, the emancipation of migrant women was a key issue in the political debate on the need for (obligatory) pre-entry tests. The image portrayed of women migrants, especially family migrants from Turkey and Morocco, was that of a group in a very poor social-economic position (poor level of schooling, poor chances on labour market) (e.g. Tk 2003-2004, 29700, nr. 3: 5) and thus a very poor starting position for integration into Dutch society. Furthermore, interviews reveal that this image also contained reference to socio-cultural aspects. For instance, the obligation to do pre-entry tests (and later to follow civic integration courses in the Netherlands) was also legitimized with reference to the social-cultural constraints that these women would face for participating and integrating into Dutch society.

6.2 Perceived impacts of post-entry measures

A first evaluation of the new Civic Integration Act (Significant, 2010) revealed that indeed the implementation of the new Act had serious difficulties in the first year, but that significant improvements have been made in the years 2008 and 2009. Key explanations for the troubled implementation during the first year are, according to Significant, to be found in the very short period that the municipalities had to prepare for the implementation of the new measures (the Act was finally passed in the Senate in December 2006 and became operational in January 2007, Minister Verdonk repeatedly refused to delay the instalment of the new Act), the late start of municipalities with entering agreements with organisations for the provision of civic integration courses, and difficulties in getting high quality data on the categories for whom the civic integration courses would be mandatory (Significant, 2010: 19-20). As a consequence, in 2007 only very few civic integration courses were actually provided, even far less than in the preceding years.

Probably also due to the adjustments made in successive years, in the context of the Deltaplan Civic Integration, the number of participants to the civic integration courses increased rapidly. By December 2009, 127.000 migrants had been reached for whom participation would be mandatory, of whom 83000 took part in civic integration courses. This also means that 44000 did not receive any 'provision' in terms of a civic integration course; these migrants were assumed to prepare for the integration test in another way. However, 37000 out of these 44000 had not passed the integration exam yet by the end of 2009 (ibid: 37). About 60000 migrants had received an official exemption for taking part in the civic integration tests. At least 80000 migrants for whom participation in the integration programs could be mandatory, had not been reached yet nor has their integration obligation formally been established.

By the end of 2009, about 20000 migrants had participated in civic integration programs on a voluntary basis. Under the new law, municipalities experienced difficulties in reaching this potentially very large pool of participants to integration programs, of about 319000 so-called 'oldcomers' (ibid: 143-144). As participation in the integration programs is not mandatory for this group, they have to be 'seduced' to participate (ibid: 34). Amongst other, the discourse on 'civic integration' seems to form an obstacle for participants from this category to enrol, especially for those who already have full citizenship and no longer feel like an immigrant or 'inburgeraar' (ibid: 35). In order to lower the threshold to participate, government has now allowed municipalities to ask lower participation fees for this group.

The reforms now appear to be on track to attain the desired level of 80% of all civic integration programs in the form of dual programs where the courses are combined with practice-oriented parts. Also, the number of participants who successfully pass the integration exam had increased remarkably. Almost everyone eventually passes the test in three times, and on average about 80% passes the test at once (ibid: 28). However, it is important to note in this respect that large numbers of immigrants have still not taken part in the tests.

There do remain however specific problems in the practical implementation of the integration courses. Also, cities do not appear to give much effect to the sanction-oriented elements of the new Civic Integration Act. Few sanctions have been imposed thus far, and as far as sanctions have been applied, most cities chose to impose fines well below the maximum sanctions as defined by the government. Also, municipalities seem to consider sanctions as potentially counterproductive in terms of getting migrants to pass the

integration exams (ibid: 31). More in general, various municipalities indicate that they experience a friction between the national public and political discourse on civic integration and their interest in promoting participation on the local level (ibid: 166).

However, little is known of the more enduring effects on the participation or integration of those who have passed the post-entry (and in some cases already also the pre-entry) integration tests.⁶⁸ A small-scale (only 29 participants and 29 professionals involved in post-entry integration programs) and mainly qualitative analysis has been made of the effects of these civic integration programs on the participation in society of migrants who have passed the post-entry tests (B&A, 2010). The outcomes of this analysis were strongly differentiated and highly tentative. It showed that some facilities or 'tracks' remained underdeveloped or relatively little used (at least in the cities examined), specifically the tracks that focused on language apprehension and on entrepreneurship. The labor-market oriented track did (in the examined case-city Enschede) lead for over 50% of the participants to a job within reasonable time after completing the post-entry program. However, this effect is diminishing with the overall economic decline over recent years (ibid: 7-9). The track for parent carers did seem to increase parent involvement with schools and voluntary organisations. The effects of the track that leads specific migrants toward a state-exam for acquiring a formal language apprehension diploma are difficult to establish, as many participants of this track already have jobs (ibid: 9). No analyses have been made of the effects of the civic integration programs on cultural attitudes of migrants, in spite of this cultural aspects being of such central importance to the political discourse on civic integration.⁶⁹

So, it is becoming evident that after some difficult years after the establishment of the new Civic Integration Act, the implementation of the new system has improved significantly. This seems due to a great extent to the very practical and at times pragmatic Deltaplan Inburgering. This Deltaplan did change the relation between central government as the instigator of the new discourse on civic integration and the municipalities, which often have a much more practical attitude towards civic integration programmes. However, it is fair to say that Ministers Vogelaar and Van der Laan have created the practical conditions for the implementation of a milder form of the initial civic integration plans of Minister Verdonk.

6.3 Methodological discussion

Although promoting integration is the key objective of both the pre- and the post-entry integration policies, there still is little evidence that these policies actually do promote integration. There are, however modest, indications that the post-entry programs do support the participation of migrants and that these migrants do often find jobs after completing their courses, though another recent study suggests that many migrants experience difficulties in keeping these jobs. In particular, some there is evidence that the post-entry programs have an independent positive effect on language proficiency of migrants. Assuming that language proficiency is a basic condition for participation, this can be seen as evidence that the post-entry courses do support the labour market position of migrants.

The effects of the pre-entry tests seem to be more differentiated. On the one hand, the level of language proficiency required and the preparation demanded for these tests is so

⁶⁸ This was a key finding from the focusgroup on 8-12-2010, but also from interviews as with a researcher from the SCP and with other experts.

⁶⁹ Interview with researcher from SCP; attempts are being made to couple databases so as to be able to monitor the social-economic participation of migrants who previously participated in civic integration programs.

low, that little effect can be expected on migrants language proficiency. However, two positive effects do emerge clearly both from the focus groups and other research reports. Firstly, the pre-entry test does seem to enhance the overall preparation and motivation of migrants who decide to come to the Netherlands, and secondly it does provide migrants with relevant practical knowledge that helps them to find their way around in the Netherlands in terms of very basic activities.

Finally, it is very apparent that the enactment of the pre-entry tests has decreased the level of immigration to the Netherlands. However, the relation between these tests and the level of immigration cannot be established in a direct manner. An important methodological reservation is that we do not know whether migrants decided not to go to the Netherlands because of the pre-entry tests, there is no direct evidence for this. Nor do we know whether migrants based their decision on knowledge of the pre-entry tests, or whether other factors (such as perception of migration/integration discourse in the Netherlands, or the pre-entry conditions that were installed only shortly before the pre-entry tests) played a more significant role.

As argued above, the Dutch government is preparing a design for more long-term monitoring of the integration effects of post-entry (and pre-entry?) measures. A study by Significant (2010) shows that a coupling of data is possible, making it possible to monitor specific cohorts over a longer period of time. Currently, such an evaluation would not yet be possible, as most data dates back only to 2007, when most migrants had not yet completed their post-entry programs (following the 2006 revisions). However, even if a long-term monitoring system is designed, it remains methodological difficult if not impossible to establish a causal relationship between the pre- and post-entry policies and the integration patterns of newcomers. This would require a cohort that is not subject to these policies, and as these policies are obligatory, such a cohort cannot be established.

In the perspective of this brief assessment of the evidence on integration and immigration effects, that government has already decided to increase the level of the pre-entry tests (from A1 minus to A1) without knowing what the actual integration effects of these measures were. This may reveal that government was more concerned about the still very high pass-rates of the tests, and may have wished only to reduce these pass-rates further. -

Also, there is little evidence from a research point-of-view that the new governments' plans to (once more) enhance individual responsibility for the post-entry programs as well, will actually promote the integration effects of these programs. Rather, the Deltaplan Civic Integration (2007) revealed that too much individual responsibility may in fact result in stagnation in civic integration programs.

