Promoting sustainable integration policies for Third Country Nationals: The migration-integration nexus in the Netherlands

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1 INTRODUCTION

2 THE EVOLUTION OF THE MIGRATION-INTEGRATION NEXUS

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

2.2 Institutional separation in the departmental organization

2.3 Admission related integration provisions since 2000; a brief history

2.4 Current trends in the Dutch civic integration policy system

3 PRE-ENTRY INTEGRATION POLICIES

3.1 Policy design

3.2 Relation to and interaction with EU regulations

3.3 Policy implementation

4 POST-ENTRY INTEGRATION POLICIES

4.1 Policy Design

4.2 Policy implementation and the Deltaplan Civic Integration

5 NATIONAL DISCOURSES ON THE MIGRATION-INTEGRATION NEXUS SINCE 2000

5.1 Politicization of the migration-integration nexus

5.2 Issue-linkages; gender and securitization

5.3 Actors from the policy subsystem
6 PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF PRE- AND POST-ENTRY INTEGRATION PROVISIONS

6.1 Perceived impacts of pre-entry measures

6.2 Perceived impacts of post-entry measures

6.3 Methodological discussion

7 THE LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIC INTEGRATION POLICIES; THE CITY OF ENSCHEDE

7.1 Contextual factors

7.2 Local migration-integration Policy Frames. An overview

7.3 The local integration landscape. A mapping of integration courses

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

7.5 Conclusions

8 CONCLUSIONS

APPENDIX: METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

LITERATURE
1 Introduction

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

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

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

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

The objective of this analysis is to find out to what extent a sustainable frame has emerged of the migration-integration nexus, that is a frame that is shared by a broad network of actors, that is consistently implemented and that is seen as effective by the involved actors. This means that this study will not determine the real world effects of Dutch
pre- and post-admission integration measures, or determine the success or failure of such policies by any given yardstick. Accepting that civic integration policy forms an ‘intractable policy controversy’ characterized by uncertainty of knowledge (such as data on effects or even expertise on its legal acceptability) and contest on the political and social desirability and acceptability of this policy, our unit of analysis is rather the more fundamental level of problem framing itself. So, this is a policy-science study of how and why the Dutch migration-integration nexus evolved as it did and whether it is considered effective by involved actors themselves, rather than a social-scientific evaluation of policy effectiveness in itself.
2 The Evolution of the Migration-Integration Nexus

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thus, the migration-integration nexus was reframed once more in the early 1990s, from a restrictive immigration policy in order to facilitate the integration of specific groups, to a more elaborate integration policy so as to cope with the ongoing arrival of family migrants in particular. Ethnic Minorities Policy of the 1980s made place for an Integration Policy that focused less on specific migrant groups and more on individual migrants (‘allochtonen’) and on their integration in social and economic spheres such as labour, education and housing. The new Integration Policy, therefore, became much more generic than the previous group-specific Ethnic Minorities Policy. The main responsibilities for immigrant integration were shifted to generic policy domains such as labour market and educational policies, and no longer seen as a distinct policy domain in itself. Finally, in 1998 a law was enacted that regulated the integration of newcomers into Dutch society by obliging them to participate in civic integration courses (without an integration exam). This marked the formal beginning of the now so renowned Dutch inburgeringsbeleid.
After the turn of the millennium, once again a new policy frame would emerge in relation to the migration-integration nexus. A sharp politicization of migration and integration made reinforcing the integration policy and adopting further restrictive measures in the domain of immigration into key policy priorities. In particular family migration from Islamic countries like Turkey and Morocco now raised broad public and political concern. This triggered new reforms in both integration and immigration policies, reforms that were mutually reinforcing. In the sphere of integration, a culturalisation of policy measures occurred. The need to acquire social skills and knowledge of national culture, for example, became strongly emphasised in the civic integration courses. In the sphere of immigration, new restrictive measures were developed, such as a 120% of the minimum wage level requirement for family migration and the introduction of pre-entry programmes that would not just have to further the integration of participants but that would also help migrants to ‘consider’ their migration to the Netherlands very thoroughly.

The new frame that emerged in this epoch not just restricted immigration in order to further integration, but also saw the toughening of integration programmes (such as the pre-entry programmes) as a means for limiting immigration among categories of migrants that were seen as hard to integrate, in particular family migrants from Turkey and Morocco. This meant that more than ever before the migration-integration nexus became of central importance to the development of both migration and integration policies. Immigration policies were adapted to the culturalisation of integration policies (in particular in relation to family migration), while integration policies were now also regarded a means for restricting immigration (for instance by ‘helping’ migrants to consider their migration thoroughly, but also by attributing a high degree of individual responsibility to the individual migrant to organize their pre-entry integration programmes). It is on this most recent episode in the development of the Dutch migration-integration nexus that this paper will focus.

2.2 Institutional separation in the departmental organization

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

In terms of ministerial responsibilities as well, there has almost constantly been a clear separation between both areas. In the 1980s and most of the 1990s, the coordination of the integration policy was the responsibility of the Minister of Home Affairs. For immigration policy there has almost constantly been a special State Secretary within the Department of Justice. In 1998, a special minister was installed for ‘Urban Policy and Integration’. Only very briefly, from 2002 to 2006, a special minister for Immigration and
Integration existed within the Justice Department (Minister Nawijn and later Minister Verdonk). In 2006 immigration was transferred from the portfolio of minister Verdonk to the minister of Justice, and when the Balkenende IV government took office in 2007 integration was moved to the Department of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment. Within this Department a special minister for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration was appointed (at first ms. Vogelaar and later mr. Van der Laan). In 2010, the policy responsibility for integration shifted back again to the Home Affairs Department. The Minister of Home Affairs, became responsible for matters more directly related to integration. At the same time, immigration policy shifted from the Justice Department to Home Affairs, where a new minister was appointed for Immigration and Asylum. Once more, responsibilities for the two fields were in the same Department, though in the hands of different Ministers.

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

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

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

Civic integration on the agenda

The Netherlands first developed a policy aimed at civic integration of newcomers with the Civic Integration of Newcomers Act (which entered into force in 1998). This law was the product of years of debate on how Dutch integration policies could be adapted to the new reality of permanent immigration. Already in 1989, the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy concluded that if immigration was to be a permanent phenomenon in Dutch society, then the integration of newcomers would also be a structural (rather than a temporary) policy in Dutch society (WRR, 1989: 10). Government should step up its efforts to cope with the ongoing arrival of newcomers and, at the same time, migrants also have a ‘responsibility’ to make an effort to integrate into society (ibid). Important is that the focus in this epoch was primarily on social economic integration (Scholten, 2010); the civic integration of newcomers should prepare migrants to participate in the spheres of labour, education and housing and prevent them from becoming ‘welfare dependents’ that would burden the welfare state.
This neo-liberal argument for a revision of the government integration policy was elaborated some years later by professors Van der Zwan and Entzinger. They framed the plans for a more individual and obligatory integration structure for newcomers in the context of ‘a societal shift (...) in the character of the welfare state from soft compensatory in the direction of achievement performance’ (Van der Zwan and Entzinger, 1994: 5). It developed a clear rights-and-duties perspective on the new integration courses; the migrants would be entitled to (and the government obliged to provide) civic integration programs to help migrants to participate on the Dutch labour market, whereas the migrants would have an obligation to participate in these programs and acquire the degree of language proficiency as well basic social skills to be able to participate on the labour market.

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

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

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

**The reform of the civic integration system**

The new Civic Integration of Newcomers Act not only became immediately questioned in terms of its implementation difficulties, it also became a central part of a broad national debate on immigrant integration at large that emerged in 2000. This debate was triggered by a media article by the public intellectual Paul Scheffer who denounced the Dutch integration
approach in terms of a ‘multicultural tragedy.’ This debate strongly contributed to a culturalisation of the tone of debate in the Netherlands; Dutch culture and history were to become key elements of the Dutch integration approach, marking a sharp difference with the individualist and social-economic approach of the 1990s and the multicultural approach from the 1980s.

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

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

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

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

2 Interview with former policy maker at Department of Justice
coalition agreement included a paragraph that contained the core of the reform of the civic integration structure that would follow in this decade:

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

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

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

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

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

At present, new reforms in the civic integration system seem imminent. In the context of the economic recession, the current government has already decided to cut down significantly on the budget for civic integration programmes. This will inevitably mean that the civic integration programs become even more an individual responsibility of the migrant themselves, and that government will have to cut down on the (already limited) ways in which it facilitates in particular the post-entry programs. Within the current political environment, this will however involve a welcome ‘side-effect’ of further decreasing the level of family migration. Interviews reveal that limiting immigration to the Netherlands has become openly recognized as a policy goal of pre-entry measures among politicians in particular, though policymakers and policy documents phrase this policy goal in more nuanced terms as an expected and also to be positively evaluated side-effect of the government measures (the latter maintaining the integration remains the main goal of these measures).

