



Governing Urban Diversity: Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today's Hyper-diversified Cities

Urban Policies on Diversity in Rotterdam, The Netherlands

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Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Overview of political system and governance structure for diversity in Rotterdam	4
2.1 <i>The political system and governance structure for urban diversity policy</i>	4
2.2 <i>Key shifts in national approaches to policy over migration, citizenship and diversity</i>	7
3. Policy strategies on diversity in Rotterdam	10
3.1 <i>Dominant governmental discourses of urban policy and diversity</i>	12
3.2 <i>Non-governmental views on diversity policy</i>	27
4. Conclusions	30
References.....	32
Appendix I. List of policy actors interviewed.....	35
Appendix II. List of policy documents analysed.....	36
Appendix III. Analysis of policy documents	37

1. Introduction

This report examines the current approaches in policies with respect to diversity for the city of Rotterdam, the Netherlands. As a background, we first provide an overview of the national political system and the governance structure for diversity in Rotterdam. We examine which actors - both governmental and non-governmental and at multiple levels of scale - are involved in the governance of diversity in Rotterdam. In addition, we give a short outline of key shifts in national policy discourses on diversity, citizenship and in-migration since the 1980s. Second, we analyse dominant governmental discourses on urban policy and diversity. Therefore, we examine how diversity is addressed in the most significant documents that deal with diversity in Rotterdam. On the basis of qualitative interviews, we also examine how governmental policy actors in the city understand the policies. Third, we also examine non-governmental views on diversity policy. Amongst others, we identify the importance of diversity as a policy issue, and the meaning, objectives and targets of the relevant policies, in different important fields, such as integration, housing, education, and work.

We find that present policy in Rotterdam pays *little attention to diversity*, that diversity is mostly understood as a matter of *ethnicity*, and that it is seen as a *problem* rather than an asset. Several policy actors have expressed their concern about the *mainstream*¹ nature of the local policies pursued by the municipality as they believe that it runs the risk of overlooking the specific needs of vulnerable social groups. Several examined policies were found to be rooted in an *assimilationist discourse*: the policies are aimed at all Rotterdammers but an extra effort is asked from newcomers to the city and those belonging to – what the municipality calls in its report on integration (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2011, p. 2) – ‘*the slow city*’² to catch up with the mainstream which seems to be the existing residents in the ‘*fast city*’. When diversity is discussed as an asset it is seen as an *economic* quality. Improving *social mobility* of residents is often used as a tool to generate such economic success. Policy pays little attention to *social cohesion*, let alone to facilitating *encounters* between diverse groups. Several policy actors have expressed their disappointment with the absence of a discussion on how to deal with diversity socially and speak of a ‘*taboo*’. The findings should be understood in the light of discourse shifts on the matter of diversity in Rotterdam and in national policies from pluralism and integrationism at the end of the 1990s to assimilationism today.

2. Overview of political system and governance structure for diversity in Rotterdam

2.1 The political system and governance structure for urban diversity policy

The Dutch three-tier government structure

The Netherlands is administered by three levels of government: the central government; twelve provinces; and 408 municipalities. In addition, several municipalities form metropolitan regions. Rotterdam is part of the province of South Holland and three urban regions in the Netherlands: the Randstad (a conurbation of urban agglomerations), the Metropolitan region Rotterdam-The Hague and the Urban Region Rotterdam (comprising 15 municipalities, including Rotterdam).

¹ By mainstream policy we mean that a policy is meant to target *all citizens* in the city rather than a specific group.

² In the policy document *Doing More: Rotterdammers in Action. Integration Strategy* the fast city is defined as the city of the successful entrepreneurs, the cultural sector, the high educated, ICT, design, and the advanced harbour industry, while the slow city is the city of poverty and stagnation, of the beneficiaries, the low educated, and the isolated population groups.

The central government sets out a policy framework that other government bodies abide to. It also collects and redistributes the state budgets (Korthals Altes, 2002). Through *special purpose grants* the central government can control municipal policy strategies (Tan-Kok, 2010). Nevertheless, the central government devolves the implementation of significant parts of its policy agenda to municipalities. Based on the policy agenda of the central government, the national ministries develop a policy framework for the provinces and municipalities. In the case of Rotterdam, the provinces and metropolitan region are not significantly involved in the governance of urban diversity. The latter is a concern of the municipality. Social policy development, implementation and finance are increasingly being devolved to municipalities (URBED & Van Hoek, 2008).

Government in the city of Rotterdam

In Dutch cities, and also in Rotterdam, the mayor and vice-mayors form the main executive body. In the Netherlands, the mayor is not elected, but appointed by the government. The mayor is chairing the council of mayor and vice-mayors, who are recruited from the parties of the ruling coalition. This council is complemented and monitored by the city council. The mayor is responsible for public order and safety. The vice-mayors are accountable for all other policy matters (URBED & Van Hoek, 2009), including citizenship, citizen participation, education, housing, urban planning, and work and income. Rotterdam is divided into 14 municipal districts. Based on the policy agenda of ruling parties, the municipal departments set out a policy framework for the municipal districts, which in turn gives substance to e.g. policies on urban diversity.

It should be noted that this governance model in Rotterdam will change as of 2014. At the start of 2013, a national government bill was passed that abolishes city districts arguing that they have developed an undesirable level of autonomy (Eerste Kamer, n.d). In response, Rotterdam will change its 'districts' into 'area committees' as of 2014. Although the latter will cover the same geographical areas, they differ from the former in at least two significant ways. First, while the district governments were composed of civil servants, in area committees 'ordinary' citizens can become members as well. Second, the coordination and implementation of policies at the district level will be scaled up to the municipal level. While districts are responsible for the implementation of various policies, area committees will develop policy under the guidance of the municipal departments. The committees will develop an Area Plan that they call *Doelen Inspanningen Netwerk* (Targets Efforts Network). The municipal departments will coordinate (local) urban policy and will have the final decision-making power.

The role of non-governmental actors in the governance of Rotterdam

The municipality of Rotterdam traditionally maintains warm relationships with non-governmental actors. At present, governing the city through public-private partnerships is the official policy strategy of the municipality. For policies on matters of diversity, the elected *city government* sets out a general policy agenda on the base of which *municipal departments* (as of 2014 area committees) develop policy. During this process the departments can (but are not obliged to) consult non-governmental stakeholders (e.g. foundations, community organisations, and researchers). The degree to which policy is developed interactively differs for each department and policy document. As of 2014, the area committees will be largely responsible for the *implementation* of urban policy. Like the districts, the area committees will work in a network of local governmental and non-governmental actors such as the police, schools, housing associations, and local businesses.

Key actors in Dutch urban diversity policy

Relevant government actors

'Diversity' is not a theme that is named as such in Dutch national policy. However, it is indirectly addressed in the policy agendas of various Ministries (see Figure 1). Before 2013, the Ministry of Internal Affairs was the most important actor regarding migration, citizenship and diversity. It was responsible for both the *social* management as well as the *spatial* planning for diversity. It developed policy frameworks and funded policy programmes on integration and 'good' citizenship. Also, it administered the *Common Integrated Approach Programme (CIAP)*, which aimed to tune the integration approaches of the central government and municipalities. As for the spatial dimension, the ministry developed policy on access to housing, and the social and economic wellbeing of neighbourhoods. As of 2013, the *social* domain has shifted to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The *spatial* domain remains the responsibility of Internal Affairs. Since 2010, the national government is cutting back heavily on subsidies for organisations that represent (ethnic) minority groups at the national level, and subsidies for integration programmes at the national and local level (National Government Budget, 2014). A national naturalisation programme remains, as well as subsidies for municipalities to establish facilities that counter discrimination and encourage the emancipation of homosexuals and women.

Although Rotterdam has participated in CIAP, diversity is not mentioned frequently in its urban policy. Diversity is indirectly addressed in the working fields of various municipal departments (Figure 1). The Department of Social Affairs is an important actor for diversity policy and discourses in Rotterdam. It develops and coordinates policy on citizenship and integration.

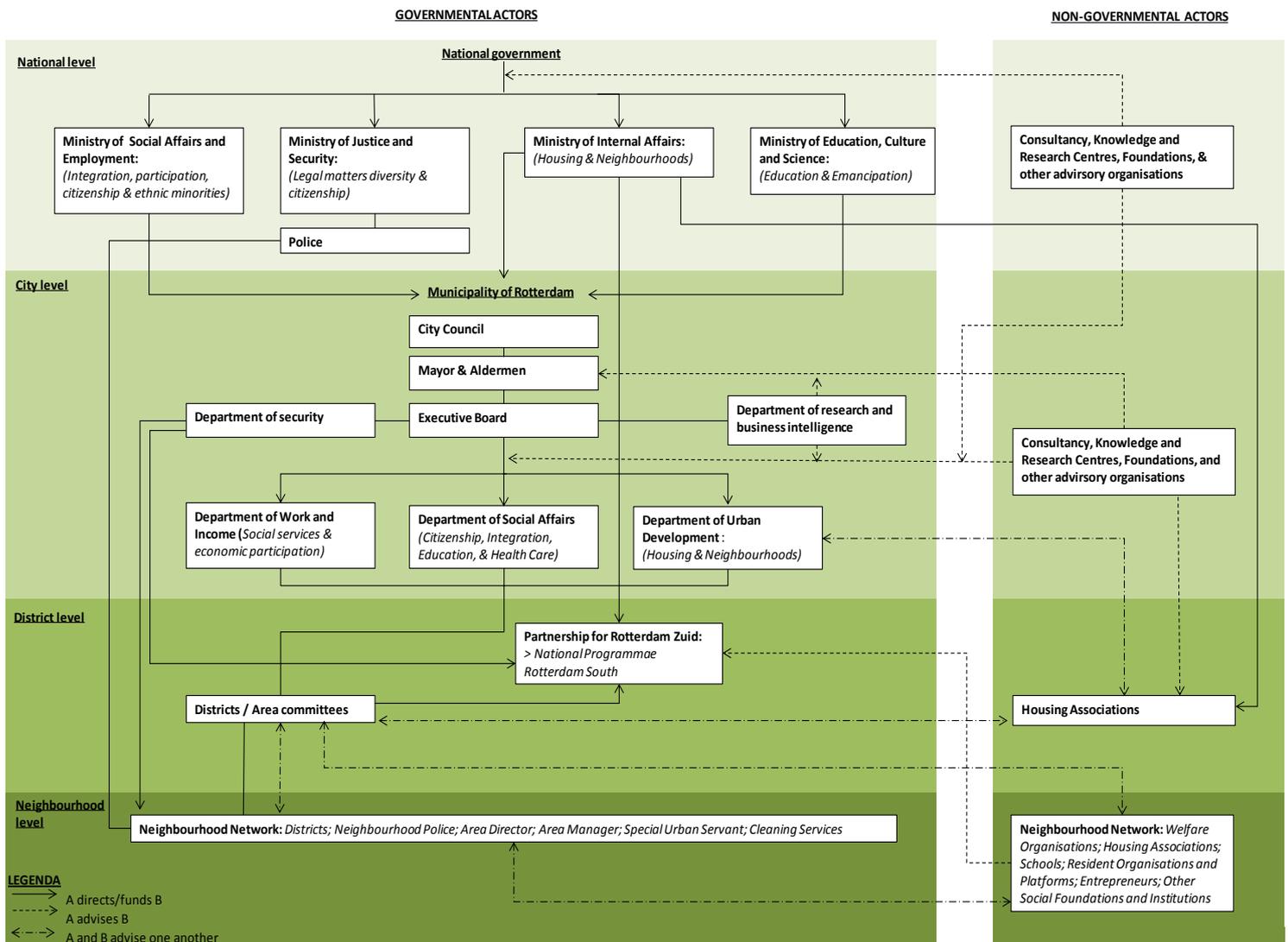
Relevant non-governmental actors

The Netherlands is home to more than 1500 migrant organisations that vary in size, age, target groups, and activities (Van Heelsum, 2004). An important institution representing the interests of ethnic minorities is the research and knowledge centre *FORUM Institute for Multicultural Issues*. Until 2013, FORUM for instance directed CIAP together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. At the regional level, RADAR – research, advice and knowledge institute operating against discrimination – is a key player.