It must be observed that very little is known about the effects of the pre- and post-entry measures in terms of promoting social-cultural integration. Also, no attempts are currently being made to map this part of the integration process, which has nonetheless been an important factor in the development of the new pre- and post-entry policies. This reveals that this culturalisation of immigrant integration has been more symbolic than substantive in terms of policy-development, or it reveals that policies have actually become more modest in social-cultural terms, promoting self-sufficiency of migrants rather than social-cultural integration.

To conclude, the absence of clear evidence that the pre- and post-entry policies do effectively promote integration, means that no final conclusion can yet be reached about the success or failure of these policies. This may, for the future, also hold legal consequences. In

particular, if these policies do not resort in sufficient integration effects, the ECJ may rule that the policies are disproportionate in terms of erecting an obstacle to the immigration of specific categories, as it was this balance between the right of family life and states' discretion to pose integration conditions that initially allowed Dutch government to develop these policies. Therefore, proving the integration effects of post- and pre-entry policies will be a central priority for the coming 1 to 2 years.

7 The local implementation of civic integration policies; the city of Enschede

In this local case study we have selected the city of Enschede as a local case. The main focus of the report is therefore on Enschede with occasional references to developments in other cities. The reason to choose Enschede is that this city is a forerunner regarding civic integration programmes and has been relatively well researched, so that we have enough data to base our report on. This report is based on written reports (see the References) and an interview we had on November 30, 2010 with Mr. Ger Gankema, the policy officer entrusted with organizing civic integration in Enschede.

7.1 Contextual factors

Enschede is a city in the east of the Netherlands, close to the German border. With its approximately 155,000 inhabitants (2008) it is a middle range city by Dutch standards. Of its inhabitants 27.5 % are of immigrant background. Enschede harbours around 150 nationalities with people of Turkish descent as the largest single immigrant group. They make up 5.8 % of the population. The majority of Enschede's immigrant population are Dutch citizens; 6 % of the population are registered as foreigners.⁷⁰ Enschede is an old industrial town (textile), which in the heydays of manufacturing attracted migrant workers mainly from Turkey. Since the decline of its industries Enschede has met major difficulties in attracting new economic activities. At present, with an average yearly income of € 28,500 per household Enschede is one of the poorest municipalities in the Netherlands. It also has (in 2008) an above average percentage of unemployed of 7.1% (the average for the Netherlands as a whole is in 2008 4.5%) (ibid.). According to Mr. Gankema the current (2010) unemployment rate is 14,4%. Unemployment of people with an immigrant background is higher than among non-immigrants and their income position is lower. Almost 35 % of the immigrant population depend on a social security benefits.⁷¹

Enschede is traditionally reputed as a 'red' municipality with the Labour Party (PvdA) dominating the local government. In the latest local elections of March 2010 the Labour Party had to take a heavy defeat. They now have to share power in the city government with the Christian Democrats (CDA), the liberal party (VVD) and Citizens' Interests (Burgerbelangen), a local party).

7.2 Local Migration-Integration Policy Frames. An overview

The municipality of Enschede has laid down its views on integration in the Policy Report 'Integration and Citizenship' (Municipality of Enschede 2008a).

'Dimensions of integration'

⁷⁰ Enschede in cijfers <http://www.enschede.nl/gemeente/cijfers/>

⁷¹ Enschede in cijfers <http://www.enschede.nl/gemeente/cijfers/>

'Integration' means for Enschede that every citizen a) is able to cope individually in the fields of work, housing, care, safety, education and leisure, b) participates in Enschede's society, and c) feels at home in Enschede. There should be no difference in the participation of native and immigrant citizens. Enschede finds it important that all citizens participate equally in society, regardless of their background. The municipality signals that still too many citizens of immigrant background do not participate equally in society. Too many of them have little education, a low income and are unemployed. Enschede does not accept permanent deprivation, nor does it accept that its citizens do not participate in society. (Municipality of Enschede 2008a: 6,7).

In Enschede's integration policy the following dimensions are emphasized:

1) language and education (upbringing) 2) housing, 3) care and well-being, 4) economy and work, 5) safety, 6) integration in the city neighbourhoods. (ibid.). In the policy document 'Integration' has been closely linked to citizenship, and is seen as almost synonymous with that concept, which is defined as 'active participation in society' (ibid.; 12).

Integration objectives and requirements

The municipality considers socio-economic success a predictor for successful integration and equal participation in society. This final objective is defined as: "each inhabitant of Enschede is able to speak Dutch, has a good education, both in terms of school performance and upbringing in the family, participates actively in the labour market and has a knowledge of Dutch society and its norms, values and customs.". 'Integration', according to the municipality, also encompasses living together in neighbourhoods, older people getting the care they need and feeling safe in one's neighbourhood. Enschede sees integration as a final objective. In order to achieve this not only efforts from the part of immigrants are needed, but also institutions in dominant society should change. The services of social organisations and the civil service should be recognisable and accessible for all. These should therefore be intercultural; their staffing, staff competencies and their service supply should be suited for citizens of different cultural backgrounds.

Actors

The local integration policy document is the outcome of a series of integration debates with interested citizens that were organized from mid 2005 until early 2006.

In the policy document 'integration' is linked to the concept of citizenship. Citizens are expected to take their own responsibility (active citizenship). Yet, integration is also the responsibility of civil society ('shared citizenship'). The municipality sees its own role in this as one of orchestrating, encouraging, facilitating or intervening. Eventually, however, the improvement of people's social position should be the result of *joint* efforts of individuals, civil society organisations and the municipality.

The Enschede Integration policy document on civic integration courses:

Starting point for the municipal integration policy is that, in principal, general policies should reach all target groups in the city. Yet, some problems of immigrants are so serious and so specific that a specific policy is needed (Municipality of Enschede 2008a: 27). This is the rationale of Enschede's civic integration policy. In the implementation of the Law on Civic Integration a choice has been made to deliver tailor-made services and at the same time to link up with existing system of redirecting unemployed people to paid employment. The aim of this approach is to ensure continuity, so that those who have completed their

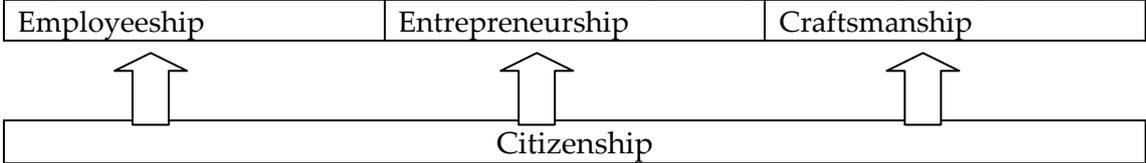
integration course will automatically be directed towards regular work or additional forms of employment. This will ensure their active participation in society (ibid.).

Dimensions:

Enschede sees civic integration courses above all as a stepping stone towards integration in the labour market. It is significant that the policy view on civic integration courses is included in the city’s Integration Policy Document’s chapter on ‘Economy and work’. This policy document also includes a special chapter entitled ‘Language and upbringing’. This suggests that a good mastery of Dutch (mainly by their by mothers) is also seen as conditional for bringing up children. Children who have learned Dutch perform better at school (Municipality of Enschede 2008: 29). The municipality has now started a new project to encourage the parents of children who visit preschool playgroups to attend language classes. An attempt is being made to use the same methods in language education for both parents and children, so that they will encourage one another and parents will be able to help their children with their exercises. Enschede also has developed a project in which children start to learn how to read from group 1 (when they are four years old). This increases their language ability enormously, according to Mr. Gankema.

Another policy document of that same year 2008, entitled ‘Taking part matters. A view on participation in a socio-economic perspective’ states that the objective of participation has broadened from labour market participation to ‘contributing to society from a socio-economic perspective’ (Municipality of Enschede 2008b: 5). Such contribution can also be in the form of volunteer work or of providing informal care. The policy document distinguishes two levels on the ‘participation ladder’ and four ‘participation domains’:

Figure 1 Participation domains in the view on participation by the municipality of Enschede



Citizenship is the first level of the participation ladder. It includes activities that are considered socially useful. Language courses and civic integration courses are required to enable people to reach this first level. This will enable them to care for themselves. The second level has economic independence as an objective. This implies that people must not only acquire general labour market skills, but they should also possess substantive knowledge and skills needed for the profession in case. The current city government has developed a new policy in which responsibilities for job training have been split: unemployed people go straight to an employer, even if their profile does not fully match that employer’s needs. The municipality is responsible for general employability, the employer takes care of the substantive job competencies.