The new Centre-Right government coalition under prime-minister Rutte that took office in 2010 (with the Liberals, the Christian Democrats and with support from Wilders’ Freedom Party) announced a further reform of the Dutch civic integration system in particular and Dutch immigration and integration policies more in general. In the coalition agreement of the new Rutte cabinet, new measures have been announced to further restrict immigration to the Netherlands. Interesting is that many of these plans, such as reinstalling an income level requirement to immigrants, elevating the minimum age requirement for family migrants to 24 years, introducing a test that would have to measure whether a migrants is most strongly attached to either the Netherlands or his/her country of origin, and other measures to further restrict family as well as asylum migration in particular, require changes in the relevant European regulations (such as the Family Reunification Directive) and treaties. Also, the coalition agreement explicitly mentions that the new cabinet will make strong efforts to change European migration regulations according to its preferences, without opting out of European and international treaties.

In terms of civic integration, the new government maintains its position that the integration of newcomers is primarily an individual responsibility of migrants themselves. This means that the government will no longer support the provision of post-entry civic integration courses; it will only establish a social loan system for those migrants who cannot immediately afford paying for the courses. This has immediately led to critical responses from the four major Dutch cities, which have expressed concerns about the negative impact of these new measures on the attendance of these courses.3

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3 NRC Handelsblad, 30-11-2010, ‘Grote Steden sturen brandbrief inburgering’.
The preceding analysis shows that the Dutch pre- and post-entry civic integration provisions (and –conditions) have changed significantly over the past decade. The new system has become more mandatory in terms of tests and legal consequences and in terms of acquiring a residence permit, more inclusive in terms of target groups, more culturalist in terms of focus and much more geared towards the individual in terms of the allocation of responsibilities for attending the courses and for funding them. However, the new civic integration system is still undergoing transformations. In particular an extensive ‘Deltaplan’ was required to resolve the many implementation problems associated with the original plans for reform. The plans of the new government show however that, in spite of the many implementation difficulties experienced before, the political attachment to the restrictive measures and the tone of the original measures remain firm.

TO BE UPDATED>/>
3 Pre-entry integration policies

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

3.1 Policy design

Policy objectives and policy theory

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

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

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4 TK 2003-2004, 2900, nr. 3: 4
5 Ibid.: 4
6 Ibid.: 6
7 Ibid.
8 TK2003-2004, 29700, nr.3: 14
9 Ibid.: 14
10 TK 2003-2004, 29700, nr. 3: 14-15
as these are qualities that are of crucial importance to the further integration in the Netherlands’.  

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

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

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

11 TK 2003-2004, 29700, nr.3: 11
12 TK 2003-2004, 2900, nr.3: 4
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.: 5
15 Ibid.: 5
16 TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 47
17 TK, 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 4
oriented) countries’, that also provide family migrants, are exempted; this includes Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, the US and Switzerland. Migrants from these countries are exempted because they ‘come from countries that are comparable to the European countries in social, economic and political respects and for that reason do not lead to undesirable and uncontrollable migration flows to the Netherlands and to substantial integration problems in Dutch society’ (Ibid.: 19). Furthermore, government states that imposing pre-entry tests for migrants from these countries was found to be ‘potentially harmful to our foreign and economic relations’. This shows that political-economic arguments also played a role in the selection of policy target groups.

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

Dutch government has raised the required level to A1 starting from January 2011. This was motivated by the seemingly small effect on language proficiency of migrants after completing the pre-entry tests. De facto, the testing level was already raised to A1 in March 2008, though the required level for passing the test had remained on A1-minus. In addition, the pre-entry tests were expanded with a literacy test. This test does not include writing skills, but does include reading Dutch, pronunciation of Dutch texts and understanding of Dutch texts. This also means that the current system of computerized examinations could be continued.

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

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18 TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 32
19 Staatsblad, 2010: 679
20 TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr.1: 9
21 Ibid.: 4
22 Staatsblad 2010, 679: 7
23 TK 2004-2005, 29700, nr. 6: 2
Dutch government does not provide pre-entry courses in the countries of origin. Migrants are entirely free in choosing how they prepare for the pre-entry tests. Recent studies show that indeed a significant supply of courses has emerged in most of the migrants’ countries of origin (Triarii, 2009: 16). The Dutch government does supply an information and training package that migrants may (but are not obliged to) buy, including a film on dvd (‘Coming the Netherlands’), a booklet, and access codes for test exams. By providing the material, but not actively organizing courses, the pre-entry policy seeks to appeal to the individual responsibility of the migrants themselves for their migration to the Netherlands.

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

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

Finally, these pre-entry conditions were expected to lead to a limitation of immigration, in particular family formation.

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

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24 TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr. 1: 16
26 C-578/08J
to raise the age requirement for both family formation and family reunification migration to 21 years, thereby toughening the criteria for family reunification in particular (though still within the legal boundaries set by the European Family Reunification Directive). The European Court also ruled that the Netherlands was not allowed to pose a general income requirement of 120% in all cases of family migrants. It is not allowed to reject applications based on a general income requirement without any assessment of the circumstances of each individual application (Ibid.). Governments are allowed to pose income requirements to applicants, but the Dutch requirement of 120% of minimum wage level is too high to posit without assessing the individual consequences of this general rule. Consequently, Dutch government changed the income requirement to 100% of minimum wage level for families and 70% of minimum wage level for single parents (Ibid.). In addition, the Dutch government will assess for every individual case what the consequences will be if the application is to be rejected and a legal check with take place whether these consequences are in line with art. 8 ECHR.

3.2 Relation to and interaction with EU regulations

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

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

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

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27 TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr. 8
reason for exempting specific categories from the general obligation of civic integration abroad.\textsuperscript{28}

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

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

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

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

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

\textsuperscript{28} The Hague Court, 23 April 2008, AWB 07/35128, JV 2008/282
\textsuperscript{29} Tk 2009-2010, 32175, nr. 1: 22
who passed the test. However, thus far there seems to be too little data (due to the recent launch of the pre-entry tests) to determine such effects.

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

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

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

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

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

30 TK 2009-2010, 32175, nr.1: 12
32 Interview with policymaker from Justice Department.
courses, whereas the Netherlands does not have a similar structure. Furthermore, Germany requires migrants to obtain a language certificate from these institutes that has to be submitted to the embassy in order to become eligible for a residence permit, whereas in the Netherlands the embassies organize the pre-entry tests themselves.

3.3 Policy implementation

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

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

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

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

The Dutch government does provide official ‘training material’ that migrants can pursue in (of from) their home countries. This training material consists of a DVD ‘To the Netherlands’, a book with photos related to the film, an audio-cd with questions and answers related to the film, and a set of (so-called TIN-) codes that migrants can use to make test-exams through a phone connection.
This training material has sparked controversy, primarily because of the image it portrays about Dutch society. Specific parts of the film with gays kissing and with a topless woman on a Dutch beach, would even make the possession of this movie illegal in a number of countries. That is why Dutch government also provides an expurgated version of the movie in some countries. This version now amounts to about one-third of the total number of training packages sold in 2009 (Significant, 2009: 14).

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

Experiences with the test

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

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

Furthermore, some participants stated that they experienced some questions as ‘patronizing’, for instance questions about whether it is permitted to hit your wife.

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

The costs for the preparation and for taking the pre-entry test amount to an average of €719 (Ernst & Young, 2009: 40); this includes the costs for the exam (€350), for the training material (€41), additional material and test-exam codes, lessons in the home countries, lessons in the Netherlands and travel and hotel costs for going to the embassy. However the differences in costs made by individual migrants are great. About 50% % spend less than €480. However, in individual cases the costs may well exceed the average of €719. About one
in four spends more than this average, and in some cases (about 2-3%) the costs exceed €2,000 (Begeleidingscommissie, 2009: 8).
Post-entry integration policies

4.1 Policy Design

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Both the Council of State and the Advisory Committee on Aliens Affairs advised against this idea, especially because it would discriminate against naturalized Dutchmen by differentiating between them and those who were born Dutch. This would violate article 1 of the Constitution, the so-called anti-discrimination article. The Advisory Committee on Aliens Affair considered the original plans ‘partly unfeasible and partly highly problematic’ (De Vries, 2006: 12). It advised government to adopt a criterion that would be less discriminatory
based on ‘birth, descent or race’, which involved looking at the period (8 years) that the applicants have resided in the Netherlands while being legally obliged to schooling (in the Netherlands, there is a general schooling obligation for all citizens until the age of 16). This advice was at initially also adopted by the minister (De Vries, 2006: TK 2004-2005, 29543, nr. 4: 14).

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

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

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

Consequently, the government was eventually forced to abandon the civic integration obligation for the three categories of naturalized Dutchmen (TK 2005-2006, 30308, nr. 106). This effectively meant that about half of the original target population of the new law (about
500,000 persons) could not be obliged to participate. Instead, it proposed a voluntary structure for the civic integration of mostly naturalized oldcomers (TK 2005–2006, 30308, nr. 110). The three mentioned categories of ‘naturalized Dutchmen’ were identified as ‘priority groups’ for the provision of these civic integration courses on a voluntary basis. Only in limited cases, for instance when a migrant receives social security benefits, municipalities can oblige these migrants to participate as a condition for receiving these benefits (see also, Significant, 2010: 67).