Rotterdam is home to multiple organisations that represent the interests of migrants. An influential one is the Platform Foreigners Rotterdam, an umbrella organisation for 55 migrant self-organisations. Although, recently, the number and power of these organisations is declining significantly due to reductions in municipal subsidies. In 2012, the Rotterdam municipality created four knowledge centres: one with a focus on '*diversity*', the others on '*emancipation of women*', the '*emancipation of homosexuals*', and the '*anti-discrimination*'. These centres act as umbrella organisations for the multitude of organisations on these topics in the city. The knowledge centres collaborate with various non-governmental and governmental actors to collect and share knowledge on these four topics.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the key governmental and non-governmental actors at multiple levels of scale and their relations in the governance of diversity in Rotterdam.

Figure 1. Map of key actors in the governance of diversity in Rotterdam



2.2 Key shifts in national approaches to policy over migration, citizenship and diversity

In the Dutch national policy context, the concept of diversity is related to matters of citizenship, in-migration and ethnic minorities. Based on studies of Bruquetas-Callejo et al. (2011); Schinkel, (2007; 2008); Scholten (2007; 2011); Van der Brug et al. (2009); and Vasta (2007) on the construction and evolution of Dutch policy discourses on these themes, this chapter gives a brief overview of key discourse shifts in national diversity and integration policy since the 1980s. To provide a background, a brief overview is given of the Dutch post-war immigration history first.

Post-war immigration trends in the Netherlands

Just after the Second World War, the Dutch government stated that the Netherlands should not be a country of immigration. In the 1950s, the government even stimulated emigration. Nevertheless, between the 1960s and 2004 immigration flows have constantly exceeded emigration flows in the Netherlands (Nicolaas & Sprangers, 2006). From the Second World War until well into the 1990s, people from the former colonies - the Dutch-Indies, Moluccan Islands, Surinam, Aruba, and the Antilles - migrated to the Netherlands. In the 1960s and 1970s, the

government recruited guest workers from Southern European countries and (later) Turkey and Morocco. While the Southern Europeans mostly returned to their home countries, the Turks and Moroccans mostly settled in the Netherlands. From the 1970s onwards, Turkish and Moroccan migrants arrived in the context of family reunion and formation, albeit the numbers have been declining somewhat in the last decade. Since the 1980s, the Netherlands has experienced an inflow of refugees from e.g. Vietnam, the Horn of Africa, and the Middle East. Recently, there has been an inflow of migrants from Western countries, including Middle- and Eastern European countries, such as Poland, Rumania and Bulgaria.

National policy discourses on immigration and integration since the 1980s

The construction of the first Dutch integration policy in the late 1970s

Before the 1970s, the Netherlands had *no policy* for newcomers let alone integration policy. Migrants were seen as transient and they were not regarded full citizens. A few *guest worker policies* facilitated temporary accommodation and return services. The absence of equal rights compared to native citizens differentiated them from society (Scholten, 2007). Various researchers including Van der Brug et al. (2009) and Vasta (2007) understand this *differentialist* model of integration through the Dutch tradition of ‘Pillarism’ that entails the formation of separate group identities – Catholic and Protestant - and the emancipation within detached groups.

In the late 1970s, social tensions (e.g. reflected in riots in Rotterdam) as well as appeals of scientists such as Han Entzinger (1975) raised awareness of the fact that immigration was not as temporary as until then the state had thought. A report of the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) *Ethnic Minorities* (1979) catalysed the first integration policy in the Netherlands: the *Ethnic Minorities Policy* of 1983 (Scholten, 2011). This policy called for the recognition of the permanent stay of migrant groups and more comprehensive measures to accommodate these groups.

Pluralism in the 1980s

The Ethnic Minorities Policy in the 1980s was *pluralist* in nature. Its rationale was that cultural minority groups with a low socio-economic status should receive special attention from the state to prevent their marginalisation. Thus, individual migrant groups such as the ‘Surinamese’, and ‘Moroccan’ were first named under the common denominator *ethnic minorities* (Scholten, 2007). Ethnic minorities were granted active and passive voting rights (Bruquetas-Callejo et al., 2011). Ethnic minorities were allowed to maintain their own cultural practices. Developing a distinctive cultural identity was thought to stimulate socio-economic emancipation.

The Ethnic Minorities Policy initiated a wide range of policy initiatives in multiple domains, including anti-discrimination law and voting rights for immigrants in the legal domain; policy for housing and education, and reducing unemployment rates among migrants in the socio-economic domain; and funding for cultural institutions to preserve migrant cultures, religions, and language in the cultural domain (e.g. Vasta, 2007). The Ministry of Internal Affairs coordinated the policy. At the end of the 1980s, the Ethnic Minorities Policy was heavily criticised both in public debates and by researchers. The 1989 advisory report of the WRR played a key role in facilitating the shift in Dutch integration policy towards socio-economic *integration* in the 1990s (Bruquetas-Callejo et al., 2011). The WRR argued that under the Ethnic Minorities Policy too little progress was made in labour market participation and educational performances of ethnic minorities. Also, a public speech of Frits Bolkestein, leader of the Liberal Party, on the dangers of Islam for the integration of migrants in society is thought to have played an influential role. The Dutch government held

on to the idea that immigration was temporary. Laws were developed to prevent further immigration.

Integration in the 1990s and the rise of area-based policies

In 1994, the *integrationist* policy *Contourennota Integration Policy Ethnic Minorities* was launched. It was different from the previous policy in at least three ways: it no longer focused on groups but on individuals; it emphasised the individual ‘civic’ responsibility of migrants to participate in society; and it no longer focused on socio-cultural but on socio-economic participation (Bruquetas-Callejo et al., 2011). Ethnic minorities were no longer mentioned as the target of the policy. Still, general measures, e.g. to enhance labour market participation, were hoped to reach ethnic minorities. Under this policy framework, the *Dutch Integration Law* was launched in 1998. Under this law, civic *integration* courses (e.g. language courses) – first initiated by local governments – were introduced to enhance the socio-economic compatibility of newcomers (Scholten, 2007).

In addition, in the 1990s, integration policies first took the form of area-based policies rather than group-based policies. Precipitated by the four largest cities in the Netherlands (including Rotterdam) a *Big Cities Policy* was launched in 1994 that aimed to tackle the complexity of spatial, social and economic problems that are characteristic for many large cities. These problems included segregation, poor housing, poverty and unemployment (Van Kempen, 2000). Next to the Big Cities Policy various policy programmes were launched for deprived neighbourhoods in the 1990s and 2000s, such as the *Powerful Neighbourhoods* (Krachtwijken) programme. These policies share an area-based approach and integrated measures including social, economic and physical restructuring. Accommodating and reflecting the shift from group-based to area-based policies in the 1990s, a Minister for Urban Policy was appointed in the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1998. As the target neighbourhoods of area-based policy programmes often consist of high concentrations of groups with a low socio-economic status and ethnic minority groups, Bruquetas-Callejo et al. (2011) amongst others argue that they are essentially integration policies as well.

A complex of events at the turn of the millennium, including a publication of a newspaper article by Paul Scheffer (2000) on ‘*the failure of the multicultural society*’, the growing popularity of the populist politician Pim Fortuyn, and several violent acts committed by migrants including the murder of film producer Theo van Gogh, contributed to a sense policy failure with respect to integration (Bruquetas-Callejo, 2011). In 2004, a parliamentary research committee was installed to examine this apparent policy failure. It concluded that integration actually had been relatively successful (Blok Committee, 2004). Policy makers found this unsatisfactory and decided to develop stricter integration policies anyway.

Assimilation tendencies in the 2000s

The disappointment with integrationist policy evolved into the 2002 policy *Integration New Style* that builds on policy in the 1990s in terms of its expectations of ‘self-responsibility’ and ‘good citizenship’ of migrants. Yet, different from the previous policy, Integration New Style moves away from mere socio-economic integration towards a focus on bridging socio-cultural distances between migrants and ‘mainstream society’. Newcomers were expected to adjust to ‘the’ mainstream Dutch culture, reflecting an *assimilation discourse*. Integration has become a substitute for being a (good) citizen (Schinkel, 2007). Also, immigration and integration policies have become stricter. Immigration flows are actively prevented (even more than during the 1990s). Both Scholten (2007) and Bruquetas-Callejo (2011) discuss how after the turn of the millennium immigration and integration discourses in policy become more closely linked. For instance, through a mathematical model Integration New Style aims to adjust the number of immigrants to

the extent in which immigrants can effectively integrate in society, both socio-economically and socio-culturally (Scholten, 2007). For this purpose, migrant selection is justified. Furthermore, since 2004, all migrants are obliged to pass an integration exam in order to apply for Dutch citizenship. The integration exam is supposed to learn newcomers about socio-economic and cultural aspects of 'the' Dutch society. The coupling of immigration and integration discourses is also embedded institutionally, in the change of integration policy coordination from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministry of Justice.

According to Schinkel (2007) the recent integration policy *Integration Memorandum 2007-2011* by a new relative left-wing minister has been understood as a shift away from the focus on socio-cultural assimilation to a focus on socio-economic assimilation. Still, illustrated by the slogan *'Make Sure You Fit In!'*, the discourse of the Memorandum remains assimilationist in nature. 'Active citizenship' and 'own responsibility' remain key values in the Memorandum.

Conclusions

Studies on the evolution of policy discourses on immigration and integration in the Netherlands show a change from a pluralist paradigm in the 1980s, in which cultural differences are appraised, towards the present assimilationist paradigm in which cultural differences are regarded problematic. During this shift, immigration has increasingly become regulated. In Table 1, an overview is provided by Scholten (2011) of the discussed different paradigm shifts in Dutch immigration and integration policy, as discussed above.