Commonalities and differences with the national integration policy:

As a general rule, local policies in the Netherlands are expected to be in line with national policy lines. In Enschede’s emphasis on active citizenship (of individual citizens), for example, some major elements of national integration policy are reflected. However, the phrasing of the Enschede integration policy document reflects a more *communitarian* and

multicultural approach than is now en vogue at the national level. To give some examples: the Enschede policy document stresses the importance of three actors - citizens, civil society organisations and the local government - working together and it emphasises the importance of citizens participating in school activities, sports and neighbourhood activities. On the one hand, and in accordance with the national approach, the importance of speaking Dutch is acknowledged, from which follows the expectation that communication in consultations, projects and activities takes places in Dutch. Moreover, also in line with the national approach, Dutch norms and values, laws and regulations are proclaimed as leading (hence no multicultural recognition of value diversity). On the other hand, however, interculturalisation of Dutch institutions is considered a requirement for a successful integration and the municipality has introduced a diversity policy for its own organisation. Moreover, a basic assumption underlying the municipality's view on integration is that preservation of the immigrants' cultural identity is of vital interest for the improvement of integration (Municipality of Enschede 2008a: 12). Migrant organizations will be subsidized if their activities promote integration (ibid.). Thus, by its explicit recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity Enschede does not depart as radically from *multiculturalism* as national integration policy does. In line with this is also that, while in national policy 'integration' has increasingly come to mean 'cultural adaptation' (in terms of language, but also adaptation to Dutch norms and values), the Enschede documents hardly talk of adaptation to Dutch values. In Enschede integration has rather been formulated in terms of education and labour market participation (socio-economic integration). Hence, local policies have more in common with national integration policy of a previous era than with the current views.

The idea that *migrant women*, as mothers, are crucial for their children's integration is in line with the analysis made by PAVEM. This high-profile advisory commission to the government concluded that the integration of immigrant families is dependent on immigrant women's education and participation, because they are the ones who educate their children (PAVEM's motto 'if you educate a woman, you educate a family'). PAVEM proposed therefore that immigrant women should make up for their arrears in Dutch language, obtain paid work and take part in social life. These proposals were implemented in national integration policy as well as in emancipation policy and they were also included into the 'Deltaplan Civic Integration' of the Balkenende IV government (Prins and Saharso 2008).

7.3 The local integration landscape. A mapping of integration courses

In 1998 the Law on Civic Integration Newcomers (*Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers, WIN*) came into force. In 2007 it was replaced by the Law on Civic Integration (*Wet Inburgering, WI*) and in the same year the national 'Deltaplan Civic Integration' was introduced, which in the years that followed was implemented at a national and local level.

Under the old law (WIN) the immigrant was expected to carry full responsibility for his or her integration (*inburgering*), which is in line with the notion of active citizenship. Yet, an evaluation report observed that, in practice, many municipalities had taken on an extensive directive role in the organisation of civic integration programme (Significant 2010: 15). This had, according to the report, an observable negative effect on

the extent to which the immigrants (*inburgeraars*) themselves felt responsible for their integration. Also in Enschede the local government took on an extensive directive role. We asked Ger Gankema about the reasons. His explanation is that one cannot expect people who have just arrived to organise their civic integration themselves. It will take much longer, which means that they will be dependent on social security benefits much longer as well. People have three-and-a-half to five years (in the case of asylum seekers) to qualify for the civic integration test. If the city would restrict its tasks to seeing to it that people pass the test, newly arrived immigrants cannot be obliged to take part in a civic integration programme during the first few years. Thus, if these people do not take any action themselves, those first years will be lost years, which can be very costly for the city. This is why Enschede has chosen to take up a more active role in organising civic integration programmes. Enschede has not opted to fully outsource its civic integration courses, because external agencies are stakeholders and therefore are not independent. Enschede has rather chosen to have one department that manages civic integration, while the programme that prepares newcomers for a job has been in-sourced to the municipal department (DCW, Work Step) charged with employment policy. By contrast, the other programme(s), e.g. those that prepare for the raising of children, health and education have been outsourced to external agencies (IVIO).

In 2003 Enschede and the neighbouring German city of Münster started to exchange experiences, in collaboration with the Regional Educational Centre (REC). The two cities wanted to know the effects of their civic integration programmes on the actual integration of immigrants, as their approaches differed greatly. In 2004 a research project started that was conducted by the University of Twente and the University of Münster (Seveker, Svensson, Thränhardt 2008; Svensson, Michalowski, Seveker 2008). In this research project a cohort of immigrants was selected and followed during a period of two to two-and-a-half years (2004-2006) in their integration process.⁷² The outcomes of this research project influenced the approach taken in Enschede at a later stage (after 2007). We will now first describe the civic integration programmes until 2007 and report on their effects; then we will do the same for the period after 2007. We will also include some information on the Münster approach.

Civic integration courses under the WIN (until 2007)

The civic integration agenda of Enschede that existed before 2007 followed closely the national agenda of the WIN. Starting point was the assumption that Dutch language proficiency and social knowledge and skills could help prevent individual migrants from ending up in a socially deprived situation. Civic integration policy was carried out by the Regional Educational Centre (REC). The Enschede policy consisted of an intensive educational trajectory with a course of 400 to 800 hours of Dutch language training and a more limited course on 'social orientation'. Each student was assigned his or her individual municipal trajectory counsellor, who coached that student. The trajectory was mandatory for all newcomers in Enschede who belonged to one of the target groups as defined by WIN, that is all TCNs (except EU/EEA-citizens and citizens from a few other countries) between 16

⁷² See for a description of the research and outcomes under section 3, (Perceived) impact of integration courses.

and 65 years of age, who intend to take up long-term residence in the Netherlands (except those who do so for employment reasons). For so-called 'oldcomers' a combined trajectory of civic integration and (re)directing to employment was developed, that is for those persons of immigrant descent who were living on a social security benefit. Participation for 'oldcomers' was on a voluntary basis.

The obligatory Enschede integration course focused on language acquisition and knowledge of Dutch society. The civic integration trajectories in Enschede were carried out by the REC. The municipality had no choice here, because at the time regulations prescribed that municipalities made use of the services of RECs. The Enschede REC had developed three trajectories: Crowbar, Icebreaker and New Neighbours. Crowbar aimed at immigrants with little formal education, Icebreaker was developed for immigrants with some years of formal education and New Neighbours was meant for immigrants with a higher education and a higher potential for learning. Classes were mixed regarding countries of origin. The course took a period of two years after which the language exam followed. Most students were highly motivated to follow classes. This was not only because they wanted to learn Dutch, but also because 'going to school' was an important social activity. Students had to have some mastery of Dutch language (in particular understand more abstract notions) before the classes in social orientation could be given. In the Crowbar groups the learning of Dutch went slower than in the New Neighbours groups. While the latter often finished their courses in social orientation within a year, the Crowbars usually took their exam in social orientation during their second year.

While the local government organised the courses, they were fully funded by the national government. Under the WIN law, the local authorities were expected to sanction students who did not show up in class, but an evaluation of the law revealed that more than half of the municipalities did not comply with this rule. The drop-out percentage nationally was between 15 and 20 %, the main reason being the acceptance of paid work (Significant 2010: 47). It is not clear from the documents whether Enschede applied sanctions in the period before 2007.

7.4 The (perceived) impact of integration courses on immigrants' integration trajectories

Impact of integration courses under the WIN (until 2007)

The impact of the integration courses under the WIN law has been measured by the Enschede-Münster collaborative research project (Seveker, Svensson, Thränhardt 2008; Svensson, Michalowski, Seveker 2008). In both countries the immigrant groups were interviewed in 2004, when they had just arrived, in 2005 after the first year, and again in 2006, after about two to two-and-a-half years. The target group that was followed by Seveker et al. (2008) in Enschede consisted of 182 people in 2005; in 2006 83 of them again filled in the questionnaire. They were mostly refugees (about half of the population) and persons who had come for marriage and family re-unification (about 40%). The target group in Münster of 161 people were so-called *Spätaussiedler*, i.e. people with a German ethnicity, mostly originating from Russia, Kazachstan and other states that belonged to the former Soviet Union. Most of these people did not speak German. 92 of them had been assigned a coach (*Lotsen*), 53, the control group, were without a coach. However, the Münster integration programme was aimed not at language acquisition, but at promoting interaction between the

immigrants and the receiving society. The Münster programme intended to combat further segregation and concentration of immigrants in certain neighbourhoods in the city. The main task of the coach, a civil servant specially assigned with this task, was to see to it that newly arriving *Spätaussiedler* would not settle in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of immigrants. Secondly, he would help them with their first introduction to the new direct environment: their neighbours and the neighbourhood, the local churches and associations, the local labour market and several public services. Newcomers were not obliged to accept the coach's assistance, but once they had done so, they had to sign an individual integration plan in which they committed themselves to not settling in an immigrant concentration area.