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

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

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

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

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

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4.2 Policy implementation and the ‘Deltaplan’ for Civic Integration

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

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

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

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39 Interview with former Minister Vogelaar.
41 Interview with researchers from SCP.
42 The term ‘Deltaplan’ is a reference to the Dutch government program of the 1950s that aimed at preventing the flooding of major parts of the Netherlands by constructing large dams. It was a very costly programme that lasted for several decades. Nowadays, in Dutch politics the term is used as a metaphor for a ‘very large and ambitious project’.
43 Also: interview with former Minister Vogelaar.
the culturalist elements of the civic integration act as developed by Verdonk. Instead, a more modest aim seems to have emerged, that is to support the self-sufficiency of the migrants in Dutch society.

In addition, the Deltaplan reinstalled the central role of municipalities in the implementation of civic integration programs. A series of simplifications in the Civic Integration Act were meant to facilitate policy implementation by municipalities. In addition, it gives the municipalities more means and more policy discretion in fulfilling their central directive role in the local implementation of civic integration courses. Though migrants’ individual responsibility for their civic integration remained a central policy goal, the more active role for municipalities and the provision of additional state funds (about 40 million euros) signal that the government was not entirely confident that this individual responsibility would be the best condition for a successful integration.\(^4\) In this respect, the Minister states that ‘it is central to find a good balance between individual responsibility and the social importance of having as many people as possible integrated, (..) in the Civic Integration Act that balance has been insufficient’ (TK 2007-2008, 31143, nr. 9: 6).

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

However, also after these changes it remained difficult to effectively reach all target groups and get them to participate in integration courses. In 2009, the major Dutch cities managed to provide less than half of the expected integration courses for newcomers and specific groups of oldcomers.\(^5\) Therefore, the new Minister for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration, Mr. Van der Laan, raised further (minor) reforms (in the context of the Deltaplan Inburgering) to enhance the practice of civic integration programs.

\(^4\) See also parliamentary debates on this point, TK 31143, nr. 9: 2.
\(^5\) ‘Forse achterstand op inburgering, in NRC Handelsblad, August 25 2009.
5 National discourses on the migration-integration nexus since 2000

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

5.1 Politicization of the migration-integration nexus

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

47 In an earlier stage, a parliamentary majority did however successfully argue against a generic integration obligation for oldcomers who had not enjoyed a specific period of education. For instance, see: ‘allen inburgering oogst alom kritiek’, Volkskrant, December 8 2004.
education was considered primarily a responsibility of the migrants themselves and their home countries, rather than a responsibility of the country of destination.\textsuperscript{48}

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

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

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

\textsuperscript{48} Interview with member of social democrat party, mr. Dijsselbloem.

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

\textsuperscript{50} “Geïsoleerde migrant regelt inburgering niet zelf”, in NRC Handelsblad, June 12, 2006.

\textsuperscript{51} Interview member of social democrat party.
that asked for policies on civic integration abroad, it did become an important supporter of these plans after their defeat in the 2002 elections.

The assimilationist turn in Dutch immigrant integration politics thus seems to have taken effect in the recent changes in the civic integration system as well (see also, Spijkerboer, 2007: 36). In particular the role of Minister Verdonk as a key policy entrepreneur for revising the Dutch civic integration structure should not be underestimated. Though the need for a revision of the system had already become manifest before her rise on the political stage\textsuperscript{52}, she was a key driver in effectuating the changes, often in spite of the many legal, financial and practical constraints and thanks to the broad political consensus identified above. This is also confirmed by statements by Ms. Vogelaar, who had been chair of the Taskforce Civic Integration from 1998 to 2002, was a member of the Franssen committee on integration tests and became minister of Integration and Neighborhood policies in 2007. With reference to the policy plans initiated by Ms. Verdonk, Ms. Vogelaar stated that these were primarily driven by ‘ideological viewpoints’, which would often be out of touch with the intractable reality of civic integration courses.\textsuperscript{53} However, Ms. Verdonk also received criticism for being too firm and political in her ideas about policy revisions. For instance, she received criticism from political parties (even within her own cabinet) and from her own department, that she had held on too long to the idea of imposing a generic civic integration obligation to (often naturalized) oldcomers, in spite of the obvious legal constraints on discriminating between different categories of immigrants. During parliamentary hearings, Verdonk had even urged her colleagues to show ‘political courage’ in realizing the new plans.\textsuperscript{54}

\subsection*{5.2 Issue-linkages; gender and securitization}

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

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{52} Interview with policymaker from Home Affairs Department.
\item \textsuperscript{53} Interview with former Minister Vogelaar.
\item \textsuperscript{54} ‘Waar blijft de inburgeringswet’, De Volkskrant, June 21, 2006.
\item \textsuperscript{55} Interviews Ms. Vogelaar, Ms. Verdonk, Ms. Sterk, Mr. Dijsselbloem.
\end{itemize}
discrimination, is to impose a general law and a general obligation for civic integration abroad.

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.3 Actors from the policy subsystem

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

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

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

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

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

60 Interview with expert from ACVZ
interviews questions were raised whether an obligation would be needed in order to reaching out to the target populations, but also whether it would be desirable.\textsuperscript{61}

Finally, in an unprecedented unified response, 18 Dutch academics from various universities and various disciplines, questioned a number of key assumptions of the new Civic Integration Act as proposed in 2006. In an open letter to the Dutch Senate, they explicitly asked to reject the new Act.\textsuperscript{62} They warned (like VNG), for the administrative implications of the new law, in particular its complex structure of loans, reimbursements, sanctions, differentiation of target groups, etc. This would, according to the professors, significantly increase the costs of implementing the new Act. In addition, they raised economic arguments against the new Act, especially because of its potentially discouraging effect on the immigration of high-skilled migrants. Thirdly, they raised moral reservations against the new act, especially as the financial responsibility of the participants and the higher threshold for passing the integration exams, would disproportionately affect the weaker immigrants. Finally, they argued that the legal constraints on imposing an integration obligation on various specific categories are so many, that in fact only a relatively small group can be obliged to take part.

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

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

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

\textsuperscript{61} Interviews XXX
\textsuperscript{62} Also published in: NRC Handelsblad, October 11th, 2006.
Whereas in terms of political discourse there was a strong consensus supporting the new government plans, the arena of public debate provided more occasion for more fundamental debates on civic integration programs. For instance, in 2004, the media picked up immediately on the criticism of the Franssen Committee of the new plans for pre-entry integration measures.\(^{63}\) The committee raised the fundamental matter that if the main objective of the pre-entry tests was to promote integration, then ‘government should be willing to pull its wallet’.\(^ {64}\) This triggered a fierce response from various parliamentarians; for instance, Ms. Hirsi Ali, then a Member of Parliament for the Liberal Party, argued that one of the goals of the new pre-entry test was to prevent illiterates and low-educated people from coming to the Netherlands.\(^ {65}\) She claimed that the goal of the pre-entry tests would indeed be to limit immigration rather than to promote integration (in line with her party’s statements). The media coverage about this debate at least reveals (rather than questions) that limiting (family) migration was indeed one of the objectives of the new policy proposals and that this goal seems to be broadly shared in Dutch politics.

In this same period, the media also explicitly addressed the lack of political willingness to accept advisory reports such as the ones of the Franssen Committee and the Blok Committee (the parliamentary investigative committee on integration policy). With regard to the latter, the media concludes, given the immediate (and in some cases even premature) rejection of this committee’s findings, that for the first time a parliamentary investigative committee had turned out to be a complete failure.\(^ {66}\) Concerning the Franssen committee

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report, media reports again address the lack of political will to respond to recommendations that were momentarily not opportune, and the swiftness of politicians to denounce the committee findings as being too political.\footnote{Coalitie snel met neerhalen kritisch rapport, March 5th, 2004.}
6 Perceived impacts of pre- and post-entry integration provisions

6.1 Perceived impacts of pre-entry measures

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

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

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

The Begeleidingscommissie (2009: 9) argues that these effects can be only limited, given the fact that the level of language proficiency required for passing the pre-entry test is set very low. There was, unfortunately, still too little data available for determining the effect of the pre-entry tests on the subsequent integration of these participants into Dutch society (Regioplan, 2009: 20). However, spokespersons from municipalities involved in post-entry programs indicate that there seems to be a slight amelioration in preparation, motivation and language proficiency of those who arrive in the Netherlands for post-entry programs after having completed the pre-entry programs (Ibid.: 20). The participants in the pre-entry tests (about 85%) themselves also seem to agree that the pre-entry tests help them prepare for their integration in the Netherlands (Ibid.: 33).
Table 9: Pass/fail rates for pre-entry tests after and before the raise of required level to A1 (Significant 2009)\textsuperscript{68}

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

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

\textsuperscript{68} Note that these figures, based on pass rates in pre-entry tests before the required level was actually raised, do not incorporate the potential effects of introducing the reading part in the pre-entry tests. It should be expected that the fail rates, especially for particular categories, will increase further due to this test.
by Regioplan (p. 18) and our own focus groups confirm the role of memorization as a factor explaining the successful pass rates in the test on Dutch society.