Table 1. The evolution of Dutch integration policy paradigms since the late 1970s

	Guest worker policy < 1978	Pluralist policy 1978-1994	Integrationist policy 1994-2003	Assimilationist policy >2003
<i>Terminology</i>	Integration with retention of identity	Mutual adaptation in a multicultural society	Integration, Active citizenship	Adaptation, 'Common citizenship'
<i>Social classification</i>	Immigrant groups defined by national origin and framed as temporary guests	Ethnic or cultural minorities characterised by socio-economic and socio-cultural problems	'Citizens' or 'Foreign', individual members of specific minority groups	Immigrants defined as policy targets because of social-cultural differences
<i>Causal stories</i>	Social-economic participation and retention of social-cultural identity	Social-cultural emancipation as a condition for social-economic participation	Social-economic participation as a condition for social-cultural emancipation	Social-cultural differences as obstacle to integration
<i>Normative perspective</i>	The Netherlands should not be a country of immigration	The Netherlands as an open, multi-cultural society	Civic participation in a de-facto multicultural society	Preservation of national identity and social cohesion

Source: adapted from Scholten (2011)

3. Policy strategies on diversity in Rotterdam

In line with discourse shifts in national policy on citizenship, migration and diversity, Rotterdam started with the so-called *Ethnic Minorities Policy* in the 1980s and the *Facet Policy* in the 1990s. Both policies targeted specific groups. The latter focused on non-ethnic minority groups as well. The focus on specific (ethnic) groups changed in the 1990s, when policies started to become more

mainstreamed. From 1998 to 2002, Rotterdam had a cross-cutting³ diversity policy called *The Multi-coloured City*. The policy was based on a pluralist discourse. Diversity was defined along socio-cultural lines and it was seen as a quality and a matter that concerns all citizens (groups) and employers in the city. In 2001, Rotterdam openly celebrated cultural diversity as a Cultural Capital of Europe. In 2002, this approach came to an abrupt end when after decades of rule by the Labour Party the populist party Liveable Rotterdam (Leefbaar Rotterdam) came to power. In line with national discourses on diversity at that time, this party aimed to achieve socio-cultural assimilation of newcomers, particularly Muslims. Ethnic and religious differences were framed as a safety threat for the city. So-called *Islam debates* organised by Liveable Rotterdam had a polarising effect. Liveable Rotterdam gave voice to existing discontent among a significant part of the population. Yet, by doing so, diversity was framed as a problem and a matter of ethnic and religious divides. Since 2006, the city is governed by the Labour Party again, but they never (re-)introduced the kind of diversity policies which were run prior to 2002⁴. How does the city of Rotterdam deal with growing diversity today?

Qualitative interviews were held with 10 governmental and 10 non-governmental policy actors on their experiences with present policy on diversity in Rotterdam (see Appendix I). In this chapter we first analyse governmental views on diversity policy. We examine 10 policy documents that interviewees identified as most influential for the governance of diversity in Rotterdam (see Appendices II and III for an overview). They fall under 7 policy areas (General Urban Policy; Citizenship and Integration; Housing; Work and Income; Safety; Education). In addition, we discuss how the interviewed governmental policy actors interpret the ways in which diversity is governed in the city. Second, we discuss how the interviewed non-governmental policy actors interpret this. The analysis of the policies and interviews is guided by eight research questions that are outlined in Box 1. We finish with conclusions and a discussion of the findings.

Box 1. Research questions for the analysis of current policies on diversity

1. Within what legal and policy frameworks does the relevant policy act?
2. Which actors are involved in the policy development and implementation?
3. How important is diversity in comparison with other policy topics in terms of budgets and human capital?
4. How is diversity defined, and is this a broad or narrow definition?
5. Is diversity understood as a problem, a neutral fact, or a quality?
6. Does the policy aim to foster social cohesion, social mobility, and/or economic performance?
7. Is the policy aimed at everyone, a specific group, and/or a specific area?
8. Does the policy call for equity or the redistribution of resources; diversity or the recognition of multiple voices; and/or places of encounter or the democratic liberalisation of diverse groups?

³ By cross-cutting policy we mean that the policy applies to all municipal departments rather than to one specific one.

⁴ This short history of diversity policy in Rotterdam is e.g. based on interviews with a former vice-mayor on Diversity Policy in Rotterdam; a municipal Programme Manager; a Policy Advisor at the RKCD; and an analysis of the Multi-Coloured City Policy.

3.1 Dominant governmental discourses of urban policy and diversity

Key policy documents

Rotterdam City Policy

At the start of their 4-year government term in 2010, the ruling coalition developed a City Plan and an associated Implementation Strategy that respectively define ‘what’ should be done and ‘how’. All policies that we will discuss here have been developed in line with the Rotterdam City Plan (CP) and Implementation Strategy (IS) 2010-2014.

City Plan and Implementation Strategy 2010-2014

While *social cohesion* and *safety* were central themes in previous City Plans, the main objective of this coalition is to strengthen the *economic performance* of Rotterdam. It intends to do so by encouraging talent development and entrepreneurship; creating an attractive, beautiful and safe city to live and work; and restructuring the municipal organisation. In the Netherlands, municipal responsibilities are increasing due to decentralisation processes while their budgets are declining. The total budget for the municipality of Rotterdam has decreased from €4.4 billion in 2010 to €3.8 billion in 2014. Thus, the City Plan argues: *'we will have to do more with less [money]'* (p.7). Most Rotterdammers will have to rely on *'their own talents'*; their abilities and social networks, so the Implementation Strategy says. The coalition will continue to support the utmost disadvantaged groups. In return, the coalition will encourage, and, when necessary, force all Rotterdammers to participate in the economy, paid or unpaid. Newcomers are asked to make extra efforts to participate in society. In addition, the municipality will cut back on its workforce, and ask professional and voluntary social partners (e.g. schools, health care institutions, and volunteers) for financial support, particularly regarding executive activities on (migrant) integration, participation and citizenship.

The City Strategy and Implementation Strategy both refer to diversity in relation to the intended diversification of the housing stock and business districts. Diversity is approached broadly, in terms of age, household composition, ethnic background and lifestyle. Both policies do not discuss how policy goals will deal with a diverse population. They merely refer to diversity as an economic asset: *'We will define the economic power of our city through the diversity of our population'* (IS, p.4). Note that it is not explained how policy is going to achieve this and that this is one of two sentences in both documents that mention diversity. *Social mobility* and *social cohesion* are framed as tools to enhance the city's *economic performance* in times of a declining municipality as reflected in the following phrases: *'Rotterdammers develop their talents [...] and hereby help the city make progress. [...] Less welfare state means more welfare society⁵: citizens rely more on one another'* (IS, p.4).

The City Plan and Implementation Strategy mention a wide variety of specific target groups for particular policy programmes and initiatives (e.g. people on benefits; elderly; students; families; drug addicts; women). At the same time, the coalition says it wants to invest in all Rotterdammers to support not only the economic success of the middle and upper class, but also the success of lower socio-economic groups. The policy is implemented through an area-based policy approach in which *'the wishes and needs in areas are regarded essential. The area-based approach entails an intensive and productive collaboration with the Districts'* (CP, p.5). The policies strive to *redistribute financial resources*, but do not solely focus on lower-income groups. It is recognised that not all Rotterdammers have the abilities to participate equally in society. Therefore, the municipality will take care of the utmost disadvantaged groups as national legislation requires them to do. Yet, the coalition wants to invest in higher-income groups and successful businesses as well. The policies do not address the social value of difference, or the right to be different, nor do they aim to generate *spaces of encounter* or *social cohesion*. Economic performance seems to be the major drive.

Citizenship and integration policies

The most specific reference to the governance of diversity in Rotterdam was found in the following two policy documents that address citizenship and integration. The Citizenship Policy was referred to most often by most interviewees.

⁵ Citizens rely more on one another when the state provides less welfare services. The coalition calls this a welfare society.

Citizenship Policy. Participation: Selecting Talent

In line with the current City Plan, the main objective of this policy is to stimulate citizens to participate in the urban economy (paid or unpaid). The policy seeks to enhance the abilities and opportunities of all Rotterdam citizens, self-reliant and less self-reliant, by stimulating them to develop their talents, and by reducing barriers to empowerment. The focus is on four fields of interest: the emancipation of women, gays and lesbians; counteracting discrimination; advocating diversity as an asset; and improving social competence and language skills through non-formal education. The second focus area (counteracting discrimination) is subject to the *Municipal Anti-Discrimination Facilities Law* that obliges municipalities to provide accessible facilities to report and get support in case of discrimination. The other focus areas are not covered by national law.

The policy follows up on the *Participation and Citizenship 2007-2010* policy, is funded from the city's budget for participation, and has suffered large budget cuts: from an annual €8 million in 2010 to €3.7 million in 2014. Funding is only available for activities that seek to share and generate knowledge on the four fields of interest mentioned above. The policy identifies three functions: *knowledge development and sharing*, *volunteers get active*, and *the citizen in the lift*. Four knowledge centres on the emancipation of women, the emancipation of homosexuals, anti-discrimination and diversity are funded to ensure that existing knowledge on these topics is safeguarded. Volunteer organisations and citizens can apply for funding for activities in the four focus areas if the activities ensure social mobility and are accessible to all. The municipality asks professional institutions for social services to take responsibility for carrying out citizenship activities. The policy is developed in association with the four knowledge centres.

The policy uses a comprehensive definition of diversity: '[...] *there is a wide variety of values, attitudes, culture, beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, knowledge, skills, and life experiences among Rotterdammers*' (p.8). Although a key goal of the policy is to generate a more positive understanding of diversity among citizens, it is acknowledged that diversity sometimes causes tensions. Also, the measures that the policy suggests to develop focus on tackling negative understandings of diversity (e.g. discrimination) rather than on extending positive developments. The policy outcomes seek to achieve the social mobility of individual citizens in order to improve the economic performance of (neighbourhoods in) the city. The policy wants to '*use the diversity optimally to create new ideas, insights and spaces to mobilise the talents of Rotterdammers maximally*' (p.8). Also references to social bonding are framed as a token for creating social mobility and economic performance: '*it is important that citizens do not only develop their own talents but that through interactions they can elicit the talents of other citizens and learn to use all existing talents in the city*' (p.8). The policy explicitly states to focus on all citizens of Rotterdam and can thus be classified as mainstream policy. The policy explicitly calls for equal opportunities for all citizens regardless of their background (e.g. it promotes emancipation and more positive attitudes towards homosexuality⁶), for the city-wide recognition of the diversity of the population, and for spaces of encounter between people with different backgrounds (e.g. through dialogues and work-collaborations).

Specific policies to create spaces of encounter between different population groups are *Opzoomer⁷ Mee* and the programme *City Initiatives*. *Opzoomer Mee* is focused at stimulating social cohesion by supporting joint activities in the street. Yearly, almost 1900 streets in Rotterdam participate in this project. Through municipal grants, *City Initiatives* enables citizens in Rotterdam to organise city-

⁶ In 2013 and 2014 €100,000 is spent on more positive attitudes towards homosexuals (half of which is specifically targeted for acceptance amongst ethnic minority groups). €83,000 is spent on the emancipation of women. In both cases, the funds are derived from the national government.