According to Esser's (2004) classification of four dimensions of integration (enculturation, positioning, interaction and identification), we may define the Enschede approach with its emphasis on language acquisition and knowledge of Dutch culture and society as a policy of *enculturation*. The justification given for the intensive and mandatory lessons in the Dutch language and in social orientation is that these are a key to integration in other dimensions, including the labour market. The Münster coach approach with its emphasis on non-segregated housing and the establishing of contacts can be characterized as a policy of *interaction*. The guiding idea behind this approach is that it is of vital interest for a successful integration in, amongst others, the labour market, that at an early stage already contacts are being made with members of the dominant society and that interaction is encouraged (Svensson et al. 2008; 254).

The project systematically compared the two approaches and compared their effectiveness. It appeared that the Enschede approach was more effective than the one in Münster. In Enschede better Dutch language proficiency went along with a better knowledge of Dutch society, increased participation in social activities and more contacts with Dutch persons (Seveker et al 2008: 65).). To illustrate this: in 2005 86% of the Enschede respondents had no job, while in 2006 this had decreased to 82%. More spectacular is the rise of people who worked 20 hours or more per week: in 2005 this was the case for 7%, in 2006 for 16%. Dependency on welfare benefits remained stable: 36% in 2005 as against 35% in 2006 (ibid.: 50). In Münster the effects of living in a non-segregated neighbourhood on other aspects of integration were less well observable. There was no positive correlation between living in a non-segregated neighbourhood and having a job (Seveker et al 2008: 65, for the explanation see below). In Enschede the percentage not living in a segregated neighbourhood rose from 60% in 2005 to 85% in 2006. This result should, however, not be explained as a result of the civic integration programme, but of the urban re-structuring activities of the city of Enschede that offered low income households the opportunity to move to new better quality houses (ibid: 51-52). An unexpected finding in Enschede was that living in a neighbourhood with few other people of immigrant background seems to have a negative impact on language acquisition and, surprisingly, also on contacts with Dutchmen. In Münster a negative correlation was also found between living in a non-segregated neighbourhood and language acquisition. The researchers suggest that in their early years of settlement migrants may benefit more from the help of migrants who had come earlier than from the host population (Svensson et al 2008: 265). It was also found that in Enschede keeping to the norms and traditions of the country of origin correlated negatively with certain aspects of integration, in particular with knowledge of Dutch society and with the number of informal contacts with Dutchmen. In Münster, by contrast, traditionalism tended to favour integration. The explanation for this is that, while the immigrants in Enschede predominantly had an Islamic

background, 49% of the *Spätaussiedler* in Münster had a Christian background. This was beneficial for their integration into the active church communities in that city. This points to the effect of immigrants' personal characteristics on integration. In Enschede only small differences were found in the level of integration between men and women, but clear differences existed between refugees and family migrants. Refugees appear to be the most vulnerable group. They feel more socially isolated and more lonely, they lack practical support, they are less often socially active and depend more often on social security. Refugees also have fewer contacts with Dutch people than family migrants do. Of course, family migrants have their families to fall back on. At the same time refugees identify more strongly than family migrants with the Netherlands, which can probably be explained because many of them have a complex relationship with their country of origin. All this suggests that refugees are more in need of help with integrating than other categories of immigrants. The researchers suggest that the integration programme should be differentiated accordingly (Svensson et al 2008: 260).

After presenting the main results of the study, a word of caution is warranted. Only some correlations were found to be significant and wherever this was the case the degree of significance was relatively low. In Enschede migrants made progress in language acquisition, but this did result in only slightly more people finding a job (0,37) or only a minor increase in informal contacts with Dutch persons (0,24). The overall conclusion of the research was that, irrespective of the approach chosen, the spill-over effect of improvement in one dimension of integration to other dimensions is limited. Therefore, a policy is needed that aims at directly influencing several dimensions of integration at the same time, e.g. measures aimed at language acquisition combined with measures aimed at providing paid employment and intensifying social contacts (Svensson, Michalowski, Seveker 2008).

Civic integration courses under the WI (after 2007)

The new Law on Civic Integration (WI), which became operative on January 1st 2007, takes participation as its starting point. This links up with changes in the national integration policy: under the Balkenende II government (2003-2006) the right to permanent residence in the Netherlands was made conditional on being integrated. Under Balkenende IV (2007-2010) the accent shifted to civic integration as a condition for participation (Significant 2010: 17). The municipality of Enschede considers civic integration, education and employment as keys to participation. The municipality realised that not receiving a social benefit does not necessarily mean that one participates in society (e.g. women with a husband who provides the family income). Therefore, not only immigrants living on a social benefit (the common target group) but also persons of immigrant background who are outside the labour force, but who do not receive any social benefit have been made eligible for the civic integration trajectories. After completion of the civic integration trajectories they also qualify for the full set of instruments aimed at work, education and participation. Participation should preferably take place in the form of work. This is not only paid employment. If we think of participation through work as a staircase, volunteer work is the bottom rung of the ladder, then follows a return or participation-job⁷³ and the highest rung of the ladder are paid employment and entrepreneurship (Inburgeringsagenda Enschede, gemeente Enschede 2008).

⁷³ These are jobs created by the municipality for people who otherwise would not find a job in the regular labour market and therefore not have a chance to acquire work experience.

The law differentiates between several civic integration exam profiles: in 2007 the profile 'Upbringing, Health and Education' (UHE) and 'Work' were introduced. Since 1 January 2010 two more profiles have been added: 'Entrepreneurship' and 'Social Participation'. Enschede offers civic integration trajectories that prepare for the exam profiles UHE and Work. This focus differs from that of certain other municipalities in the Netherlands. Amsterdam, for example, has focused on 'entrepreneurship'; a trajectory preparing for the entrepreneurship exam is running as a pilot project in Amsterdam.

Enschede believes that learning Dutch is more effective when it is combined with participation in society. Therefore in Enschede all integration courses are offered as a *dual* trajectory; language in combination with (volunteer) work. The law stipulates that persons who take a civic integration course must develop oral and written proficiency in Dutch at level A2. In its civic integration trajectories Enschede provides a higher level of language proficiency (B1) than the law requires. The idea is that a higher language level promotes better opportunities in volunteer work and/or for continuing education. This should guarantee a "sustainable civic integration and participation in society" (Inburgeringsagenda Enschede, gemeente Enschede 2008, p. 2).

Target groups

DUO/IB (the National Office for the Administration of Study Grants) has calculated on the basis of certificates and data from the Immigration Service (IND) how many people are obliged to take an integration programme. In Enschede about 1800 persons of immigrant origin are dependent on a social security benefit. About 500 of them can be obliged to take a civic integration course. Most of them are 'oldcomers' who arrived after 1998, and who for whatever reason have never followed a civic integration programme nor taken a test. The other 1300 can be assumed to have a language deficiency and therefore also are eligible to the courses. In addition to these 1800 persons, about 3900 persons without a social benefit can be obliged to take a civic integration course. It has been estimated that altogether about 8,000 persons of immigrant background, but not dependent on social benefits are in need of a civic integration course. Then there is a group of about 10,000 native Dutch persons who are 'functional illiterates'. Most of them will not have paid employment, but are dependent on social security. Consequently, they too belong to the target groups. In practice, the policy first targets persons obliged to take a civic integration test, i.e. the 3900 mentioned before. These include both newcomers and 'oldcomers'.