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

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

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

Figure 2: Number of applications for temporary residence permit (blue line for entire population, brown line for those required to pass a pre-entry test)
Though the effects differ little for different categories of applicants, the decrease was slightly larger for elderly persons and for low-educated persons. This seems to point at a degree of ‘self-selection’ amongst migrants (Regioplan, 2009: 60-62); migrants who fear not being able to pass or who are not motivated to take part in the pre-entry tests, do not apply for family migration. It is also possible also that the partners selected for family migration are more highly educated than before. In terms of countries, in particular the number of applications from Turkey, Morocco, Brazil and Indonesia seems to have decreased relatively strongly (Ibid.: 70). An important finding in relation to European regulations, is that pre-entry tests seem to bring about little selection effects in terms of pass or fail-rates; almost 96% of the participants who take part in the pre-entry tests eventually manage to pass the test. Therefore, Lodder (2009: 34) concludes that ‘the imposition of the pre-entry tests has posed a more severe obstacle to low-educated, family reunification migrants, specific nationalities and in particular Turkish and Moroccans than for other categories of migrants (..), but for none of these groups is this obstacle so severe that it results in the exclusion of specific groups.’

In various reports, the effect on the levels of immigration of specific groups is defined as ‘self-selection.’ This would mean that the pre-entry tests themselves, because of the high passing rates, do not so much select migrants, but that migrants determine for themselves whether they consider themselves capable of passing a pre-entry test and based thereon they decide whether or not to engage in such a test. This is also reflected in the changing composition of the group of applicants for temporary residence permits in the concerned countries (see table 2): the percentage of female applicants has increased (further) to more than two-thirds, the applicants have on average become more highly educated (increase of percentage of highly educated from 20 to 33%) and they have become younger on average (from 33 to 31 years of age). Furthermore, differences in terms of countries or origin were detected (Moroccans and Ghanians, for example, have scores below average, while Chinese, Thai and Brazilians score above the average). Of course, these trends cannot be simply causally related to the pre-entry tests alone.
Table 10: Characteristics of applicants for temporary residence permits before and after effectuation of the Integration Abroad Act (in %) (Significant 2009: 61-62).

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

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

**Perception by TCN’s**

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

The focus groups reveal that migrants do question the added value of the pre-entry tests. The test in basic knowledge of Dutch society is seen as simple, but many migrants also seem to pass this test through the memorization of example-questions. An often mentioned positive effect of this part of the pre-entry test was that it did provide migrants basic knowledge for finding one’s way into Dutch society: for instance, knowing how things work in relation to general practitioners in the Netherlands.
Many migrants also indicated the presence of questions that they did not consider very relevant for their participation in Dutch society. Especially questions about Dutch culture and history (such as about Rembrandt’s ‘Nightwatch’) were referred to in this respect. Moreover, some migrants also perceived the test as patronizing, especially in the case of migrants who had already obtained an adequate level of knowledge of Dutch society and Dutch language proficiency in another manner.

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

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

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

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

Probably also due to the adjustments made in successive years, in the context of the Deltaplan Civic Integration, the number of participants to the civic integration courses increased rapidly. By December 2009, 127,000 migrants had been reached for whom participation would be mandatory, of whom 83,000 took part in civic integration courses. This also means that 44,000 did not receive any ‘provision’ in terms of a civic integration course; these migrants were assumed to prepare for the integration test in another way. However, 37,000 out of these 44,000 had not passed the integration exam yet by the end of 2009 (ibid: 37). About 60,000 migrants had received an official exemption for taking part in the civic integration tests. At least 80,000 migrants for whom participation in the integration programs could be mandatory, had not been reached yet nor has their integration obligation formally been established.

By the end of 2009, about 20,000 migrants had participated in civic integration programs on a voluntary basis. Under the new law, municipalities experienced difficulties in reaching this potentially very large pool of participants to integration programs, of about 319,000 so-called ‘oldcomers’ (ibid: 143-144). As participation in the integration programs is not mandatory for this group, they have to be ‘seduced’ to participate (ibid: 34). Amongst other, the discourse on ‘civic integration’ seems to form an obstacle for participants from this category to enrol, especially for those who already have full citizenship and no longer feel like an immigrant or ‘inburgeraar’ (ibid: 35). In order to lower the threshold to participate, government has now allowed municipalities to ask lower participation fees for this group.

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

There do remain however specific problems in the practical implementation of the integration courses. Also, cities do not appear to give much effect to the sanction-oriented elements of the new Civic Integration Act. Few sanctions have been imposed thus far, and as far as sanctions have been applied, most cities chose to impose fines well below the maximum sanctions as defined by the government. Also, municipalities seem to consider sanctions as potentially counterproductive in terms of getting migrants to pass the
integration exams (ibid: 31). More in general, various municipalities indicate that they experience a friction between the national public and political discourse on civic integration and their interest in promoting participation on the local level (ibid: 166).

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

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

6.3 Methodological discussion

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

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

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69 This was a key impression from the focusgroup on 8-12-2010, but also from interviews as with a researcher from the SCP, xxxx

70 Interview with researcher from SCP; attempts are being made to couple databases so as to be able to monitor the social-economic participation of migrants who previously participated in civic integration programs.
low, that little effect can be expected on migrants language proficiency. However, two positive effects do emerge clearly both from the focus groups and other research reports. Firstly, the pre-entry test does seem to enhance the overall preparation and motivation of migrants who decide to come to the Netherlands, and secondly it does provide migrants with relevant practical knowledge that helps them to find their way around in the Netherlands in terms of very basic activities.

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

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

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

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

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

To conclude, the absence of clear evidence that the pre- and post-entry policies do effectively promote integration, means that no final conclusion can yet be reached about the success or failure of these policies. This may, for the future, also hold legal consequences.
particular, if these policies do not resort in sufficient integration effects, the ECJ may rule that the policies are disproportionate in terms of erecting an obstacle to the immigration of specific categories, as it was this balance between the right of family life and states’ discretion to pose integration conditions that initially allowed Dutch government to develop these policies. Therefore, proving the integration effects of post- and pre-entry policies will be a central priority for the coming 1 to 2 years.
7 The local implementation of civic integration policies; the city of Enschede

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

7.1 Contextual factors

Enschede is a city in the east of the Netherlands close to the German border. With its approximately 155,000 inhabitants (2008) it is a middle range Dutch big city. 27.5% of its inhabitants are of immigrant background. Enschede harbours around 150 nationalities with people of Turkish descent as the largest immigrant group. They make up 5.8% of the population. The majority of Enschede’s immigrant population has the Dutch nationality; 6% of the population of Enschede is registered as a foreigner (source: Enschede in cijfers http://www.enschede.nl/gemeente/cijfers/). Enschede is an old industrious town (textile), which in the heydays of manufacturing attracted migrant workers mainly from Turkey. Since the decline of its industries Enschede has met major difficulties in attracting new economic activities. At present Enschede is with an average yearly income of € 28,500 per household one of the poorest municipalities in the Netherlands and has (in 2008) an above average percentage of unemployed of 7.1% (the average for the Netherlands as a whole is in 2008 4.5%)(ibid.). The current (2010) unemployment rate is according to Gankema 14.4%. The unemployment of people with an immigrant background is higher than that of authochtonous people and their income position is lower. Almost 35% of the immigrant population is dependent on a social security benefit.71 Enschede is traditionally reputed as a ‘red’ municipality with the Labour Party (PVDA) dominating the local government. In the latest local elections of March 3 2010 the Labour Party had to take a heavy defeat. They now have to share power in a local council with the Christian Democrats (CDA), the liberal party (VVD) and Citizens’ Interests (Burgerbelangen, a local party).

7.2 Local migration-integration Policy Frames. An overview

The municipality of Enschede has laid down its views on integration in the policy report ‘Integration and Citizenship (Municipality of Enschede 2008a). The municipal integration policy document is written by Herma Scholten and Ger Gankema. Scholten and Gankema have together developed the whole municipal infrastructure on civic integration in Enschede..(Off the record; The responsible alderman at that time Ed Wallinga did not closely watch the subject ‘zat er niet strak op’). for the integration policy document they asked all

71 Source: Enschede in cijfers http://www.enschede.nl/gemeente/cijfers/
municipal departments to point out what their contribution could be to integration. This was to prevent that integration would become the responsibility of only one department. For the same reason, to ensure that all felt committed to the integration policy, they demanded that all aldermen and all municipal departments declared themselves committed to the integration policy document. This explains why in the Enschede integration policy document one finds subjects, like care for elderly people, that one normally would not expect in a policy document on the integration of immigrants.