⁷ The term *Opzoomeren* originates from the *Opzoomerstreet* in Rotterdam, where in 1989 residents started an initiative to tidy up their street. It has become an official verb in the Dutch language.

wide activities that aim at encouraging social cohesion between residents in Rotterdam. The yearly budgets for Opzoomer Mee and City Initiatives are €933,000 and €250,000, respectively.

Doing More: Rotterdammers in Action. Integration Strategy

In 2009, the Dutch Minister of Integration, Van der Laan, published a policy letter in which he pleaded for a two-way integration process between newcomers and native Dutch residents, where newcomers were asked to make an extra effort, to adapt to '*Dutch society*'. The cross-cutting integration programme that we examine here was developed as a response to the request to the city board to translate the letter in the context of Rotterdam. With a fairly limited budget of approximately €150,000 of the city's budget for participation for four years, ending in 2014, the programme facilitates dialogues and activities on integration, social tensions, culture and language barriers between Rotterdammers with diverse backgrounds; to contribute to common visions on Rotterdam society; and to support new networks (e.g. between the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam on integration). It aims to do so in neighbourhoods as well as city-wide. The programme seeks to support existing activities and measures in the City Plan that contribute to integration. The content of the programme is partly influenced by the outcomes of consultation rounds with a variety of stakeholders (e.g. researchers, citizen organisations, and governmental actors). Although these stakeholders advised the municipality to '*move beyond the integration debates*' (p.3), like the City Plan, the programme shares minister Van der Laan's view that newcomers should assimilate culturally and economically into '*Dutch Society*'.

The policy defines diversity relatively narrowly, along two dimensions. First, there is '*a big diversity of background and lifestyles of population groups*' (p.2), which is mainly attributed to the continuing process of immigration. Second, the programme speaks of '*the fast and the slow city [...] [defined respectively as] the successful entrepreneurs, the cultural sector, the high educated, ICT, design, the advanced harbour industry [...] [and] the city of the beneficiaries, the low educated, the isolated population groups, of poverty and stagnation*' (p.2), first defined as such by Henk Oosterling, urban philosopher and Rotterdammer. The programme argues that more attention should be paid to commonalities between people to promote more positive experiences of diversity. Therefore, it proposes measures that foster more positive understandings of diversity. Yet, the programme mostly emphasises negative experiences of diversity as it concludes that '*overall we can speak of a heavy pressure on social structures in Rotterdam*'. In line with the City Plan, the programme aims to stimulate talent and entrepreneurship, the *social mobility* of citizens, so as to strengthen the *economy* of Rotterdam. For instance, the programme advises to facilitate work tours in which unemployed people of the slow city can meet employers of the fast city in the harbour. The programme claims to be mainstream, aimed at all Rotterdammers. Newcomers to a city experience difficulties on a number of matters including language barriers and knowledge of local institutional arrangements. Nevertheless, according to *Doing More* newcomers need not expect to be treated differently from existing residents as this would favour them above existing citizens:

We want equal opportunities for all Rotterdammers and we will counteract unbalanced approaches. We think this is also part of the constitutional law. The constitutional law forms a framework for the integration of new Rotterdammers. It creates order in society, entails rules, and offers protection and opportunities to all citizens' (p.4).

This phrase reflects the assimilationist ideas of citizenship that seem to underlie the programme. The Integration Programme calls for spaces of encounter between diverse social groups. For instance, it seeks to encourage discussion about social tensions, different cultures, and language barriers; encourage the development of common images or '*consensus*' on Rotterdam society; and foster new coalitions between diverse groups. The policy calls for equal treatment of Rotterdam

citizens under the law, but does not encourage socio-economic equity through the redistribution of resources. The policy recognises a certain degree of diversity in terms of ethnicity and socio-economic features. Yet, by arguing that citizens belonging to *'the slow city'* and *'newcomers'* should adapt to the fast city and cultures of existing residents, it can be questioned if the programme is really that open to diversity as it proclaims.

Housing Policy and the Rotterdam Law

The City Plan and Urban Vision 2030⁸ form a framework for housing policy in Rotterdam. In the Housing Vision (HV) 2007-2010 and Implementation Programme (IP) 2010-2014 this is elaborated in more detail. In addition, several areas in Rotterdam are subject to the controversial national *Law Exceptional Measures Metropolitan Problems* - popularly known as the *Rotterdam Law* since 2005.

Updated Housing Vision 2007-2010 and Implementation Programme 2010-2014

In line with the City Plan and Urban Vision 2030, the current housing policy aims to make Rotterdam an attractive residential city where people can choose from a diverse and a high quality housing stock as part of their housing career. The Implementation Programme identifies seven efforts to achieve these goals: improve the quality of the housing stock and living environments; enhance residential satisfaction; encourage renters to buy; govern access to affordable housing; raise awareness of housing opportunities and create a positive image of Rotterdam as a residential city; and tackle and prevent nuisance. Hereby, the policy hopes to tackle selective migration⁹, poor housing quality, and insufficient housing supply for low-income groups. The policy was developed by the municipality after consultation with a number of stakeholders including housing corporations, market parties, and residents (organisations). The municipality hoped to cooperate with a wide variety of parties to realise their goals.

In the examined housing policies diversity is a matter of residential characteristics and preferences. Diversity is approached comprehensively: the policies refer to socio-cultural background, income, age, household size and type, stage in the housing career, and lifestyle of residents. The *connotation* of diversity in the policies depends on the scale and the subject. At the city level, diversity is framed as strength: housing differentiation is realised in order to accommodate more diverse income groups, lifestyles, age groups, and household types. Also *income diversity* is regarded an asset. Particularly in low-income areas, the policy strives for a mix of incomes. This is most evident in the 2005 *Act on Exceptional Measures Concerning Inner-City Problems* that is developed to regulate the proportion of low-income households in deprived urban areas¹⁰. It is now popularly called the *Rotterdam Act* as it was first proposed by the municipality of Rotterdam, arguing that certain deprived areas in Rotterdam could not accommodate any more vulnerable residents. It is presently in effect in five designated areas in Rotterdam. Six major housing associations in Rotterdam have committed themselves to the Act. Several scholars and politicians in the Netherlands are critical of the Act and argue that it violates the freedom of establishment (of vulnerable groups) (see Van Eijk, 2013a; 2013b; Ouwehand, 2006). In addition, they believe that the Act unofficially aims at limiting the housing opportunities of disadvantaged *ethnic minorities* like the proposal for the Act by the 2002-2006 Rotterdam municipality initially claimed (Ouwehand & Doff, 2013). As this violates the constitution, the target group was then

⁸ The City Vision 2030 is a long-term spatial development strategy for Rotterdam that was developed in 2007.

⁹ 'Selective migration' refers to the situation that more households with relatively high incomes leave Rotterdam than settle in the city.

¹⁰ The Act allows municipalities to exclude people who depend on social security (apart from social security for the elderly) and cannot financially support themselves, and who have not lived in the municipal region in the preceding six years, from rental housing in a number of designated areas with high concentrations of low-income households.

changed into disadvantaged newcomers. Also, critics point to evaluations of the Act that show failing results. Nevertheless, in 2013 the Act was expanded and extended for another four years.

While the Implementation Programme is positive about income diversity in neighbourhoods, it is not so positive about diversity of lifestyles and ages: *'the residential and living climate is under pressure in various places in the city due to (too) much mix of different lifestyles'* (IP, p.22). Therefore, the policy advocates to use a lifestyle approach in which residential areas are labelled for a specific lifestyle and sometimes age group (e.g. elderly; students), and house seekers are informed about this when buying and renting housing. The lifestyle approach in Rotterdam Housing Policy is based on the Brand Strategy Research (BSR) model by a company called SmartAgent Company. Based on peoples' values, motives and needs SmartAgent Company identifies four categories of residential lifestyles: yellow (involvement and harmony); green (seclusion and safety); blue (control and ambition); and red (freedom and flexibility) (SmartAgent Company, 2008). SmartAgent Company has categorised all neighbourhoods in Rotterdam by residential lifestyles. Housing corporations inform renters about the dominant lifestyle in a residential area. In the case of contrasting lifestyles renters receive a (non-binding) negative recommendation. Also future owners are informed about the prominent lifestyle in a particular area. The lifestyle approach aims to raise residential satisfaction by preventing social tensions. This is thought to enhance the attractiveness of Rotterdam as a residential city. Critics question the feasibility of the lifestyle approach: can it capture the growing diversity and change of residential preferences and behaviours and how does it deal with conflicting lifestyles within households (Van Kempen & Pinkster, 2003)?

In line with the City Plan, the main goal in the housing policy is to enhance the economic position of Rotterdam: *'it is our ambition to enhance the economic support for shops, schools and other facilities and to generate a more balanced population'* (HV, p.17). Socially cohesive, high quality and mixed-income residential areas that are clustered by lifestyle act as a tool to attract higher-income groups and achieve such an economic balance. By stimulating renters to buy, and buyers to stay in the city, the policy seeks to control residential mobility. As such, residential mobility is a tool to improve the attractiveness of Rotterdam as a residential city as well. Although the policies do discuss specific housing matters for specific target groups (e.g. families, elderly, students) the examined policy is explicitly framed as mainstream policy:

'it is our ambition to improve the quality of living of all Rotterdammers. It is important that everyone, contemporary and future residents, resides with pleasure. [...] We look beyond the middle and higher income groups that we seek to retain and attract. We pay attention to residential satisfaction of all Rotterdammers, thus also those with a low income. Rotterdam should become a residential city for everyone' (HV, p.16).

The goal to attract higher-income renters to buy a dwelling is not only presented as a way to achieve a more balanced housing market, but also as a way to generate more affordable housing for lower-income groups. In the Netherlands, a significant part of social housing is occupied by middle-income groups. When they leave their rented dwelling for an owner-occupied dwelling, more housing is thought to become available for lower-income groups. The policy does not aim at facilitating spaces of encounter. On the contrary, by clustering residents with similar lifestyles the policy seems to seek to accomplish the opposite. Income mix is not framed as a way to generate contact between different social groups but as a way to increase the economic position of the area. Notably, the policies do not explain how more socio-economically 'balanced' neighbourhoods will benefit the area and its citizens.

Urban Policy for Rotterdam-South

Approximately 200,000 people live in Rotterdam-South. The area is one of the most deprived areas in the Netherlands in a form that is considered '*un-Dutch*' (NGN, 2011, p.1). Compared to the city of Rotterdam and other cities in the Netherlands, average education levels are low, unemployment rates are high, housing quality is poor, and residential satisfaction is low (PNP, 2013). Because of its history as a settlement place for (immigrant) dock-workers the population in Rotterdam-South majorly consists of low-skilled workers and ethnic minorities. Due to its relatively cheap housing stock the area is subject to selective migration¹¹. In 2006, the Municipality of Rotterdam, the three districts in Rotterdam-South, and four housing corporations started a comprehensive revitalisation programme for the area called *Pact op Zuid* (Pact for South). In 2012, the Programme was followed up by the National Programme Rotterdam-South (NPRS). The NPRS consists of a Policy Programme and an Implementation Plan.