For the year 2010 780 new civic integration trajectories had been planned: 650 for the UHE profile and 130 for the Work profile. Of these 780 about 60% (480) are obliged to participate in the programme, 40% (320) participate voluntarily. Out of the 480 mandatory participants 130 receive a social security benefit. The other 350 are obliged to participate in the programme, but are not recipients of any social benefit. These are newcomers holding a job or whose partner has a job. Persons attending the UHE profile are predominantly women, mothers often, not necessarily marriage migrants. The reason why so many more people are being channelled into UHE than into Work is that the latter profile is attended only by persons on social security. About two thirds of the participants are women, predominantly 'oldcomers'. Initially, Mr. Gankema of the city of Enschede explained, 780 participants was believed to be too ambitious a goal, but it looks as if the civic integration programmes are going to achieve it. The other profiles (Entrepreneurship and Social

Participation) started only in 2010. So far, only few persons have been following any of these profiles.

Mr. Gankema has the impression that immigrants arriving now on average are more highly educated than before. Illiteracy has become a problem of 'oldcomers'. This would suggest that the pre-entry tests introduced in 2006 do fulfil their selective function. Mr. Gankema adds that it is his impression that nowadays persons of immigrant background more often marry a partner raised in the Netherlands.

In Enschede, the department of Language & Civic Integration co-ordinates the civic integration programmes. The work-oriented trajectory is a programme of 36 hours per week, consisting of the components language, work practice and social capacities. The language trajectory includes the acquiring of work experience through traineeships, or so-called participation and return jobs (i.e. jobs created by the local government to give people a chance to obtain work experience), with a regular job or entrepreneurship as final objectives. These trajectories aimed at work are carried out by the municipal organisation itself through a unit named WorkStep, located within the Social Unemployment Relief Works. Enschede claims to be the only Dutch municipality that has integrated civic integration into the existing infrastructure that aims at ushering people back to work (Verslag Inburgeren en participeren 2010, p. 46). The municipality has developed the method by itself and keeps track of the development of the participants and their satisfaction. Starting a work-oriented trajectory implies directly starting to work with the municipality. Each participant has a weekly meeting with a trajectory consultant to discuss his or her portfolio.

The UHE-oriented trajectory is for immigrants who clearly will not enter the regular labour market, such as persons with a disability benefit or women with young children. The UHE-trajectory aims at participation in society through volunteer work. Therefore, this trajectory includes not only a language course and a course on culture and society, but also a language traineeship of at least 250 hours. The Upbringing, Health and Education trajectories are implemented by an external organisation. The REC of Twente, the region of which Enschede is part, also carries out part of the UHE language trajectory.

Language coaching

The joint project with the city of Münster was a reason for the municipality of Enschede to introduce a language coach. This project was introduced in 2008 for all newly arrived inhabitants of Enschede and for people who had already been staying in the city for some time, but who still did not know their way around and who had few contacts with local Dutch persons. Participation is on a voluntary basis. The introduction of a coach fits well with the current national policy that stresses participation as a final goal of civic integration. The coach is a volunteer who helps the participant in the civic integration programme with language acquisition, but who also introduces that person to all kinds of provisions in the neighbourhood. The coach should take the participant's wishes as a starting point. The most important target, however, of the coaching project is to broaden the social network of the participant. Therefore the coaching project was offered initially only to people who were believed to be socially isolated. This was also because occasionally there was a shortage of coaches. However, this narrowing down of the target group was not mentioned in the written policy (Van der Velde 2009: 79). The participant and the coach usually meet once a week during a period of twelve weeks. The city's Language and Civic Integration

department alerts persons who start a civic integration trajectory to the existence of a language coach. The coordination of this coaching project is in hands of Alifa, a welfare organisation. The work of a coach requires certain capabilities. To this purpose coaches obtain a training and they are also coached themselves (Van der Velde 2009: 38). In 2009 the coaching facility was provided on an at random basis to everyone who qualified for participation in the project (both 'oldcomers' and newly arrived persons). This enabled the University of Twente to set up two groups for a study on the effects of coaching on integration, one group of those who had accepted the facility and another group that preferred to have no coach.

Accompanying policy measures:

As day care facilities for children are an important condition for enabling participants to follow the civic integration trajectory, the municipality has organised day care in combination with pre- and early school education to tackle language deficiencies among immigrant children as early as possible. There is also an experiment to improve the reading abilities of children below six years of age.

Enschede has developed a literacy trajectory as a pre-trajectory before people start civic integration. All illiterate citizens in Enschede, natives and immigrants, receive an invitation to participate (Inburgeren en participeren 2010: 43).

The costs for one civic integration trajectory amount to € 10,000 on. The municipality expects to receive € 5,000 per trajectory from the national government. Enschede has chosen to provide the remaining € 5,000 from municipal funds earmarked for civic integration, education and the promotion of employment. (Inburgeringsagenda Enschede, Gemeente Enschede 2008). The law allows municipalities to ask participants in a civic integration trajectory to contribute € 270. Enschede keeps to this contribution, but it collects this money not until the end of the programme, when it is settled with the government bonus that participants receive when they pass the exam within less than three years (Van der Velde 2009, p. 36). Participants who have been obliged to take a civic integration trajectory are entitled to a re-imbusement of day care costs. Participants on a voluntary basis do not have this right, but the municipality reimburses their expenses as well.

Overall, Enschede prefers to invest in a positive approach and in positive incentives like bi-monthly graduation ceremonies and a civic integration party (B&A Consulting 2010: 46). The city counts on the participants' commitment and on the professionalism of the instructors. Therefore, there is no need for the use of sanctions. As Mr. Gankema explained, the municipality has two sanction instruments at her disposal: a cutback in social security benefits and, since 2008, an administrative fine. The fine has not been applied yet, because the period under the new regime before people must have passed the test is not yet finished. Cutting back social security benefits has only seldom been applied. Usually a warning that a sanction is on its way makes people change their minds. Mr. Gankema expects, however, that from 2011, when the period has passed, more sanctions will be given.

Impact of integration courses under the WI (after 2007)

In 2007 the Enschede target group included about 4,400 persons. The integration courses under the new law started in 2008. About 1,600 candidates had finished the programme by mid 2010, of whom 1,000 followed the UHE trajectory and about 600 the trajectory to paid work. So far, 101 out of these 600 participants have passed the exam. Forty-two out of these 101 have continued their education or have a non-regular job, seven persons have become

entrepreneurs, and 52 have found a regular job. The economic crisis that started at the end of 2008 has had a dramatic impact on employment opportunities: in 2008 17 people found a job after having passed the exam, in 2009 this was the case for just five persons and by mid 2010 the score for that year still stood at zero (B&A Consulting 2010: 47).

Of those who passed the language test, about two thirds did so at the standard A2 level, while the remaining one third reached the higher B1 level (B&A Consulting 2010: 47). Van der Velde (2009: 39), however, reports complaints from the responsible city department that the B1 level is optional and that only few participants have chosen to take that level.

On the effect of the coaches two qualitative studies are available and both point at the limited effects of the project (Van der Velde 2009; Plinke 2010). With some minor exceptions only the coaching project did not enlarge the Dutch social network of the participants. After all, there is not much difference between those who had a coach and those who did not have one. Most participants have a limited social network anyway, mainly consisting of persons of their own cultural background. The objective of broadening the social network of the participants through the coaching activities has not been reached. This may have been caused by bad timing: the participants were busy attending language classes and, therefore, may have been too much focused on language training. The participants without a coach confirmed that there was really little time left for other things. Most participants claimed that they certainly had an interest in meeting new people, but not now. The participants in the coaching programme found this a valuable experience, but for a reasons different from the programme's primary objectives. The added value of the coach, they found, was that he or she provided assistance whenever language problems arose. The coach also helped the participants to find their way in the maze of official institutions. In general, those who had had a coach were grateful for all the practical help they had received and generally considered the coach as a supportive element in their integration process.

Prospects

In future, mr. Gankema would prefer to let voluntary participants attend only the language part of the programme. In his view they do not need the rest of the programme, as most of them know their way around in the Netherlands, where they have been residing for a long time already. This would make the programme cheaper and shorter, and more people could then be helped at the same costs. Formally, individuals who have only attended the language classes cannot take a civic integration test. The administrative solution to this would be to let them take the *Staatsexamen* at level one. It is not likely that these people, often women with little education, will pass the test. This might create a problem, as the funds allotted by the Ministry to the municipalities are based on the number of people who successfully pass the exam. However, as the present government is planning to discontinue these budgets anyway, this will cease to be a problem.