'Dimensions of integration'
‘Integration’ means for Enschede that every citizen a) is able to cope for himself in the fields of work, housing, care, safety education and leisure time, b) participates in Enschede’s society and c) feels at home in Enschede. There should be no difference in the participation of autochthonous and allochtonous citizens. Enschede finds it important that regardless of their background all citizens participate equally in society. The municipality signals that still too many citizens of immigrant background do not participate equally in society. Too many of them have little education, a low income and are unemployed. Enschede does not accept enduring backlogs and citizens who do not participate in society. (Municipality of Enschede 2008a: 6,7).

In the integration policy the following dimensions are emphasized: 1) language and education (upbringing) 2) housing, 3) care and well-being, 4) economy and work, 5) safety, 6) integration in the city neighbourhoods. (ibid.). ‘Integration’ is in the policy document linked to and almost synonymous with citizenship as the latter is defined as active participation in society (ibid.; 12).

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

Actors
The local integration policy document is the outcome of a series of integration debates with interested citizens that were organized from mid 2005 to the beginning of 2006. In the policy document ‘integration’ is linked to the concept of citizenship. Citizens are expected to take their own responsibility (active citizenship). Yet integration is also a responsibility of civil society (shared citizenship). About the municipality’s view on its own role: it orchestrates, stimulates, facilitates or intervenes, but in the end the improvement of people’s social position is a result of the joint efforts of individuals, civil society organizations and the municipality.
The Enschede Integration policy document on civic integration courses:

Starting point for the municipal integration policy is that in principal general policies should reach all target groups in the city. Yet the problems of immigrant are so serious and specific that a specific policy was required (Municipality of Enschede 2008a: 27). This is the rationale of Enschede’s civic integration policy. In the implementation of the Law Civic Integration the choice has been made to deliver tailor-made services and at the same time link up with the existing system of re-integration to paid labour. The aim of this approach is that a continuous line is created that activates people thus that they flow into regular and additional work and thus participate actively in society (ibid.). Dimensions: Civic integration courses seem to be for Enschede foremost a stepping stone to integration in the labour market. Telling is also that the policy view on the civic integration courses is a section in the city’s integration policy document’s chapter on ‘Economy and work’. Yet, there is in the integration policy document also a special chapter entitled ‘Language and upbringing’. This suggests that a good mastery of Dutch (by mothers) and for Enschede language acquisition is also linked to the issue of raising one’s children. Children who have learned to speak Dutch at home will perform better at school (Municipality of Enschede 2008: 29). The municipality has now started a new project to channel the parents of children visiting preschool playgroups to language lessons. An attempt is being made to use in the language education for parents the same method or approach as the approach by which their children get taught, so that there is a good connection and parents understand and can help their children with exercises. In Enschede there is also a project for children in which the children start to learn to read from group 1 (when they are 4 years old). This increases their language ability enormously, according to Gankema.

In another policy document from the same year ‘Taking part counts. A view on participation in socio-economic perspective’ it is explained that the view on participation has broadened from labour market participation to ‘contributing to society from a socio-economic perspective’ (Municipality of Enschede 2008b: 5). This contribution can also be in the form of volunteer work or informal care giving. The policy documents differentiates between two levels on the participation ladder and four participation domains:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employeeship</th>
<th>Entrepreneurship</th>
<th>Craftsmanship</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
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Citizenship is the first level of the ladder. It includes activities that are considered socially useful. This includes basic requirements for citizenship. Language courses and civic integration courses can be located on this level. People who are on the first level of citizenship are able to look after themselves themselves in society. The second level has economic independence as an aim. Craftsmanship means that people must not only acquire general labour market skills but also possess substantive knowledge and skills needed for the profession in case. The current city government has developed a new policy in which responsibilities for job training have been split: unemployed people go straight to an employer, even if there profile does not fully match what the employer needs. The
municipality is responsible for general employability, the employer takes care of the substantive job competencies.

Commonalities and differences with the national integration policy: the local integration policy is expected to follow the national policy (in Dutch policy terms the national integration agenda is ‘rolled out’ in the municipalities). We see the diagnosis and prognosis of the national integration policy back in the emphasis on active citizenship (of individual citizens). Yet from the wording of the Enschede integration policy document one suspects a more communitarian and multicultural approach than is now en vogue on the national level. To give some examples: the Enschede policy document stresses the importance of three actors, citizens, civil society organizations and the local governance, working together and emphasizes the importance of citizens participating in school activities, sports and neighbourhood activities. On the one hand in accordance with the national current more assimilationist approach the importance of speaking Dutch is recognized, from which follows the expectation that communication in consultations, projects and activities takes places in Dutch. Moreover, also in line with the national approach, Dutch norms and values, law and regulation are proclaimed as leading (hence no multicultural recognition of value diversity). On the other hand interculturalisation of Dutch institutions is considered a requirement for successful integration and the municipality has introduced a diversity policy for its own organization. Moreover, a basic assumption underlying the municipality’s view on integration is that preservation of cultural identity is of vital interest for the improvement of integration (Municipality of Enschede 2008a: 12). Migrant organizations will be subsidized if their activities promote integration (ibid.). Enschede, hence, by its explicit recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity does not depart as radically from multiculturalism as national integration policy does. While in national policy the focus is on the individual migrant and collaboration with migrant organizations is considered as undesirable, in Enschede this collaboration still takes place. In line with this is also that while in the national policy programme ‘integration’ has increasingly come to mean ‘cultural adaptation’ (in terms of language, but also adaptation to Dutch norms and values) in the Enschede documents there is little talk of adaptation to Dutch values. In Enschede integration is formulated more terms of education and labour market participation (socio-economic integration), hence corresponding more with the national integration policy of a previous era.

The problem analysis that migrant women as mothers are crucial for the integration of their children is in line with the analysis made by PAVEM. This high profile advisory commission to the government concluded that the integration of immigrant families is dependent on immigrant women’s education and participation, because it is them who educate their children (PAVEM’s motto ‘if you educate a woman, you educate a family’). The PAVEM proposed therefore that immigrant women should make up for their arrears in Dutch language, obtain paid work and take part in social life. These proposals have been implemented into the national integration policy and in the emancipation policy and have also been included in the Deltaplan Civic Integration of the Balkenende IV government (Prins and Saharso 2008).
7.3 The local integration landscape. A mapping of integration courses

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

In a national evaluation of the civic integration system it was observed that the immigrant was expected by the law on civic integration ((WIN) to carry the full responsibility for his or her integration (inburgering), which is in accordance with the notion of active citizenship. Yet in practice in many municipalities the local authorities took on an extensive directive role in the organization of the civic integration programme (Significant 2010: 15). This had, according to the report, an observable effect on the extent to which the immigrants (inburgeraars) took responsibility for their integration. Also in Enschede the local government took on an extensive directive role. We asked Ger Gankema about the reasons. His explanation is that you cannot expect people who have just arrived to organize their civic integration themselves. It will take much longer, which means that they will be longer dependent on a social security benefit. People have 3,5 to 5 years (asylum seekers) to qualify for the civic integration test. If the city’s task is only to see to it that people pass the test than in the years before they cannot be obliged to take part in a civic integration programme. If newly arrived immigrants don’t take any action than these are 3,5-5 lost years and costly for the city. This is why Enschede has chosen to take a lead in the organization of civic integration programmes. Enschede has not opted to fully outsource the civic integration courses, because external agencies are stakeholders and therefore not independent. Enschede has therefore chosen to have one department that directs the civic integration, while the the programme preparing for the jobmarket is in-sourced to the department (DCW, Work Step) that was already responsible for the re-integration of unemployed into work and the other programme(s) preparing for raising children, health and education are outsourced to external agencies (IVIO).

In 2003 Enschede and the German city of Münster started to exchange experiences, in collaboration with the Regional Educational Centre (REC). The two cities wanted to know the effects of their civic integration programmes on the actual integration of immigrants as their approaches differed greatly. In 2004 a research project started that was conducted by the university of Twente and the university of Münster (Seveker, Svensson, Thränhardt 2008; Svensson, Michalowski, Seveker 2008). In this research project a cohort of immigrants was selected and followed during a period of two to two-and-a-half year (2004-2006) in their integration process. (see for a description of the research and outcomes under section 3, (Perceived) impact of integration courses). The outcomes of this research project were taken into account and influenced the approach taken in Enschede at a later stage (after 2007). We will first describe now and report on the effects of the civic integration programmes until 2007, then do the same for the period after 2007 and we also included some information on the Münster approach.

Civic integration courses under the WIN (until 2007)
The civic integration agenda of Enschede that existed before 2007 followed closely the national agenda of the WIN. Starting point was the assumption that Dutch language proficiency and social knowledge and skills could help prevent that individual migrants would end up in a socially backward position. The civic integration policy was carried out by the REC. The Enschede policy consisted of an intensive educational trajectory with a course of 400 to 800 hours Dutch language training and a more limited course ‘social orientation’. Each student was assigned his or her individual municipal trajectory counselor who coached the student. The trajectory was obliged for all newcomers in Enschede who fell under the target groups as defined by the WIN, that is all TCN foreigners between 16-65 year who (intend for) a long time stay in the Netherlands. For so-called ‘old-comers’ there existed a combined trajectory of civic integration and re-integration into the labour market for people of immigrant descent who were living on a social security benefit. Participation for old-comers was on a voluntary basis.