South Works! National Programme Rotterdam-South and Implementation Plan 2012-2014

The goal of the NPRS is to '*decrease the unnecessary deprivation among residents and to improve the quality of life in South*' (PNP, 2013, p.1) so that in 20 years time the area will be on a comparable socio-economic level with other urban areas in the G4¹². The programme focusses on three themes: education, work, and housing. It aims to increase educational performance of young residents, increase employment levels, and improve the housing stock to counteract selective migration. The programme involves multiple forms of citizen participation. NPRS focusses on the districts of Charlois, Feijenoord and IJsselmonde. Within these areas, most attention is given to 7 '*focus areas*' that are considered the most problematic. The programme is coordinated by a Project Office, and governed by the National Government, the central Municipality of Rotterdam, three local districts, a resident committee, and various education and healthcare institutions, housing corporations, and local businesses. The NPRS is financed by the National Government, the Municipality of Rotterdam, and local housing corporations and businesses.

The word 'diversity' as such is not explicitly mentioned in the NPRS. Indirectly, however, the programme refers to it in two ways. First, it is argued that the population is young and has '*a mix of backgrounds*' (p.8). The mixed population is portrayed as an asset as the residents are thought to be '*successful in matters that governments and institutions easily overlook*' (p.8). Yet, these '*backgrounds*' and '*matters*' are not defined. Second, the Programme seeks to achieve diversity of income and a diverse housing stock. A diverse housing stock is thought to attract and retain higher-income groups in the area. Framed in this manner, diversity is seen as a quality. Nevertheless, the Programme does not mention how income diversity will exactly benefit the residents of Rotterdam-South. Furthermore, '*generating and recognising diversity*' are no primary goals. The NPRS can be classified as an *area-based policy* as it targets residents in designated areas in Rotterdam-South. Under all three policy themes (education, work and housing), the policy seeks to improve the *economic performance* and *social mobility* of residents in Rotterdam-South. For instance, the policy seeks to align local educational programmes with job opportunities, and to give benefit recipients priority in internships and vacancies. Also, by diversifying the housing stock, the policy hopes to give residents the opportunity for a better dwelling within their own district. The policy does not aim to *facilitate encounters* between residents, let alone does it strive for *social cohesion*. The NPRS is essentially a *redistribution* programme. The scale of socio-economic problems in Rotterdam-South has led to the unique urban governance construction (in the Dutch context) whereby multiple

¹¹ 'Selective migration' refers to the fact that a relatively a higher amount of higher income groups leave Rotterdam-South than those who settle in the in the area.

¹² In Dutch Policy '*the G4*' is used to refer to four largest cities in the Netherlands: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht.

governmental and non-governmental parties at different spatial scales collaborate with the collective aim to improve the economic well-being of the area and its residents.

Work and income policy

At present, three policy documents on economic matters are at work in Rotterdam: the *Economic Vision 2020*, the *Economy and Labour Market Programme* and *Rotterdam Works!* The first two documents discuss diversity in relation to macro-economic processes of supply and demand (in an implicit way). The latter addresses diversity in relation to individual people and is therefore most relevant for this research.

Rotterdam Works! Policy Framework Work and Re-integration 2011-2014

Rotterdam Works! implements the goal of the *Rotterdam City Plan 2010-2014* to encourage Rotterdammers to participate in and contribute to society through paid or unpaid work. The goal of the policy is:

‘that as many Rotterdammers who receive benefits as possible become economically independent and no longer need benefits. Every client – even if paid work is not feasible (yet) – is active by contributing to society in a meaningful way. Meantime, they develop themselves. This, we call Full Engagement’ (p.5).

The implementation of Full Engagement is guided by six priority areas. First, in order to encourage paid work, the policy will stimulate educative reintegration trajectories for unemployed people through a combination of paid and unpaid work. Second, employers will have the opportunity to receive municipal subsidies for the labour costs of employees who are in the process of reintegrating into the labour market. Third, young people will be required to either have a paid job or to be in education. Fourth, language education will help participation in society through paid or unpaid work. Fifth, barriers to paid employment that are caused by health issues will be mapped and addressed. Sixth, the municipality will form partnerships with professionals (e.g. health insurance companies, housing corporations, healthcare facilities, schools, industries and businesses) to improve the effectiveness of its strategies. The policy relies on the participation of unemployed residents in Rotterdam (receiving benefits).

Diversity is not mentioned explicitly in *Rotterdam Works!* However, the policy does acknowledge the existence of diversity in abilities of residents to participate in the urban economy. All residents are required to participate and hence it is assumed that they can. Nevertheless, in the policy residents are allowed to partake according to their capabilities. The policy assumes that all Rotterdammers possess talents. This reflects a positive understanding of the abilities of citizens. Citizens receiving benefits can be seen as the principal target group of the policy. The policy pays particular attention to people that experience difficulties accessing the labour market, young people receiving benefits, and newcomers to the city that are obliged to or want to follow language and integration courses. However, paid work is presented as the norm. The unemployed and the benefit recipients are presented as a problem:

‘Rotterdam is a working class city, and we are proud of this. Sitting on the couch at home while being unemployed and receiving benefits is not an option’ (p.3).

And:

‘Rotterdammers that can but do not want to [participate in the economy] get sanctioned’ (p.12).

Rotterdam Works! can be regarded as a redistribution policy, albeit one subject to conditions and obligations for the recipients. While the national and municipal budgets for socio-economic participation have declined significantly (even though demands for benefits are increasing), the policy does seek to provide disadvantaged people with tools to increase their socio-economic opportunities. The main goal of the policy is to increase the *social mobility* of residents so as to improve their *economic performance* and reduce their dependency on state benefits. The examined policy does not seek to *generate encounters* between people with diverse backgrounds, let alone does it seek to generate *social cohesion*.

Safety Policy

Programme Safety 2014-2018. #Safe 010

The Programme Safety 2014-2018 acts as a framework for all safety-related programmes and projects. The policy aspires that *'all neighbourhoods in Rotterdam are safe, and that residents, entrepreneurs and visitors of the city feel safe'* (p.3). A four-tier approach is adopted. First, Rotterdammers are at the heart of the governance of safety in the city. In collaboration with the municipality and the police, residents determine which three problems with regard to safety and liveability deserve most priority. Second, the municipality will enforce the law and meanwhile invest in new ways to make people live up to it. Third, the municipality wants to collaborate with multiple parties at various scales (e.g. the national and local police, residents (platforms), city districts, local businesses) to improve its approaches regarding safety in the city. Last, the municipality will inform all parties in Rotterdam about safety matters in the city so as to move towards a collective approach. The policy has been developed by the municipality in collaboration with residents, entrepreneurs, academics and professionals.

The examined 44-page long Safety Policy refers to diversity twice. First, it does so when discussing the intended collaborative approach. A broad definition of diversity is used:

'the structure of the population is changing. There are more young people and elderly people. Newcomers arrive. We will keep in touch with all these groups and their social networks' (p.6).

It remains unclear who 'all these groups' exactly are. Their existence is presented without a particular positive or negative implication for the governance of safety in the city. In the second reference to diversity, the term *ethnic diversity* is used. Ethnic diversity is portrayed as a potential threat to safety that professionals will be trained to deal with. Particularly groups that are culturally *'different'*, can form a risk for society, it is argued:

'having a different cultural background can cause difficulties to participate in society. Due to mutual misunderstandings that are caused by cultural differences, it is sometimes difficult to reach out to these groups. Therefore, we give these groups particular attention. We make contact with communities of diverse cultural backgrounds. [...] With our knowledge, we train professionals how they can deal with cultural diversity. [...] In addition, we discuss with these communities how they can better utilise their own powers to take responsibility' (p.31).

Neither the targeted cultural groups, nor the groups that do not form a potential threat are defined in the Safety Policy. Perhaps, the Rotterdam *Action Programme Antilleans* that targets *'problems of Antilleans'* (on display on a municipal webpage on safety policy) may serve as an indication of this policy approach. Besides ethnic minorities, the Safety Policy in Rotterdam targets several other so-called *'risk groups'*, such as *'drug criminals'*, radicalised people, EU-migrants,

homeless people as well as (criminal) young people that cause nuisance. The policy uses an area-based approach. It targets all neighbourhoods in Rotterdam differently. Those that are relatively unsafe get particular attention. Amongst other initiatives, a project with so-called ‘*urban marines*’ is set up to improve the safety in these neighbourhoods. As most attention is paid to the most vulnerable groups and areas the Safety policy can be regarded a *redistribution policy*.

The policy acknowledges that socio-economic and socio-spatial disadvantages can encourage criminal behaviours, but does not focus primarily on encouraging *social mobility* or *economic performance* of residents. Instead, the policy mostly focuses on correcting unlawful and encouraging lawful *behaviours*. The use of role models to prevent young people and ethnic minority groups to isolate themselves from society can serve as an example of this behaviour-centred approach. In several ways, encouraging *social cohesion* is used as a tool to prevent criminal behaviours, not as a goal in itself. As an example, the policy discusses an experiment of the municipality, the ‘*Last Chance Approach*’, where an appeal is done to the social networks (e.g. family, friends, and teachers) of young people with ‘*negative behaviours [...] to activate and support them to change their behaviour and to solve their problems*’ (p.37). Indeed, *stimulating encounters* between people with legitimate and illegitimate behaviours is used as a means to encourage safety in the examined policy.

Educational Policy

Rotterdam Educational Policy 2011-2014: Better Performance and Attack on Drop-outs

Current educational policy in Rotterdam consists of two related policy documents: *Better Performance* (BP) and *Attack on Drop-outs* (AD). Both aim to increase the quality and performance of education in Rotterdam. The former intends to increasing educational performances, through three lines of approach: extending school hours; professionalising the educational environment; and raising parental involvement in the educational career of their children. The latter aims to prevent school drop-outs through two lines of approach: keeping children at school; and guiding children that have dropped out back to school. The educational policy is complemented by various projects and programmes. For this study, an interesting one is the *Good, Better, Best* project under the *Language Attack Programme* that aims at increasing parental involvement at school by improving the Dutch language skills of parents that have difficulties with the language. It is financed by the EU. The Educational Policy is largely financed by the national and municipal government. Some programmes and projects are financed by the schools themselves. The policy was developed by Rotterdam School Boards and the Municipality and carried out by educational employees, volunteers, parents, municipal employees, and businesses.

Diversity is not a prominent topic in current education policy in Rotterdam. Nevertheless, the *Better Performance* document does refer to diversity twice. This is first implicitly, as a matter of ethnicity and socio-economic status:

‘Rotterdam is home to a range of nationalities. Two third of young people grow up in families that do not descend from the Netherlands. Although Rotterdam is home to many second and third generations immigrants, often little or no Dutch is spoken at home. One in three students grows up in a family with low-educated parents. These young people rarely participate in higher education forms and do not always obtain a degree to participate in the labour market’ (BP, p.13).