The real dramatic change is that the present government intends to make the preparation for the civic integration tests the full and sole responsibility of the immigrant. Immigrants are obliged to take the test, but they themselves will be responsible for their preparation. This means that the municipalities will no longer have an orchestrating role in the organising of the civic integration programmes, but, as is to be expected, they will only have to see to it that immigrants take their exams. In the very near future, 2013, there will no longer be a municipal civic integration policy.

Mr. Gankema also points at another negative consequence of the upcoming changes. Under the new system participants will have to borrow € 5,000 to follow a language course.

Those who participate on a voluntary basis will also have to pay this sum. Very often these are women who are either 'oldcomers' or spouses of a partner with paid employment. This will negatively affect the emancipation of these women, as only few of them will be prepared to pay so much money. Mr. Gankema thinks this is bad not only for the women themselves, but also for future generations. As it is becoming common practice that grandparents look after their grandchildren while the parents go to work, these grandchildren will then be raised by persons who are not fluent in Dutch.

7.5 Conclusions

The Enschede integration policy broadly follows national integration policy, in its emphasis on active citizenship. Yet, it differs from national policy in its more communitarian and multicultural perspective. Assimilation to Dutch values is not a major theme in the municipal integration policy and many of Enschede's policy measures reflect an explicit recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity.

The obvious targets of the Enschede civic integration policy are persons who are obliged by law to follow the civic integration programme and to take the test. Yet, Enschede also tries to reach individuals, women in particular, who are not obliged to participate, because they have been living for a long time in the Netherlands or because they have a husband who provides the family income. Enschede has taken several measures to 'lure' these women into the programme. This is not only for their own benefit, but also because women often play a prominent role in the upbringing of children, the next generation. From the evaluation studies it has appeared that refugees constitute another risk group that needs extra policy attention.

Enschede keeps the organization of its civic integration policy in one hand – its own hand – for reasons of effectiveness. The city argues that, if it does not do so, it may lose costly years - literally costly, because immigrant dependency on social security will then last longer.

Do civic integration programmes promote integration? The Enschede (NL) - Münster (BRD) studies suggest that they do indeed, even though the results are modest. Does it matter how the programme is designed? Again, the comparison between the two cities suggests that it does. An enculturation policy aimed at language acquisition (the Enschede approach) seems to have more effects on other dimensions of integration than a policy that focuses on promoting interaction, as in Münster. However, only short term results could be assessed in the comparative study; long term effects may be different. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of civic integration programmes can be improved by addressing several dimensions of integration at the same time.

According to Mr. Gankema, our major source of information on Enschede, the city is now receiving new immigrants who are more highly educated than in previous years. This may indicate that the civic integration test in the country of origin that was introduced in 2006, and that had as one of its goals to discourage low educated people from coming, is effective.

In national integration policy the civic integration test functions as a selection instrument: an independent or permanent residence permit and also Dutch citizenship have been made conditional on passing the test. The Enschede civic integration policy does not aim at differentiating between immigrants who are able to integrate successfully and those who are not, nor for that matter between native citizens and citizens of immigrant origin. As

a matter of principle, all are seen as (future) fellow citizens. All citizens must be sufficiently equipped for participation in society. Therefore, also semi-literate native persons belong to the target group. For participants insufficiently equipped for a successful participation, for example because they are (semi-)literate, additional policy measures have been designed to make up for deficiencies. Hence, the Enschede policy is inclusive, aiming at keeping all on board. Sanctions are hardly used as policy instruments.

Civic integration seems to be well on track in Enschede. However, if the plans of the current government come true, there will be no local civic integration policy any more as of 2013. The plans of the national government to let everyone, including voluntary participants, pay € 5,000 for the programme will discourage immigrant women from partaking in the programme. This is to be deplored from a perspective of their own emancipation as well as from that of future generations.

8 Conclusions

The Netherlands was the first European country to have institutionalized the migration-integration nexus, initially in a Civic Integration Act for newly arrived immigrants and later also in a Civic Integration Abroad Act for those who envisage migrating to the country. The Dutch case has set a model that is currently being followed by an increasing number of other European countries. This also makes that the Dutch case is closely monitored not only within the Netherlands, but also throughout Europe and even beyond.

This report has analysed why and how the Dutch migration-integration nexus has evolved the way it has. It has also taken a first glance at any evidence of the effects of the policy measures taken. Through document analysis, interviews and a series of focus groups a reconstruction has been made of the background of the Dutch migration-integration nexus (chapter 2), the development, formulation and implementation of pre-entry policies (chapter 3), the development, formulation and implementation of post-entry policies (chapter 4), public and political discourses on these policies (chapter 5), the effects of these policies (chapter 6) and, finally, the relation between the national and local level in post-entry policies (chapter 7). From this analysis the following conclusions can be drawn.

Trend toward more individual responsibility

The central objective of Dutch civic integration policies – both pre- and post-entry policies - has remained roughly the same over the last one-and-a-half decade, even though its implementation has become considerably stricter during that period. The primary focus of the Dutch approach is on language acquisition as the key condition for social and economic participation (or for various other forms of social participation). Initially, participation in the post-entry programs was mandatory for certain categories of newcomers, particularly for those who were not citizens of an EU/EEA Member State and a limited list of other countries and who had come to the country for reasons other than temporary employment or study. Since 2007 the obligation has shifted from merely participating in a course to passing the civic integration test successfully. Passing the test has become a condition for acquiring permanent residence. The current government intends to go even one step further by denying residence to anyone who fails to pass the test within the time limits set for this. In addition to this, passing a pre-entry test in the country of origin became mandatory in 2006 for certain categories of would-be immigrants from outside the EU/EEA.

In an international comparative perspective the Dutch approach stands out in that it includes socio-cultural elements. This is indeed an aspect that is often debated in national politics, but also in the international literature. However, our analysis has shown that in practice this socio-cultural element is much less central than has often been depicted. This holds in particular for the very basic ‘Knowledge of Society’ test that is part of the pre-entry test. Policy makers and political actors interviewed for our study, but also migrants who have passed this ‘Knowledge of Society’ test qualify it as not very meaningful. The post-entry test on Dutch society is certainly more meaningful in this respect, but here too it is not so evident what it aims at and what impact it has on the migrants’ socio-cultural integration. In reality, these tests focus more strongly on providing practical knowledge for everyday situations rather than on passing on ‘values and norms’ of Dutch society.

An additional characteristic for the Dutch approach has been its growing emphasis on the migrants’ individual responsibility for their integration, initiated since the publication

of the Government's Memorandum on the Contours of a New Civic Integration Structure in 2003. Since then, migrants have been made increasingly responsible for finding relevant training programs by themselves and for financing their own participation in the courses. Consequently, the role of the government has been gradually reduced to that of an umpire, whose main task is to test whether migrants have managed to acquire relevant competencies for integrating into Dutch society. For the pre-entry tests government has never even actively engaged in the provision of training programs nor in the certification of private training providers. This is unlike what, for example, the German and the British governments do (even though the Dutch government does provide a certified training package that may be used by migrants). For the post-entry tests, government has left the provision of training programs to commercial providers (except for a few specific categories). Current government plans aim at stopping all forms of government involvement in the programs, as is already the case in the pre-entry tests.

Strong linkage between civic integration and gender issues

The development of the Dutch approach in pre- and post-entry integration policies is often explained by the 'assimilationist turn' that Dutch politics have taken during the last decade. Undeniably, the rise of a more assimilationist frame of immigrant integration was a direct motivation for the development of these policies. However, the assimilationist turn in itself does not provide a full explanation for the overwhelmingly broad support that these policies have met in Dutch politics and society.

Our analysis reveals that a powerful issue connection between civic integration and the emancipation of migrant women (especially Muslim women) has been a major factor in creating a broad consensus on the policy plans. The need to emancipate vulnerable migrant women has often been mentioned in the interviews we have held, but also in policy documents and debates, as a reason to reinforce pre- and post-entry measures. The dominant image in this respect is that these women, particularly those with a Moroccan or a Turkish background, are in a weak social and economic position, suffer from cultural constraints (including arranged and forced marriages) and, when they become mothers, will play a central role in the reproduction of integration problems and therefore in their perpetuation.

In the view of the government this also justifies the mandatory nature of pre- and post-entry tests. Making the passing of the tests conditional to legal admission (in the case of pre-entry tests) and to permanent residence (in the case of post-entry tests) will obliging the women concerned to participate in the programs. In the view of the government this will help them emancipate from their cultural background, which is considered a constraint to their proper functioning in Dutch society.