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

Regarding funding sources: the municipality received money from the government. On sanctions: in an evaluation of the WIN it was signaled that more than half of the municipalities did not sanction in case a student did not take or failed the exam. The drop out percentage nationally was between 15 and 20%, the main reason being the acceptance of paid work (Significant 2010: 47). It is not clear from the documents whether Enschede applied sanctions in that period (before 2007). Gankema explained that the municipality has 2 sanction instruments: a cutback in people’s social security’s benefit and since 2008 an administrative fine. The fine has not yet been applied, because the period under the new regime before people must pass the test has not yet passed. The instrument of cutting back someone’s social security’s benefit has only seldom been applied. Usually it sufficed to give a warning that a sanction is on its way. Gankema expects, however, that from 2011 when the period has passed more sanctions will be given.

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

Impact of integration courses under the WIN (until 2007)
The impact of the integration courses under the WIN is measured by the Enschede Münster collaborative research project (Seveker, Svensson, Thränhardt 2008; Svensson, Michalowski, Seveker 2008). In both countries the immigrant groups were interviewed in 2004 when they had just arrived, in 2005 after the first year and in 2006 after about two to two-and-a-half years. The target group that was followed by Seveker et al. (2008) in Enschede consisted in 2005 of 182 people of whom in 2006 83 people again filled in the questionnaire. They were mainly refugees (about half of the population) and people who came for marriage and family re-unification (about 40%). The target group in Münster of 161 people were so-called Spätaussiedler, i.e. people with a German ethnicity, mostly originating from Russia, Kazakhstan and other states that belonged to the former Soviet Union. Most of these people did not speak German. 92 Of them were assigned a coach, 53, the control group, went without a coach. The Münster integration programme was aimed however not at language acquisition, but at promoting interaction between the immigrant and the receiving society. The Münster programme wanted to combat further segregation and concentration of immigrants in certain neighbourhoods in the city. It developed the so-called shepherd or coaches (in German: Lotsen) project. The main task of the coach, a civil servant specially assigned with this task, was to see to it that newly arriving Spätaussiedler would not settle in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of immigrants. Secondly, he would help them with the first introduction to the new direct environment: the neighbours and the neighbourhood, the local churches and associations, the local labour market and several public services. Acceptance of the assistance of a coach was not obliged, but once the immigrants had accepted his help, they had to sign an individual integration plan in which they committed themselves not to settle in an immigrant concentration area. Following the classification in dimensions of integration by Esser (2004) in enculturation, positioning, interaction and identification, the Enschede approach with its emphasis on language acquisition and knowledge of Dutch culture and society can be characterized as a policy of *enculturation*. The justification given for the intensive obligatory education in Dutch language and social orientation is that these are the key to integration in other dimensions, including the labour market. The Münster coach approach with its emphasis on non-segregated housing and the making of contacts can be characterized as interaction policy. The guiding idea behind this approach is that it is of vital interest for a successful integration in, amongst others, the labour market, that in early stage contacts are made with members of the dominant society and interaction takes place (Svensson et al. 2008: 254).

The comparative policy evaluation asked for Enschede: do the findings confirm the idea that language acquisition and knowledge of society are key to integration? For Münster it tested the idea that housing migrants in a non-segregated neighbourhood and bringing about informal contacts and social interaction promote integration. The Enschede approach seemed more effective than the Münster approach. In Enschede a better Dutch language proficiency went together with a better knowledge of Dutch society, increased participation in social activities and more contacts with Dutchmen Seveker et al 2008: 65). To illustrate: in Enschede in 2005 86% of the group researched had no job, while in 2006 this had decreased to 82%. More spectacular is the rise of people who worked 20 hours or more per week: in 2005 7%, in 2006 16%. The percentage that was dependent on a welfare benefit remained stable (36% in 2005, 35% in 2006) (ibid.: 50). In Münster there was less observable positive effect of living in a non-segregated neighbourhood on other aspects of integration. There was no positive correlation between living in a non-segregated neighbourhood and having a job (Seveker et al 2008: 65, see for the explanation below). In Enschede the
percentage not living in a segregated neighbourhood rose from 60% in 2005 to 85% in 2006. This result should, however, not be explained as a result of the civic integration programme, but of the urban re-structuring activities of the city of Enschede that offered low income households the opportunity to move to new better quality houses (ibid: 51-52). An unexpected finding in Enschede was that living in a neighbourhood with few other people of immigrant background seems to have a negative impact on language acquisition and surprisingly, also on contacts with Dutchmen. In Münster also a negative correlation was found between living in a non-segregated neighbourhood and language acquisition. The researchers suggest that recent migrants may in the early years of settlement benefit more from the help of other earlier settled migrants than from the host population (Svensson et al 2008: 265). Another finding was that in Enschede keeping to the norms and traditions of the country of origin correlated negatively with some other aspects of integration, i.e. knowledge of society and informal contacts with Dutchmen. In Münster traditionalism promoted integration. The explanation is that while the immigrants in Enschede predominantly had an Islamic background, 49% of the Spätaussiedler in Münster has a Christian background. This was beneficial for their integration in the active Münster church communities. This points to the effect of immigrants’ personal characteristics on integration. In Enschede there appeared to be only small differences in the level of integration between men and women, but clear differences between refugees and family migrants. Refugees appeared in Enschede to be the most vulnerable group. They are more often socially isolated and lonely, lack practical support, are less often socially active, more often dependent on a social security benefit and have less contacts with Dutchmen. Family migrants have their family to fall back on. Whilst refugees’ identification with the Netherlands is stronger than that of family migrants, the explanation is most likely refugees’ complex relationship with their country of origin. This suggests that refugees are more in need of help with integrating than other categories of immigrants. The researchers therefore suggest that the integration programme should be differentiated accordingly (Svensson et al 2008: 260).

After presenting the main results of the study, a word of caution is warranted. Only some correlations were found to be significant and if so, the significances were relatively small. In Enschede migrants made progress in language acquisition, but this did result in only slightly more people finding a job (0.37) or only a minor increase in informal contacts with Dutchmen (0.24). The overall conclusion of the research was that irrespective of which approach was chosen, there is little spill-over effect of improvement in one dimension of integration to other dimensions and that therefore a policy is warranted that aims to directly influence several dimensions of integration at the same time, e.g. measures aimed at language acquisition combined with measures aimed at paid work and social contacts (Svensson, Michalowski, Seveker 2008).

Civic integration courses under the WI (after 2007)
The new law (WI) takes participation as its starting point. This links up with changes in the national integration policy: under the Balkenende II government (2003-2006) the right to permanent residence in the Netherlands was made conditional on being integrated. Under Balkenende IV (2007-2010) the accent shifted to civic integration as a condition for participation (Significant 2010: 17). The municipality of Enschede considers civic education, education and re-integration as keys to participation. As the municipality realized that not receiving a social benefit does not necessarily mean that one participates in society (e.g. women with a husband who provides the family income) not only immigrants living on a
social benefit (the common target group) but also immigrants not receiving a social benefit are eligible for the civic integration trajectories, and after completion of the civic integration trajectories for the whole set of instruments aimed at work, education and participation. Participation should preferably take place in the form of work. This is not only paid work. If we think of participation through work as a staircase then volunteer work is the bottom rung of the ladder, then follows a return- or participation-job\textsuperscript{72} and the highest rung of the ladder is paid work and entrepreneurship (Inburgeringsagenda Enschede, gemeente Enschede 2008).

The law differentiates between different civic integration exam profiles: in 2007 the profile ‘Upbringing, Health and Education’ (UHE) and ‘Work’ were introduced. Since 1 January 2010 2 other profiles were added ‘Entrepreneurship’ and ‘Social Participation’. Enschede offers civic integration trajectories that form a preparation for the exam profiles UHE and Work. This is a different focus from that of some other municipalities in the Netherlands. E.g. Amsterdam has focused on ‘entrepreneurship’; a trajectory preparing for the entrepreneurship exam is running as a pilot project in Amsterdam.

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

Target groups
DUO/IB (the national office for study grants) calculated on the basis of certificates and data from the Immigration Service (IND) how many people were obliged to take an integration programme. In Enschede there are about 1800 people of migrant origin who are dependent on a social security benefit. About 500 of them are obliged to take a civic integration course (i.e. oldcomers, who arrived after 1998, who for whatever reason have not followed a civic integration programme and test). The other 1300 can be assumed to have a language deficiency and therefore also in need of and eligible for the civic integration courses. Apart from these there are about 3900 people without a social benefit who are obliged to take a civic integration course and it is estimated that in the category of allochthones who are not dependent on a social benefit about 8000 people are in need of a civic integration course. Then there is a group of about 10.000 autochthon Dutch functional illiterates. Most likely they don’t have paid work but are dependent on a social benefit. Therefore they too belong to the target groups. In practice the policy targets in the first place persons that are obliged to take a civic integration test: the 3900 people mentioned before. These consist of ‘oldcomers’ and ‘newcomers’. Additional information by Gankema: Nationally there are 18.000 new arrivals, 4000 of whom are asylum seekers. Enschede receives 1%, which is 180 people of whom 40 are asylum seekers per year who are obliged to take an integration programme and test.