The second reference to diversity is more explicit. Rotterdam schoolchildren are described as ‘*very diverse in backgrounds and language and development levels*’ (BP, p.13). In both instances, the diversity is framed as a problem for the socio-economic well-being of the city and for teaching the children,

respectively. The policy aims to solve these problems by stimulating disadvantaged and non-Dutch speaking groups to assimilate into the (Dutch) urban economy. The *Attack on Drop-outs* document does not explicitly refer to diversity, and uses general terms such as ‘youngsters’, ‘children’, and ‘Rotterdamers’ to describe its target population. Both policy documents indirectly refer to diversity in another way: a diversity of talents. In contrast with ethnic and socio-economic diversity, diverse talents are framed both as a quality and a challenge. Thus, the policy *recognises diversity* but certainly does not promote it. Although the Educational Policy is aimed at all schoolchildren in Rotterdam under 23 years old, specific attention is given to so-called ‘*target group children* [...] [defined as] *children of whom at least one parent was born in a non-Western country or of whom the parents were born in a Western country and at least one parent has a low education level*’ (BP, p.10) and their parents, as well as children that perform exceptionally well at school. Priority is also given to children that live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods¹³ of Rotterdam. The policy shows elements of a *redistribution policy* but cannot be regarded as such completely because it invests both in disadvantaged groups and areas and children that perform well. Increased *social mobility* and better performance of school children are framed as the primary goals of the policy as this is thought to benefit the *economic performance* of the city as a whole:

‘with its relatively young population, the city is a breeding ground for talent. It provides opportunities but also challenges to allow this talent to develop optimally. There are still too many youngsters who do not utilise their talents enough. In addition, a well-educated labour force is essential for the economic, social and cultural development of the city. Education in Rotterdam plays a key role in this’ (BP, p.3).

The policy does not aim at *generating encounters* between diverse social groups to stimulate positive understandings of diversity. Two arrangements that are discussed in the policy do focus on generating *social cohesion*: *Intensive School Arrangements* (ISO) for schools that perform (very) weakly and *Top Classes* for all other schools in Rotterdam. As part of these programmes, schools are linked to each other to ‘*support schools to further develop a method that leads to better educational results*’ (BP, p.15). However, as the phrase shows, in these arrangements social cohesion is not portrayed as a goal but a means to accomplish the primary policy goal of better *educational performance* of schools.

Interpretations of diversity policy by governmental actors

Out of the interviews carried out with 10 governmental policy actors, we have identified seven interrelated themes concerning the extent to which and ways in which policies address diversity in Rotterdam.

Little attention for diversity

Most governmental policy actors confirm that the word ‘diversity’ as such is not often explicitly mentioned in present policy documents in Rotterdam. Interviewees argue that diversity is also not discussed much in municipal departments, districts, and social institutions. For instance, a Political Advisor argues:

“Years ago, I used to work with it [diversity] a lot as a civil servant. But, in recent years this is not the case anymore. I believe that it has faded away a bit. Before, there used to be an

¹³ On the basis of four categories (capacities, living environment, participation and social bonding) the Municipality of Rotterdam monitors and classifies its neighbourhoods with a ‘*Social Index*’ (see CRRSC, 2009). Disadvantaged neighbourhoods are defined through their low score on this index.

entire post for Integration and Participation [policy]. Today, this [formal attention for diversity] has certainly become less” [6 January 2014].

Interviewees explain that within the municipality diversity is presently a matter of the Social Affairs Department. Nevertheless, the interviewees argue that it should be a cross-cutting matter: all civil servants should become more aware of how policy and their actions affect the diverse population. In addition, a number of interviewees argue that the personnel of the municipality and institutions should become more diverse to better represent the diversity of the population of Rotterdam. This will contribute to better services as the municipality will then have better knowledge of the diverse city, it is argued. A Programme Manager argues:

“I think that as an organisation we do not know our city well enough. Of course, there are some colleagues [that work on this matter], but the group is fairly limited. However, a civil servant that chooses to work for the municipality must know its city. Sometimes, that is not the case. [...] Rotterdam is a diverse city. [...] Therefore, we should be representative for [the existing diversity in] society. And that, we are just not. I find this a point of concern” [1 November 2013].

In the same line, some interviewees mention that the municipal budget for the governance of diversity is fairly low. When asked, most argue that only the budgets of citizenship and integration policy can be regarded budgets for governing diversity, counting €4.8 million¹⁴ and €150,000 on a total municipal budget of €4.2 billion for 2013. Indirectly, many more services are working with diversity such as the departments of housing, education, safety, and work and income. However, not all policy actors identify this as a diversity focus in their work. In interviews with two Policy Advisors, after a lengthy conversation on housing and income differentiation strategies and the lifestyle approach, they argue that diversity is not an issue in housing policy and that there is no budget for it. According to the vice-mayor on Labour Market, Higher Education, Innovation and Participation (LEIP) the budget cuts could also bring new opportunities as they force relevant social partners to become active and innovative.

Diversity is often defined in terms of ethnicity

Although diversity is sometimes defined broadly, e.g. as “*a matter concerning cultural diversity, religious diversity, sexual orientation, et cetera*” [Policy Advisor, 23 October 2013], more often it is framed and understood in terms of ethnic diversity. In the interviews the majority of governmental policy actors interpret diversity as a matter of ethnicity. When asked about diversity in Rotterdam, a vice-mayor for Housing, Spatial Planning, Property, and Urban Economy (HPPE) use the concept of multiculturalism, and an Area Director talks about ethnic groups in the neighbourhood (e.g. the Turks, Antilleans, Moroccans, etc.). Rather than perceiving it as a dimension of diversity, an Area Manager distinguishes between socio-economic background and diversity, which she refers to as ethnicity:

“Many people with low incomes move to these neighbourhoods because of the affordable housing stock. The people that move in are often of foreign descent because often many [foreigners] have a low income. But is the starting point then diversity? Would it not be the socio-economic situation?” [7 November 2013].

¹⁴ This amount includes the budgets for Citizenship Policy (€3.7 million), Opzoomer Mee (€933,000) and City Initiatives (€250,000).

The only exception is housing policy. Here, interviewees claim that diversity is not interpreted as a matter of ethnicity but as one concerning incomes, and lifestyles:

“For us diversity is primarily about income groups. To generate a stable socio-economic basis in a specific area, or at least to make sure that it [the housing stock] will not become too one-sided. [So] that an area does not become increasingly vulnerable” [Senior Policy Advisor, 28 October 2013].

Diversity is often understood as a problem

Most governmental policy actors explain that diversity is often understood as a problem that the city needs to cope with. Even though the city – particularly in its citizenship and integration policy - tries to frame diversity as a quality, for instance by talking about ‘*talent development*’ and the city’s ‘*174 nationalities*’, policies often pay more attention to potential negative effects of diversity, such as social tensions, economic competition, and socio-economic exclusion, rather than on extending positive developments, interviewees argue. According to an vice-mayor on HPPE

“In every day practice people worry [indeed] about the negative sides [of diversity]. [...] People are concerned with the here and now. When you are unemployed and thousands of people move here, it makes no sense [for me to] tell a good story about ‘it is all so important for Europe’ etcetera. The unemployed will just see the negative consequences” [6 January 2014].

Two Policy Advisors and the vice-mayor on HPPE see the lifestyle approach in housing policy as a way to avoid potential negative effects of diversity and to increase residential satisfaction.

When governmental policy actors were asked why policy makers do not discuss diversity, understand diversity in terms of ethnicity, and hesitate to portray it as a quality, several interviewees argue that this derives from the 4-year term in which Liveable Rotterdam had significant power in the city council (2002-2006). This caused a radical policy discourse shift from pluralism to assimilation. Interviewees mention that negative experiences of ethnic diversity were emphasised. A Programme Manager describes it as follows:

“A motion was submitted – no diversity policy – and hereafter the taboo emerged. It is very strange. Abroad, we talk about diversity with no trouble - nice stories – then everyone is impressed and wants to come and have a look at Rotterdam. But, internally we do not talk about it and you do not see it back on paper either. In the entire City Plan, I think diversity and integration are mentioned once as words, but then no more. It is the fear in politics. In this case I would say it is the PvdA [Labour Party] who is scared to put diversity into the foreground. It is just not talked about” [1 November 2013].

However, according to the two interviewed vice-mayors there is no need to reintroduce diversity as a policy issue in Rotterdam when it is defined in terms of ethnicity. It will merely lead to emotional discussions on the pros and cons of diversity, they argue, which is unfruitful because diversity is a fact: “*fortunately, we do not bicker about ‘is it something good or something bad?’ anymore” [vice-mayor on LEIP, 8 January 2014].* Also, with the decreasing municipal budgets and shift towards networked governance, both question whether it is the role of the municipality to govern social experiences of diversity today.

Policies that approach diversity as a quality generally focus on the economic benefits

When diversity is seen as an asset in policy, municipal policy actors mainly talk about its potential *economic* qualities. Two narratives can be distinguished in this respect. First, several interviewees argued that a diverse labour force will allow the municipality and other non-governmental organisations and businesses to better “*know the city*” [Senior Policy Advisor, 23 October 2013]. This will allow organisations to be more responsive to society and the market. Second, most interviewees argue that the city should use the international networks of its citizens to improve its economic competitiveness:

“The fact that the city is so diverse makes that you can easily build bridges to the rest of the world. You [the city] are not one group but you represent the rest of the world. [...] But, in order to recognise the diversity and talent and to seek how to develop it, that is what we are currently trying to find out” [Programme Manager, 1 November 2013].

According to the vice-mayor on LEIP, in contrast with urban policy, bottom-up governance initiatives in Rotterdam do often focus on social rather than economic dimensions of diversity, e.g. through cultural exchanges, and support relations between different cultural and socio-economic groups.

Inconsistencies in the scope of policy (implementation)

Although the analysis of policy documents has shown that many inconsistencies exist in policies that address diversity, one of these is discussed particularly frequently and extensively by the interviewees, namely the tension between the stated universal nature of a policy and its focus on particular groups in its actual implementation. Interviewees argue that “*to the outside world, the municipality communicates to strive for mainstream policy*” [Programme Manager, 1 November 2013]. However, this is not evident in all policies. Safety policy, for instance, focuses on various target groups, a few interviewees say. A Programme Manager argues:

“As municipality we seek to communicate unambiguously but in our practice you can see different trajectories. For instance, [...] [the citizenship policy team] says: we do not practice policy for specific groups very explicitly. In the Programme Mee(r) Doen, when it is necessary, for instance, to talk with the Pakistanis, we go and talk with Pakistanis. [...] So that is the Social Affairs Department, then you have the Department of Work and Income, they say: our policies do not target specific groups. To the outside world, the municipality communicates: our policies do not target specific groups. But, [in practice] it depends on the relevant alderman, managers, and the civil servant whether and why they deviate from this. For example, we have the Somalis. That is a group with many problems. The Department of Work and Income makes an exception for this. Not structurally though. Previously, we had structural subsidies for specific groups. That we have no longer” [1 November 2013].

Mainstream policy is not always evident in policy implementation either. According to two Policy Advisors, housing policy adopts an area-based approach in which the local needs of areas significantly influence the policy approach. Indeed, an interview with an Area Director and Area Manager reflected a customised implementation of policy, depending on the area and target group:

“You cannot just implement municipal policy in a city district, [...] you need to coordinate [municipal] supply and [local] demand. [...] Let’s say that there is no money to maintain public space, the gardens [according to the municipality]. Local employees would say: ‘great starting point: in that street it would work out fine, but over there certainly not. We need an

extra commitment to get people to clean up there once a week'. [...] You have to know exactly what is going on in your area. You cannot just decide that all people clean up" [7 November 2013].