While the Dutch approach to pre- and post-entry measures has been taken as a role-model in many European countries by now, it has also received fierce criticism in a national as well as an international setting. In particular, doubts have been expressed whether these strict Dutch demands are in line with some of the relevant EU directives and with the European Convention on Human Rights. In their effects the tests may impact as unjustifiable barriers to immigration, rather than as instruments to promote integration. This is likely to become a major issue of debate between the Netherlands and certain European institutions in the coming years.

The Dutch approach has also been criticized in feminist literature for projecting traditional Western gender images on immigrant women that are just as negative as the ones that are supposed to be substituted (Kirk, 2010). Many of the post-entry programs stress

these women's future task as housewives or parents or, at best, as volunteer workers, rather than prepare them for a role in the labour market. It is felt that this approach tends to reproduce conservative gender images.

Discrepancy between national and local levels

As previously noted, the national policy trend is toward more individual responsibility and less government involvement in training programs that prepare for the pre- and post-entry tests. In this respect, however, our analysis of local post-entry policies in the city of Enschede reveals a growing discrepancy between this national trend on the one hand and a more pragmatic local approach in dealing with specific integration problems on the other hand. At the city level confrontation with real-life integration problems is particularly manifest. This is even more so since the implementation of major parts of the country's employment and social security policies have been transferred from the national to the local level. This has encouraged local awareness that unsuccessful integration can be particularly costly for a city. This explains why many Dutch cities consider the idea of making migrants responsible for their own integration as too non-committal. Consequently, these cities prefer to maintain a more active integration policy, and Enschede is one of them. It has decided to step up its efforts to improve the migrants' language proficiency, even by providing individual language coaches to migrants.

This is a much more pro-active approach than the national government advocates and one that focuses much less on cultural aspects. The city expects that this will increase labour participation and reduce the migrants' dependence on social security more effectively. If the civic integration budget allocated to the local government does not allow for language training any more, Enschede will use other funds from the city budget for this, such as those for redirecting unemployed persons to the labour market or for adult education for illiterate or semi-literate people.

It is interesting to note that the transfer of certain responsibilities to private enterprise and to local authorities has deprived the national government of certain instruments that might have been helpful in implementing its own policies. This, of course, is not the case for the pre-entry tests, which are the sole responsibility of the national government. In the post-entry tests, however, we observe a discrepancy between the intentions of the national government, laid down in various pieces of legislation, and their implementation at the local level. In our study the city of Enschede served as an example of this, but it certainly does not stand alone.

Difficult to establish long-term effects on integration trajectories

Post-entry policies of civic integration have existed for a considerable time now and several studies have been carried out to assess participation in the courses and success rates in the final tests. In the late 1990s the then new policy suffered from various implementation problems, causing high drop-out and low success rates. Gradually this situation improved, but the introduction of the new law in 2007 as well as the long period of uncertainty that preceded it, again limited the policy's effectiveness. In recent years, participation rates in the post-entry tests have gone up, but it is still too early to say how many of those eligible have actually passed the test successfully within the required maximum period of 3½ years. A great majority of candidates for the test actually do pass, but available data indicate that only 15 per cent of all potential candidates do so within the first one-and-a-half year (SCP 2010). Overall, newly arrived migrants ('newcomers') tend to obtain better results than migrants

with long residence records ('oldcomers'). A reason for this might be that new arrivals tend to be younger and better educated than members of the established migrant communities.

More important even is to assess the impact of post-entry courses and tests on the actual integration process of migrants. From the little evidence that exists on this we may conclude that there are some positive effects, though these effects are modest. Recent studies of post-entry programs reveal that their immediate effect is that many migrants indeed find a job after having passed the test. However, another recent study suggests that these effects only have a limited sustainability (Rekenkamer Den Haag, 2010). Research on this is methodologically complex, because the mandatory nature of participation makes it difficult to define an appropriate control group. This may be solved, at least partly, by the current plans of the government to develop a data base that allows following cohorts of migrants for a longer period. It is remarkable is that effects of civic integration policies on socio-cultural integration are not being monitored. This underlines our earlier observation that this aspect of the Dutch approach has much less primacy than is often claimed.

The first studies on the effects of the pre-entry tests, as well as our interviews and the focus groups we have held with migrants who had taken these pre-entry test, provide strong evidence that the integration effects of these tests are very limited at best. The 'Basic Knowledge of Life' test is perceived by migrants as strongly ritualistic, which may explain the very high pass rates. However, it has been observed by involved policy actors as by participants in the pre-entry courses themselves, that the pre-entry tests do have a positive effect on the degree of preparation and motivation of the migrant when preparing for migration to the Netherlands. Rather than language or culture, it is primarily the more practical knowledge of Dutch institutions that appears valued in practice.

Impact on immigration

Since the introduction of the pre-entry tests in 2006 considerable changes have occurred in migration to the Netherlands, particularly in migration for family reasons. The percentage of women amongst the applicants for residence permits has gone up. This is remarkable, since, as we have just seen, the pre-entry measures were primarily targeted at women, who were believed to be insufficiently emancipated for a proper functioning in Dutch society. The level of education of applicants for residence permits from countries where the test is mandatory has also gone up, while their average age has gone down. This is more logical than it may seem, because there is a negative correlation between educational level and age: younger applicants tend to be better educated than older ones. Overall, there has been a drop in the number of applications, but this drop has been more substantial for some countries (e.g. Ghana, Morocco) than for others (e.g. Turkey). The most recent data, however, point at a renewed upsurge in the number of applicants for family migration, also from countries that initially had been most strongly affected by the pre-entry integration measures. This is not a real surprise; we know from previous cases that measures that restrict immigration often lead to postponement of plans rather than to their complete abandonment.

Nevertheless, statistical data and research outcomes point at a dramatic drop in the percentage of people living in the Netherlands who directly recruit their spouses in Turkey or Morocco, the two countries from which the most sizeable immigrant communities affected by the pre-entry tests originate. In the early 2000s this percentage stood around 70, less than a decade later it hovered around fifteen. It will be difficult to deny that the introduction of the pre-entry test, in combination with a number of other measures aimed at making family migration stricter, has provoked this drop. The fact, however, that the second generation is

gradually becoming less oriented towards the home country of their parents - sometimes even their grandparents - may also help explain the decrease.

There are indications that some people resident in the Netherlands, both native Dutch people and persons with an immigrant background, have been successful in circumventing the stricter immigration rules for spouses by settling temporarily in another EU-country where rules are less strict, particularly in neighbouring Belgium or Germany. Research evidence exists that this has happened in Denmark, where similarly strict rules have encouraged thousands of Danes wishing to marry a foreign partner to move to Malmö or to another place in Southern Sweden. In the Dutch case, however, this seems to have occurred on a limited scale only.

Finally, another unexpected outcome of the pre-entry tests has been the astonishingly high pass rates of those taking the test. It can be argued that the test is not too difficult, and some of our respondents have admitted that a good memory can be very helpful. One could also argue that the high costs of the tests lead to a strong self-selection: only those candidates who are really confident that their level is adequate will go for it. In any case, the idea that the test would be a first incentive for illiterate or semi-literate people to familiarise themselves with Dutch language and culture before actually moving there, has proved to be rather erroneous. In fact, many people who take the test are well educated and, given the fluency with which certain candidates already speak Dutch, it can be assumed that they have spent some time in the Netherlands before, e.g. as a tourist or possibly as an undocumented migrant.

On the basis of our research we may conclude that the recent pre-entry measures have reshaped migration flows to the Netherlands, particularly those of family migrants. There is little evidence that the pre-entry tests actually constitute a first step toward integration of newcomers who otherwise would have had insufficient opportunities. This was a major reason why the Dutch government had introduced these tests. The government has always denied that pre-entry tests were meant to curtail family migration. Arguably, such an objective could constitute a challenge to European regulations governing family migration. Nevertheless, since the pre-entry tests and other new conditions have been introduced, a clear shift has occurred in the nature of family migration and in the characteristics of family migrants. A direct causal relationship, however, is difficult to prove, but it does seem justified to conclude that, so far, the introduction of pre-entry tests has had a stronger impact on the nature of immigration to the Netherlands than on the process of integration as it takes place after settlement in the country.