\textsuperscript{72} These are jobs created by the municipality for people who would otherwise never find a job on the regular labour market and hence never have a chance to gain work experience.
For 2010 780 new civic integration trajectories are planned: 650 to UHE and 130 to Work. So, how is this amount of 780 people composed? Of these 780 about 60% (480) are obliged to participate in the programme, 40% (320) are voluntary. Of these 480 obliged, 130 receive a social security benefit. The other 350 are obliged to participate in the programme, but don’t receive a social benefit. These are newcomers holding a job or the partner has a job. The people who go to UHE are predominantly women, mothers often, not necessarily marriage migrants. Why are there so many more people who are channeled to UHE than to Work? It is people who receive a social security benefit who are channeled to Work, while the rest is directed at UHE. The latter are people not receiving a social benefit, usually because they are the partner of someone with a job. About two thirds of them is female, most of them ‘oldcomers’. Initially, Gankema explained, 780 participants was believed to be a too ambitious goal, but it looks as if the civic integration programmes are going to reach this goal. The other profiles entrepreneurship and social participation started only in 2010. There are hardly any people following Entrepreneurship (about 10 out of 130) and social participation (outsourced to IVIO) is not yet evaluated, because it just started.

Gankema confirms that to his knowledge the immigrants that arrive nowadays are now higher educated than in the years before. Illiteracy has become a problem of ‘oldcomers’. This would suggest that the pre-entry tests that were introduced in 2006 do fulfill their selective function, but Gankema also adds that his impression is that nowadays people of immigrant background more often marry a partner who is raised in the Netherlands.

The coordination of the civic integration programmes is in the hands of the department Language & Civic Integration (L & I). The work-oriented trajectory is a programme of 36 hours per week, consisting of the components language, workpractice and social capacities. The language trajectory is connected to gaining work experience through traineeships, and so-called participation- and returnjobs (i.e. jobs created by the local government to give people the opportunity to gain work experience), with a regular job or entrepreneurship as final objective. These trajectories aimed at work are carried out by the municipal organization itself through a unit named WorkStep located within the social unemployment relief works. Enschede claims to be the only Dutch municipality that has integrated civic integration into the existing infrastructure to help people to work through work (Verslag Inburgeren en participeren 2010, p. 46). The municipality has developed the method itself and keeps track of the development and satisfaction of the participants. To start with a work-oriented trajectory comes down to directly start to work with the municipality. Each participant has a weekly meeting with a trajectory consultant to discuss his or her portfolio.

The UHE-oriented trajectory is for immigrants who clearly will not enter into the regular labour market like people who receive a disability benefit or women with young children. The UHE-trajectory aims at participation in society through volunteer work. Therefore this trajectory includes not only language teaching and a course on culture and society, but also a language traineeship of at least 250 hours. The Upbringing, Health and Education trajectories are carried out by an external organization but also the REC of Twente carries out part of the UHE language trajectory.
Language coach

The joint project with the city of Münster was a reason for the municipality of Enschede to introduce a language coach. This project was introduced in 2008 for all newly arrived inhabitants of Enschede and for people who had been staying already longer in the city, but still did not know their way in the city and who had few contacts with Dutchmen. Participation is voluntary. The introduction of a coach fits well with the current national policy that stresses participation as an endgoal of civic integration. The coach is a volunteer who helps the participant in the civic integration programme with the language, but also introduces the person in question to all kinds of provisions in the neighbourhood. The coach should take as a starting point the participant’s wishes. The most important target however of the coaches project is to broaden the social network of the participant. Therefore the coaches project was offered initially only to people of whom it is suspected that they are socially isolated. This was also because occasionally there was a shortage of coaches. This narrowing of the target group was however not mentioned in the written policy (Van der Velde 2009: 79). The participant and coach usually weekly meet each other for a period of 12 weeks. The department L&I alerts people who start a civic integration trajectory to the existence of a language coach. The coordination of the coaches project is in hands of Alifa, a welfare organization. The work of a coach requires certain capabilities. Therefore coaches get training and are coached themselves (Van der Velde 2009: 38).

In 2009 the coach was offered a select to all people (old and newly arrived) that were called up for an intake conversation for the civic integration programme. This was for the UT study, so that two groups were created, one with and one without coach, to allow the measuring of the effect of a coach on integration.

Accompanying policy measures:

As day care facilities for children are an important condition for making it possible for participants to follow the civic integration trajectory, the municipality has organized day care and combines this with pre- and early school education to tackle language deficiencies of immigrant children as early as possible. There is also an experiment to intensify the reading of children below 6 years of age.

Enschede has developed a literacy trajectory as a pre-trajectory before people start their civic integration trajectory. All illiterate citizens in Enschede, autochthon and allochthon, get an offer (Inburgeren en participeren 2010, p. 43).

The costs for civic integration trajectory are € 10000 on average per trajectory. The municipality expects to receive from the government € 5000 per trajectory. Enschede has therefore chosen for an integral allocation of the municipal means for civic integration, education and re-integration (Inburgeringsagenda Enschede, Gemeente Enschede 2008). According to the law municipalities may ask of people who take part in a civic integration trajectory to pay a contribution of € 270. Enschede keeps to this contribution but collects this contribution only at the end of the programme and settles it with the government bonus that people receive when they pass the exam within the trajectory period of three years (Van der Velde 2009, p. 36).

Regarding sanctions: according to B&A Consulting (2010: 46) Enschede invests in a positive approach and positive incentives like bi-monthly graduation ceremonies and a civic integration party. Enschede counts on the commitment of people who take civic integration
trajectories and of the professionals who carry out the programmes and therefore has no need for the use of sanctions Gankema explained that the municipality has 2 sanction instruments: a cutback in people’s social security’s benefit and since 2008 an administrative fine. The fine has not yet been applied, because the period under the new regime before people must pass the test has not yet passed. The instrument of cutting back someone’s social security’s benefit has only seldom been applied. Usually it sufficed to give a warning that a sanction is on its way. Gankema expects, however, that of 2011 when the period has passed more sanctions will be given.

Impact of integration courses under the WI (after 2007)
In Enschede the target group was in 2007 about 4400 people. The integration courses under the new law started in the course of 2008. About 1600 candidates have finished the programme (medio 2010) of whom about 600 people followed the trajectory to paid work. Of these 600 101 passed the exam. 42 Of them continued their education or have a non-regular job, 7 people became an entrepreneur and 52 found a regular job. The economic crisis that started at the end of 2008 had however a dramatic impact on the opportunities to find work: while in 2008 17 people found a job after having passed the exam, in 2009 this were 5 people and medio 2010 the score was 0. (B&A Consulting 2010: 47) The other 1000 people followed the UHE trajectory. According to the B&A consulting report about one third of the participants passed the language test on the higher B1 level. The others reached the standard level (B&A Consulting 2010: 47). Van der Velde (2009: 39) however reports complaints from the T&I department that the B1 level is optional and only few participants have chosen to take that level.

On the effect of the coaches we have two qualitative studies. Van der Velde (2009) compared the participation of 6 people (5 oldcomers, one newly arrived immigrant) who had a coach with 5 people (3 oldcomers, 2 newcomers) who did the civic integration programme without a coach. Plinke (2010) did the same. She spoke 5 people with coach (3 oldcomers, 2 newcomers) and 5 people without a coach (2 oldcomers, 3 newcomers). In most of the coaching trajectories the focus was on language acquisition (practicing and help with the exercises). Coaches also explored the city with the participant, went together to the supermarket and explained informal social rules (‘no, we don’t line up here properly, don’t let others jump the queue’). They helped participants with all sorts of practicalities (e.g. to find a doctor, visit the doctor together or help to do people’s administration). One woman found work as a volunteer in the Food Bank with the help of her coach. Also for another participant her social contacts with Dutch increased through the coaching. In two cases initiatives were taken to make the participant a member of a sports club (as he had indicated he was interested in that). Yet, in the end they did not become a member, because they claimed they were too busy as their civic integration programme that prepares them for paid work is a full time (36 hours per week) programme.

Except for two people the coaching did not enlarge their Dutch social network. Therefore there is not much difference between the group with and without coach, as most participants, both with and without a coach, have a limited social circle of mostly people of their own cultural background. The aim of broadening the social network of the participant through the coaching activities is not reached. The timing is probably bad; the participants were busy taking language classes and were therefore focused on language training. Secondly, they were too occupied by the programme to have time left for other activities, as also the people without coach confirmed. They were interested in meeting new people, but
not now. The people who had worked with a coach found this a valuable experience, but for other reasons. The added value of the coach was that they valued the help of the coach with the language, they knew better how to find their way in official institutions and were grateful for all the practical help they had received and in general considered the coach as a supportive element in their integration process.