The two explain that the implementation of mainstream policy also depends on the employees of a district. For instance, they argue that the district of Delfshaven is much stricter with the requirement that NGOs can only get subsidies when activities target multiple social groups than the district of Feijenoord.

Some interviewees are concerned that a mainstream policy approach is not sensitive enough to the needs of diverse social groups, particularly vulnerable groups in society. A Policy Advisor expresses his concerns about mainstream policy and argues that more attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups. Not only does mainstream policy run the risk of excluding certain social groups, he argues, but when it is not sensitive to diversity it will be ineffective as well:

"If you want to do something about the health of Rotterdam children in Rotterdam West, then it is certainly important to know that the parents who live there have a certain background, that they communicate in a different way with their children than in Schiebroek or Kralingen [more affluent areas in Rotterdam], that the manners and communication are different. I am not only talking about language. Sometimes, that can be a problem as well, but also the way you interact with each other is undoubtedly different, family relations are different. So if you want to reach children there, in Rotterdam West, then you need to implement different instruments. If you do not take local diversity into account, you will simply become less effective" [23 October 2013].

The vice-mayor on LEIP agrees that policy should provide enough space for specific interventions. However, she believes that present urban policy in Rotterdam does this.

From cultural integration to economic participation in urban policy in Rotterdam

Since the presentation of the 2012 research report *The State of the Integration: Amsterdam and Rotterdam Compared*, the municipality of Rotterdam has built upon it in its policy, municipal policy actors argue. The report concludes that the city cannot ask foreign groups to assimilate into Dutch society as half of the population of both cities have a foreign background. Therefore, most interviewed municipal policy actors argue that the Department of Social Affairs is moving from a cultural *integration* discourse towards a focus on economic *participation* of all Rotterdammers. Many interviewees refer to this as "*going beyond integration*". However, the interviewees acknowledge that not all municipal departments have made this shift and that the municipality is still looking for a suitable and affordable approach. According to the vice-mayor on LEIP, the economic participation discourse is not assimilationist in nature. Rotterdammers are asked to integrate into the economy, but they are free to choose how they do so (e.g. paid or voluntarily). Nevertheless, an Area Manager discusses how assimilationism still often underlies urban policy today as economic and cultural integration are very much intertwined. She illustrates this with an example of work tours that are organised in Rotterdam-South under the Mee(r) Doen policy for unemployed young people who often belong to an ethnic minority group to meet potential employers in the harbour:

"The harbour employers say: of course, we would like to employ people from this area, there is plenty of work. But when it comes down to it, the education levels and social skills of the people that seemed eligible for the jobs appear insufficient. Thus, economic and social dimensions correlate. Somehow, it is the case that people in this area have to adjust to the

employers will. And it stands or falls on trivial things: giving a weak hand. In Turkish and Moroccan culture this is a sign of respect. Yet, a harbour employer wants a strong hand, strong, steady. When the applicant does not look you in the eye during an interview it is a sign of respect, but they [employers] find him too hesitant. This type of things. So, then it goes wrong” [Area Manager, 7 November 2013].

The vice-mayor on LEIP agrees that discrimination at work needs to be addressed. However, both she and the vice-mayor on HPPS argue that it is fair that for some jobs (on the higher end of the labour market) employees are asked to adjust to existing work cultures.

From government to governance in the development of policy

In the interviews policy actors were asked about key actors regarding policy development and implementation. Like in the policy documents, government officials argue that the municipality no longer works as a government actor but as one of the managerial actors in a governance¹⁵ model. According to all governmental policy actors, the municipality collaborates with various non-governmental parties when developing an approach on the governance of diversity. A Programme Manager says:

“we are one of the players and we are not the one with the final say. This [...] has to do with the fact that civil society can survive without government. [...] Have you heard of the essay The Trees and the Rhizome? The Rhizome is the network society and the tree is the government that stands strong but really is no longer that strong at all. As a government, we are looking at how we can participate and thus also at how we can handle diversity” [1 November 2013].

3.2 Non-governmental views on diversity policy

The views of non-governmental policy actors show similarities with those of governmental policy actors, although there are some differences as well. Non-governmental policy actors too argue that urban policy in Rotterdam pays relatively *little attention to diversity*. They also argue that diversity is not mentioned often in urban policy nor talked about often by policy actors, that relatively few policy makers work on the matter (mostly in the Social Affairs Department), and that the budgets for diversity are relatively small. For instance, according to a Policy Advisor at the Rotterdam Knowledge Centre on Diversity (RKCD) few people are working on the theme of diversity, while actually, it

“should be carried out by many services. [...] The theme diversity does not belong to one vice-mayor. There should be a vice-mayor [on it], but simultaneously, the ministers, the executive board, everyone should carry it out” [7 November 2013].

Non-governmental policy actors argue that the two policies in which diversity is most prominently addressed – on citizenship and integration – have experienced relatively high budget cuts compared to other policy themes. Rather than framing this as an opportunity, like the vice-mayor on LEIP does, a Policy Advisor at the Knowledge Centre for Anti-Discrimination (KCAD) explains that the cuts have caused a loss of activities on matters of diversity. In addition, they have caused many NGOs to disappear, causing knowledge loss.

Similarly to what emerged from the interviews with governmental policy actors, non-governmental policy actors argue that diversity is often framed and understood as a matter of ethnic diversity. Like

¹⁵ In this study governance is defined as the fragmentation of political power through public-private partnerships in which the public government acts as a facilitator and manager of private interests of both commercial and voluntary parties through networks.

governmental policy actors, in the interviews many interpret diversity as a matter of ethnicity as well. For instance, when asked about diversity in Rotterdam, a Programme Manager explains that the issue of diverse nationalities, for example at work, has recently been discussed much. Again, housing policy is identified as an exception as here diversity is said to address incomes and lifestyles.

More often than governmental policy actors, non-governmental actors argue that diversity is understood as a problem that the city needs to cope with. A Research Director for instance says:

“I hope that we can reach a stage in which it [diversity] can be seen as a quality. However, in recent years it was absolutely not [understood as] a quality. Rotterdam – not necessarily the people, I think it is not that much an issue there – has done its very best to get on all the black lists. It was one big negative city marketing, what they have done in recent years: we are the poorest city, the city with the most problems, the city with the highest number of migrant groups, the greatest diversity and ethnic backgrounds – and that was presented as a problem that needed to be solved” [31 October 2013].

Like the interviewed municipal Policy Advisors on housing, a Programme Manager at a Housing Association sees the lifestyle approach in housing policy as a way to avoid social tensions: *“there can be a potential source of discomfort with different cultures because you do not understand one another, because you have different day and night rhythms, or because you are annoyed by [loud] music, those kinds of things” [28 October 2013].*

Like governmental interviewees, when explaining the lack of attention for diversity, the interpretation in terms of ethnicity and the negative connotations of the term in present policy discourses, most non-governmental interviewees refer to the way in which Liveable Rotterdam addressed diversity during their period of governance. A Policy Advisor at the RKCD talks about so-called ‘Islam debates’ that took place under Liveable Rotterdam rule and that generated stereotypes and feelings of ‘them and us’ between Muslims and non-Muslims. Like most municipal interviewees, but different from the two interviewed vice-mayors, most non-governmental interviewees describe the phenomenon as a taboo that needs to be addressed. For instance, a former vice-mayor at the municipality of Rotterdam and founder of the Colourful City programme in 1998 argues that the current coalition has never dared to reintroduce pluralist discourses for fear of losing (populist) votes.

Several non-governmental interviewees discuss how - when diversity is seen as a quality in policy - governmental as well as non-governmental policy makers mainly portray it as an economic benefit. The director of the Nation Programme Rotterdam-South (NPRS) explains that previously policy makers focussed more on creating social cohesion while at present economic performance is the main goal, also in his programme. This is in line with findings from the documentary analysis. Social cohesion is rarely referred to and if it is, it is used as a token for generating economic benefits. A Policy Advisor of the RKCD argues that in the super-diverse city of Rotterdam it is important that the municipality pays attention to the social qualities of diversity besides the economic ones, for instance by encouraging more positive and tolerant understandings of differences. Moreover, when more people can work with diversity among the population, this will benefit the economy as well, he argues. Also, a researcher and founder of an urban revitalisation programme in Rotterdam-South and the Director of the Knowledge Centre for Emancipation (KCE) emphasise the importance of training people to be able to work and live together *“interculturally”*, thus sensitive to complex cultural diversities. These views are in contrast with those of several governmental actors, including the vice-mayors, who no longer find this a duty of the municipality.

Similar to some governmental interviewees, non-governmental actors talk about the tension between a universal and a more focused policy approach. They argue that some municipal departments practice mainstream policy, while others target specific groups and that there often seem to be exceptions to the rule. For example, the Director of KCE explains that on the one hand the national government demands local organisations to use a mainstream approach and on the other, they often ask her organisation to organise a social programme on a specific theme (e.g. hidden women, honour-related violence, domestic violence, forced marriage and sexuality) in specific ethnic communities. In addition, non-governmental policy actors tell how organisations can get around the demand for mainstream policy (implementation) by

“adding a sentence that says that an activity should be accessible to all [when applying for municipal subsidies]. Of course everyone is welcome. Yet, at the same time when a certain group of people comes together it excludes other people” [Director of Research, 31 October 2013].

Like several municipal interviewees, non-governmental interviewees are worried about the prioritising of mainstream policy and argue that policy should pay more attention to disadvantaged groups. According to a policy advisor at RKCD, mainstream policy wrongly ignores the diversity of the population. A policy advisor at KCAD questions: *“there is mainstream policy, but does it manage to reach everyone”* [30 October 2013]? Furthermore, a policy advisor at RKCD asks: against the standards of what particular groups in society was a mainstream policy developed?

According to the interviewed Director and Policy Advisors at the Knowledge Centres, the so-called *“Dutch culture”* is still a benchmark for mainstream policy in most policy fields. The Director of the KCE says:

“In general it [the way in which the municipality addresses diversity] is not so bad. But they [the municipality] could be much more inviting and should also integrate the native population. The process cannot be one-way. That is emphasised too much, that newcomers should integrate in the city. But today, many newcomers were born here. They have the same rights to citizenship as a native Dutch person” [20 October 2013].

Also, a Programme Manager at a housing association gives an example of this as he explains that in line with municipal and national discourses on integration, leaflets are only provided in Dutch despite of the fact that a significant part of their clients do not understand the Dutch language well. Indeed, while several governmental actors speak of a shift away from a cultural assimilation discourse in urban policy, the majority of non-governmental actors argue that there is still an assimilationist notion in policy (practice):

“in my view present policy is focused on ‘we must make sure that foreign people integrate, while I think integration should come from various sides. But essentially, we should think of how citizens can be involved in the city – independently of their ethnic background’ [Policy Advisor RKCD, 7 November 2013].