Appendix: methodological observations

This research involved a combination of the following methods:

- **Review of secondary literature.** In order to get a better view of the development of Dutch civic integration policies, a review was made of available secondary literature on this topic.
- **Analysis of policy evaluations.** A number of research agencies has been very active in producing evaluation studies and monitoring reports on pre- and post-entry measures. This includes amongst others the reports from RegioPlan, Significant and B&A. These reports are publicly available.
- **Analysis of parliamentary documents and records.** Especially for the reconstruction of formal policy goals and measures and for the analysis of political discourse, use has been made of the (digitally available) archives of the Second Chamber of Parliament. This includes both the analysis of parliamentary documents, but also records of parliamentary hearings on these documents.
- **Analysis of media discourse.** For the reconstruction of public discourses on civic integration policies, an analysis has been made of media records of two leading Dutch newspapers, the Volkskrant and the NRC Handelsblad. A quantitative analysis was made of the scale of attention to civic integration. In addition, a qualitative analysis was made of the content of a selection from the articles on civic integration policies in these newspapers.
- **Focus groups and interviews.** On a number of elements on which this research focuses, the preceding methods and sources were insufficient. Therefore, on specific points additional methods have been used. Firstly, a number of focus groups were held; one with experts (in total 6 participants), and several with small groups of migrants that completed a pre-entry test before coming to the Netherlands.

Focus group (8-12-2010) with:

- Researcher from RegioPlan
- Researchers (2) from Radboud University
- Member of Dutch organization for refugees
- Policymakers (2) from the City of Enschede

Focus groups with migrants who have previously completed a pre-entry test

- At locations of Nieuwland (profile: Work) and Ooverbruggen (profile; education), both in the City of Rotterdam.
- In total 10 participants

In addition, a number of interviews was held (in total a number of 21) with experts, representatives from NGO's, policy-makers from relevant departments and with a number of parliamentarians who had been involved in the political discourse on civic integration policies.

- Research manager Regioplan, 10-8-2010.
- Chair of the national consultative body for minorities (LOM), 28-9-2010.
- Researcher of the Free University of Amsterdam, 11-8-2010.
- Former policymaker at Department of Justice, 27-8-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice A, 24-8-2010

- Policymaker at Department of Justice B, 30-9-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice C, 7-10-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice, D, 12-10-2010.
- Policymaker at Department of Justice, E, 12-10-2010.
- Policymaker at Home Affairs Department A, 14-10-2010
- Policymaker at Home Affairs Department B, 14-10-2010
- Former policymaker at Home Affairs Department A, 24-8-2010
- Former policymaker at Home Affairs Department B, 6-10-2010
- Former chair of Aliens Affairs Committee, 14-9-2010
- Researcher from Social and Cultural Planning Office, 13-10-2010.
- Former Minister of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration (Ms. Vogelaar), 7-12-2010.
- Former Minister of Immigration and Integration (Ms. Verdonk), 15-12-2010.
- Member of Parliament for the Christian Democrat Party (Ms. Sterk), 24-11-2010.
- Member of Parliament for the Social Democrat Party (Mr. Dijsselbloem, PvdA), 19-01-2011.

Literature

- Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken (2010). Briefadvies huwelijks- en gezinsmigratie. ACVZ/ADV/2010/004
- B&A Consulting (2010), *Inburgeren en participeren. Verslag van vier kwalitatieve casestudies naar de effecten van inburgering op participatie*. The Hague.
- Research Monitoring Committee Evaluatie WIB (2009) Evaluatie Wet Inburgering Buitenland: Centrale bevindingen en conclusies. Den Haag.
- Bonjour, S. (2009). Grens en gezin. Beleidsvorming inzake gezinsmigratie in Nederland, 1955-2005. Amsterdam: AUP.
- Committee Franssen (2004). Inburgering getoetst. Advies over het niveau van het inburgeringsexamen in het buitenland.
- Dagevos, J. & A. Odé (2010). Vijf gemeenten over inburgering. In: Odé e.a. (Red.), *Jaarboek Minderheden*. Den Haag: SDU.
- Dagevos, J. (2010). De waarde van taal. In: Odé e.a. (Red.), *Jaarboek Minderheden*. Den Haag: SDU.
- De Vries, K.M. (2006). Het Nieuwe Nederlandse Inburgeringsstelsel. *Migrantenrecht*, nr. 8: 272-282.
- Gemeente Enschede (2008), *Inburgeringsagenda Enschede. Inburgering, educatie en reïntegratie als vliegwiel voor participatie*.
- Gemeente Enschede (2008), *Integratie en burgerschap. visie op een multicultureel Enschede*.
- Human Rights Watch (2008). *The Netherlands: Discrimination in the Name of Integration. Migrants' Rights under the Integration Abroad Act*.
- IBO (2002). *Perspectief op integratie. Naar doelmatigheid van het inburgeringsbeleid*. Den Haag.
- Kirk, K. (2010). *Gendered perspective on Dutch civic integration policies*. PhD Thesis, Queens University Belfast.
- Lodder, G.G.S. (2009). *Juridische Aspecten van de Wet Inburgering Buitenland*. Onderzoek uitgevoerd in opdracht van het ministerie van VROM. Leiden, Universiteit Leiden.
- Lucassen, L. and Penninx, R. (1995). *Nieuwkomers, nakomers, Nederlanders. Immigranten in Nederland 1550-1994*. Amsterdam; Het Spinhuis.
- Odé, A. en K. de Vries (2010). De geschiedenis van inburgering in Nederland. In: Odé e.a. (Red.), *Jaarboek Minderheden*. Den Haag: SDU.
- Plinke, M. (2010), *Integration Buddies in Enschede: an Evaluation*. Ba. Thesis European Studies, School of Management and government, University of Twente.
- Prins, B. & S. Saharso (2008), 'In the spotlight. A blessing and a curse for immigrant women in the Netherlands.' in special issue *Ethnicities* 8 (3), pp. 365-384.
- PwC Consulting & Regioplan (2002). *Evaluatie van de wet inburgering nieuwkomers*. Amsterdam.
- Regioplan (2009). *De Wet Inburgering Buitenland. Een onderzoek naar de werking, de resultaten en de eerste effecten*. Den Haag: Regioplan.
- Rekenkamer Den Haag (2009). *Werk maken van inburgering. Onderzoek naar resultaten inburgeringsbeleid*. Rekenkamer Den Haag.

- Scholten, P. (2010). Framing immigrant integration. Dutch research-policy dialogues in comparative perspective. Amsterdam: AUP.
- Seveker, M., Svensson, J. & Thränhardt, D. (2008), *Migranten integreren. hoe kunnen we integratie optimaliseren? Innovatieve concepten voor bevordering van integratie in Münster en Enschede*. Enschede/Münster: gemeente Enschede, ROC van Twente, Universiteit Twente, Stadt Münster.
- Significant (2010). Evaluatierapport Inburgering in Nederland. Barneveld: Significant.
- Significant (2010). Monitor inburgeringsexamen buitenland. Barneveld: Significant.
- Significant (2010). Volgstelsel inburgering, effect van inburgering op participatie. Pilotonderzoek, eindrapportage. Barneveld: Significant.
- Significant. Organisatiebureau Op Eigen wijze (2010), *Evaluatierapport Inburgering in Nederland*. Barneveld.
- Spijkerboer, T. (2007). Zeker Weten. Inburgering en de fundamenteën van het Nederlandse politieke bestel. The Hague: SDU.
- Strik (2010)
- Svensson, J., Michalowski, I. & Seveker, M. (2008), 'Ervaringen met de indicatorenmethodiek in een vergelijkende evaluatie van lokaal integratiebeleid.' *Migrantenstudies* (4): 250-272.
- Taskforce Inburgering (2002). Meer dan een eerste stap, eindadvies van de Taskforce Inburgering aan de rijksoverheid. Den Haag.
- Triarii (2009) Randvoorwaarden Niveau A1 Inburgeringsexamen Buitenland. Den Haag.
- Velde, A. van der (2009), nieuwe aanpak; verbeterde inburgering? Een analyse van het inburgeringsbeleid met en zonder loodsen bij de gemeente Enschede. Master thesis Public Administration, School of Management and Government, University of Twente.
- VNG, Association of Dutch Municipalities (2007). Ontwikkeling VNG0visie integratie 2007-2017. Quick scan onder 11 gemeenten. VNG: Den Haag.
- WODC, Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (2009). Internationale gezinsvorming begrensd? Een evaluatie van de verhoging van de inkomens- en leeftijdseis bij migratie van buitenlandse partners naar Nederland. The Hague, WODC, Cahier 2009-4.