Prospects
As of 2011 Gankema would like to offer voluntary participants only the language part of the programme, because the rest they don’t need, because voluntary means that they are already residing long in the Netherlands. By offering only a language course the programme is cheaper and shorter. Then it is possible to help more people, for the same costs. Officially these people cannot take an civic integration test, because they have followed only the language part. The administrative solution is then to let them take the Staatsexamen I. It is not likely that these people, often women with little education, will pass the test. This might suggest a problem, because the money allotted from the ministry to the municipalities is based on the amount of people that successfully passed the exam, but since the budgets are finished already and the policy will, according to the plans of the new Cabinet not be pursued, this is not so much a problem.

The real dramatic change is that the new Cabinet wants to make the preparation for the civic integration tests the full and sole responsibility of the immigrant. Immigrants are obliged to take the test, but are themselves responsible for their preparation. This means that the municipalities will no longer have an orchestrating role in the organizing of the civic integration programmes, but will, as is to be expected, only have to see to it that immigrants take their exams. In the very near future, 2013, there will be no longer be a municipal civic integration policy unless the municipalities think up a trick. Ideas Gankema is playing with: when the civic integration budget for newcomers will be reduced to zero, the required budget must be found in the re-allocation budgets (to re-allocate jobless people living on a social security benefit to a job). In Enschede we are talking about a budget of approximately 24 million €. That will be cut back in 2012 to perhaps 50%.

Another negative consequence of the coming rules Gankema signaled: Under the new system people will have to borrow €5000 to follow a language course. As also voluntary participants have to pay this sum, and it is in particular women who belong to this category (as oldcomers or as people, whose partner has a job), this will hamper the emancipation of women, because he expects they will not be prepared to pay so much money. That is bad for the women themselves, but also bad for future generations, for, as it is becoming common practice that grandparents look after the grandchildren while the parents go to work, it is the grandchildren that get raised by people who are not fluent in Dutch.

Gankema also signaled a moral problem regarding the civic integration test in the country of origin. It may be effective in discouraging low educated people from coming to the Netherlands, but isn’t that discriminating against lower educated people? Turkey has a bilateral agreement with the Netherlands. There has already been one try out court case in which a Turkish immigrant refused to pay the obliged €270 the argument being that there is an agreement between Turkey (as candidate member state) and the EU about the free movement of people and goods, which does not allow barriers impeding this free movement.
7.5 Conclusions

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

The obvious targets of the Enschede civic integration policy are people who are obliged to follow the civic integration programme and take the test. Yet Enschede also tries to reach women in particular, who are not obliged to participate, because they are already living for a long time in the Netherlands or because they have a husband who provides for the family income. Enschede has taken several measures to ‘lure’ these women into the programme. This is for their own good, but also because it is women who raise the children. From the evaluation studies refugees appeared to be a risk group that needs extra policy attention.

Enschede keeps the organization of the civic integration policy in one hand – its own hand – for reasons of effectiveness. One risks otherwise to loose costly years, literally costly, because immigrants will then be longer dependent on a social security benefit.

Do civic integration programmes promote integration? The Enschede (NL) - Münster (BRD) studies strongly suggest that indeed they do. Does it matter how the programme is designed? Again the comparison between the two cities suggest that it does. An enculturation policy aimed at language education (the Enschede policy) seems to have more effects on other dimensions of integrations than an interaction policy and hence be more effective, but this may be only a short term result. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of civic integration programmes can be improved by addressing (working on) several dimensions of integration at the same time.

According to our interviewee Enschede receives now immigrants who are more highly educated than in previous years. This may indicate that the civic integration test in the country of origin that was introduced in 2006, and which had as one of its goals to discourage low educated people from coming, is effective. Yet, our spokesman raised questions about the legitimacy and moral justifiability of this policy measure, because it discriminates against lower educated people.

The national civic integration policy wants to use the test as a selection instrument: an independent or permanent residence permit and also Dutch citizenship were made conditional on passing the test. The Enschede civic integration policy itself is not aimed at selection of those who are able to successfully integrate from those who are not. Immigrants are considered as (future) fellow citizens who are here to stay. The policy is aimed at promoting their integration. If people are not well equipped for successful integration, e.g. illiterate, flanking policy measures are designed to make up for these disadvantages. The policy is hence inclusive, to keep all on board. Sanctions are hardly used as policy instruments.

Civic integration seems to be well on track in Enschede, yet if the plans of the current government come true, as of 2013 there will be no local civic integration policy anymore.

The plans of the national government to let everyone pay €5000 for the programme, including voluntary participants, will discourage immigrant women from partaking into the programme, which is to be deplored, both from the perspective of their own emancipation as from that of future generations.
8 Conclusions

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

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

Trend toward more individual responsibility

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

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

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

**Strong linkage between civic integration and gender issues**

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

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

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

Although these intentions may seem noble to many, doubts have been expressed whether these strict Dutch demands are in line with some of the relevant EU directives and with the European Convention on Human Rights. In their effects the tests may impact as unjustifiable barriers to immigration, rather than as instruments to promote integration. This is likely to become a major issue of debate between the Netherlands and certain European institutions in the coming years.

The Dutch approach has also been criticized in feminist literature for projecting traditional Western gender images on immigrant women that are just as negative as the ones that are supposed to be substituted (Kirk, 2010). Many of the post-entry programs stress these women’s future task as housewives or parents or, at best, as volunteer workers, rather
than prepare them for a role in the labour market. It is felt that this approach tends to reproduce conservative gender images.

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

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

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

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

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

The first studies on the effects of the pre-entry tests, as well as our interviews and the focus groups we have held with migrants who had taken these pre-entry test, provide strong evidence that the integration effects of these tests are very limited at best. The ‘Basic Knowledge of Life’ test is perceived by migrants as strongly ritualistic, which may explain the very high pass rates.

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

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

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

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

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

This research involved a combination of the following methods:

- **Review of secondary literature.** In order to get a better view of the development of Dutch civic integration policies, a review was made of available secondary literature on this topic.

- **Analysis of policy evaluations.** A number of research agencies has been very active in producing evaluation studies and monitoring reports on pre- and post-entry measures. This includes amongst others the reports from RegioPlan, Significant and B&A. These reports are publicly available.

- **Analysis of parliamentary documents and records.** Especially for the reconstruction of formal policy goals and measures and for the analysis of political discourse, use has been made of the (digitally available) archives of the Second Chamber of Parliament. This includes both the analysis of parliamentary documents, but also records of parliamentary hearings on these documents.

- **Analysis of media discourse.** For the reconstruction of public discourses on civic integration policies, an analysis has been made of media records of two leading Dutch newspapers, the Volkskrant and the NRC Handelsblad. A quantitative analysis was made of the scale of attention to civic integration. In addition, a qualitative analysis was made of the content of a selection from the articles on civic integration policies in these newspapers.

- **Focus groups and interviews.** On a number of elements on which this research focuses, the preceding methods and sources were insufficient. Therefore, on specific points additional methods have been used. Firstly, a number of focus groups were held; one with experts (in total 6 participants), and several with small groups of migrants that completed a pre-entry test before coming to the Netherlands.

Focus group (8-12-2010) with:
- Researcher from RegioPlan
- Researchers (2) from Radboud University
- Member of Dutch organization for refugees
- Policymakers (2) from the City of Enschede

Focus groups with migrants who have previously completed a pre-entry test:
- At locations of Nieuwland (profile: Work) and Ooverbruggen (profile: education), both in the City of Rotterdam.
- In total 10 participants

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

- Research manager Regioplan, 10-8-2010.
- Chair of the national consultative body for minorities (LOM), 28-9-2010.
- Researcher of the Free University of Amsterdam, 11-8-2010.
- Former policymaker at Department of Justice, 27-8-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice A, 24-8-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice B, 30-9-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice C, 7-10-2010
- Policymaker at Department of Justice, D, 12-10-2010.
- Policymaker at Department of Justice, E, 12-10-2010.
- Policymaker at Home Affairs Department A, 14-10-2010
- Policymaker at Home Affairs Department B, 14-10-2010
- Policymaker at Home Affairs Department C, XXX
- Former policymaker at Home Affairs Department A, 24-8-2010
- Former policymaker at Home Affairs Department B, 6-10-2010
- Former member of the Aliens Affairs Committee, 14-9-2010
- Former Minister of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration (Ms. Vogelaar), 7-12-2010.
- Former Minister of Immigration and Integration (Ms. Verdonk), 15-12-2010.
- Member of Parliament for the Christian Democrat Party (Ms. Sterk), 24-11-2010.
- Member of Parliament for the Social Democrat Party (Mr. Dijsselbloem, PvdA), 19-01-2011.
- Former Member of Parliament for the Green Left Party (Ms. Azough), XXX
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