Finally, governmental policy actors argue that the municipality collaborates with multiple non-governmental and business actors when developing and implementing policies addressing diversity. Yet, this is not how the majority of non-governmental actors experience the role of the municipality. According to the Director of the NPRS the municipality is very influential for policy development and implementation in Rotterdam, being one of the main reasons the National Programme was installed. The knowledge centres are funded through the Citizenship Policy. However, also in the experience of the Director and Policy Advisors at the Knowledge Centres neither they nor other non-governmental parties were included in the policy development process. For example, a Policy Advisor at the KCAD says:

“It feels very much imposed. This is our policy and this is how we will apply it. If you do not agree, no subsidy. I think it is being imposed. But afterwards [if you accept the requirements] you are able to participate. See, it should have been different at the formation of the policy, involve the people” [30 October 2013].

Likewise, a Policy Advisor at the RKCD says that NGOs used to collaborate with civil servants when developing policy. In recent years, this does not happen anymore, he says. One reason for this is that many NGOs have disappeared due to budget cuts. The municipality has stopped to fund special interest groups due to budget cuts and the focus on mainstream policy. Consequently, he argues that organised civil society is not that strong anymore. Another reason could be that the municipality is undergoing internal changes, he argues:

“With the budget cuts everyone is searching, there is unrest: will I have a job? Decentralisations, mergers, et cetera. The Department of Social Affairs is new, and Health Care Services are [now] also part of the department” [7 November 2013].

4. Conclusions

This report has shown that the municipality is the central *actor* in the development and implementation of policies addressing urban diversity in Rotterdam. Municipal responsibilities on this topic are growing due to decentralisation processes even though their budgets are declining. The municipality of Rotterdam is currently undergoing major changes in its organisation, governance approach, and budgets. Interviews with key policy actors have indicated that at present urban policy regarding diversity is largely developed and directed by the vice-mayors and associated municipal departments. Multiple other parties can participate during policy implementation. Various governmental and non-governmental parties collaborate in policy implementation at a local level. Yet, due to cuts in the subsidies of many NGOs in recent years, civil society at the city level is not as powerful as it was.

The analysis has however shown that present policy in Rotterdam pays *little attention to diversity*. Rotterdam currently does not have an articulated diversity policy. Two policies address diversity explicitly: a citizenship and an integration policy. Other examined policies (e.g. on housing, education, safety, work and income and Rotterdam-South and the city plan) touch upon the topic but do not address it directly. Interviewees mention that diversity is not talked about often within the municipality and within social services. In addition, they argue that the personnel of the municipality and other organisations in Rotterdam are still not representative in terms of ethnicity and gender for the population of the city. Finally, the interviewed policy actors argue that the municipal budget for the governance of diversity is relatively low. Most policy actors indicate that only the budgets of citizenship and integration policies can be regarded as budgets for governing diversity. Furthermore, these budgets have decreased significantly in recent years. The Integration Policy has finished as of 2014.

The analysis in this report has shown that - with the exception of housing policy – diversity in Rotterdam is mostly understood as a matter of *ethnicity*. Moreover, diversity in policy is more often understood as a *problem*, rather than an asset or opportunity. Another related finding from interviews is that the municipality strives to practice *mainstream policy*. Several interviewees have expressed their concerns about this approach, despite the fact that not all departments follow this trend and that in practice municipal and non-municipal parties work around this requirement. Although policy actors value that mainstream policy does not differentiate – and thus also does not stigmatise - between groups, they are concerned that it will not reach everyone. Many actors are concerned about the impact of mainstream policy on the most vulnerable groups.

Policies in Rotterdam hold an underlying *assimilationist discourse*: the policies are aimed at all Rotterdammers but an extra effort is asked from newcomers to the city and those belonging to – what the municipality calls – ‘*the slow city*’ to catch up with the mainstream which policy portrays as the existing residents in the fast city. Indeed, in the analysis we found that a better *economic performance* of Rotterdam is currently the main drive behind urban policy. When diversity is discussed as an asset it is seen as an economic quality. This is communicated clearly in the present coalition’s *City Plan*, and comes back in all the examined policy documents. Also, interviewed policy actors confirm this, with the exception of some governmental policy actors.

The examined policies call for a *redistribution of resources* to form a safety net for the poorest. However, the redistribution only seems modest, because most policies aim to invest in ‘all’ Rotterdammers, also successful ones, to make the city more attractive e.g. for higher-income groups. Improving social mobility of residents is often used as a tool to generate such economic success. Some policies *recognise* different kinds of diversity. For instance, the area-based approach in some policies takes diversity of places into account when implementing policy. Yet, policy pays little attention to *social cohesion*, nor to facilitating *encounters* between diverse groups. The lifestyle approach in housing policy could serve as an example of

this. It prevents potential negative experiences between people with different residential preferences and behaviours by (re-)developing neighbourhoods for a specific lifestyle rather than to mix lifestyles and to promote positive interactions between them, although relevant governmental policy actors argue that within lifestyle there are other diversities (e.g. in income and ethnicity). Several policy actors have expressed their disappointment with the absence of a discussion on how to deal with diversity socially and speak of a 'taboo'. As one of the interviewees has argued, in a super-diverse city such as Rotterdam it is essential to pay more attention to positive experiences of differences and connections between different groups in policy.

Policy actors find explanations for these findings in the recent socio-political history of Rotterdam. While pluralist discourses in national policy made space for integrationist views at the beginning of the 1990s, pluralist policy discourses in Rotterdam lasted until 2002 when the *Multi-coloured City Policy* came to an end. After several decades of Labour party rule, the populist party Liveable Rotterdam became the biggest political party. Under their rule, Rotterdam policy 'skipped' the national integrationist discourse of the 1990s, and adopted an assimilationist policy approach that was consistent with but slightly harsher than national policy discourses then. Liveable Rotterdam emphasised the negative experiences of ethnic diversity and Muslims in urban policy (implementation), hereby representing existing concerns among the city's population about these matters then. When the Labour party came back to power in 2006, they sought to promote a more inclusive, and positive understanding of diversity. However, from the Liveable Rotterdam term of governance they learnt not to ignore the negative experiences of ethnic diversity among the population. The current coalition is in search of new ways to cope with experiences of urban diversity. According to two interviewed Vice-Mayors, it is a conscious choice of the ruling coalition not to focus explicitly on diversity in policy. Nevertheless, most policy actors believe that they have not dared to (re-)introduce pluralist discourses in fear of losing (populist) votes. In line with national policy discourses they currently mostly focus on socio-economic rather than socio-cultural topics.

In March 2014, there will be municipal elections. That year, city districts will also merge into area committees (see chapter 2.1). As of 2015, national governmental subsidies for citizenship and integration will end. It is unclear how these governmental changes will influence policy discourses on diversity in Rotterdam.

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Appendix I. List of policy actors interviewed

Number	Function	Organisation
1	Vice-Mayor Housing, Spatial planning, Property, and Urban Economy (including NPRS)	Municipality of Rotterdam
2	Political Advisor	Municipality of Rotterdam
3	Senior Policy Advisor	Municipality of Rotterdam, Urban Development Department
4	Senior Policy Advisor	Municipality of Rotterdam, Urban Development Department
5	Vice-Mayor Labour market, Higher Education, Innovation and Participation	Municipality of Rotterdam
6	Senior Policy Advisor	Municipality of Rotterdam, Social Affairs Department
7	Programme Manager	Municipality of Rotterdam, Social Affairs Department
8	Senior Strategic Advisor	Municipality of Rotterdam, Executive Board
9	Area Manager	Municipality of Rotterdam, a City District
10	Area Director	Municipality of Rotterdam, a City District
11	Former Vice-Mayor Diversity Policy Rotterdam	Director Rotterdam Skillcity (RVS)/ Philosopher Erasmus University Rotterdam
12	Senior Policy Advisor	Rotterdam Knowledge Centre on Diversity
13	Senior Policy Advisor	Rotterdam Knowledge Centre on Diversity
14	Director	Knowledge Centre on Emancipation / Dona Daria
15	Senior Policy Advisor	Knowledge Centre on Anti-discrimination / Radar
16	Programme Manager	Housing corporation Woonstad
17	Director	National Programme Rotterdam-South
18	Founder Pact op Zuid / Researcher	Pact op Zuid / Skillcity (RVS)
19	Director of Research	Stichting de Verre Bergen
20	Programme Manager	Stichting de Verre Bergen

Appendix II. List of policy documents analysed

Rotterdam City Policy

Coalition Work Programme Rotterdam 2010-2014. Working on Talent and Entrepreneurship [College Werkprogramma Rotterdam 2010-2014. Werken aan Talent en Ondernemen]

Implementation Strategy Rotterdam [Uitvoeringsstrategie Rotterdam]

Urban Vision 2030 [Stadsvisie 2030]

Citizenship and Integration Policy

Citizenship Policy. Participation: Selecting Talent. Definition of Citizenship Policy for the years 2012 to 2015 [Burgerschapsbeleid: Kiezen voor Talent. Invulling van het burgerschapsbeleid voor de jaren 2012 tot 2015]

Doing More: Rotterdammers in Action. Integration Strategy [Mee(R) Doen: Rotterdammers in Actie. Integratieaanpak]

Implementation Programme Colourful City 1998-2002 [Uitvoeringsprogramma Veelkleurige Stad 1998-2002]

Housing Policy

Law on Exceptional Measures Metropolitan Problems [Wet Bijzondere Maatregelen Grootstedelijke Problematiek]

Living in Rotterdam. Updated Housing Vision 2007-2010 [Wonen in Rotterdam. Geactualiseerde Woonvisie 2007-2010]

Implementation Programme Housing Vision 2010-2014 [Uitvoeringsstrategie Woonvisie 2010-2014]

Urban Policy for Rotterdam South

South Works! National Programme Quality Leap South [Zuid Werkt! Nationaal Programma Kwaliteitsprong Zuid]

National Programme Rotterdam South. Implementation Plan 2012-2014 [Nationaal Programma Rotterdam Zuid. Uitvoeringsplan 2012-2014]

Work and Income Policy

Rotterdam Works! Policy Framework Work and Re-integration 2011-2014 [Rotterdam Werkt! Beleidskader Werk en Re-integratie 2011-2014]

Safety Policy

Programme Safety 2014-2018. #Safe 010 [Programma Veiligheid 2014-2018. #Veilig 010]

Action Programme Antilleans. Huntu Nos Por Logra. Together we can achieve it. Antilleans Policy in Rotterdam [Actieprogramma Antillianen. Huntu Nos Por Logra. Samen kunnen we het bereiken. Antillianenbeleid in Rotterdam].

Educational Policy

Better Performance Programme. Rotterdam Educational Policy 2011-2014 part 1 [Programma Beter Presteren. Rotterdams Onderwijsbeleid 2011-2014 deel 1]

Attack on Drop-outs Programme. Rotterdam Educational Policy 2011-2014 part 2 [Programma Aanval op Uitval. Rotterdams Onderwijsbeleid 2011-2014 deel 2]

Language Attack 2011-2014 [Taaloffensief 2011-2014]