

Creating a city for a generation of integration

in which young people with migration background have a sense of belonging

Research report

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Refugees are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, children, with the same hopes and ambitions as us, except that a twist of fate has bound their lives to a global refugee crisis on an unprecedented scale.

Khaled Hosseini

Acknowledgement

This research is part of the 'Advanced Housing Design', a graduation studio of the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of TU Delft.

Alice Alkateb
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To complete this research, I had to deal with cramps in my fingers, square eyes and had to consume copious amounts of coffee. It was a big personal challenge, because most of the resources that I used to complete my project were in the Dutch language that I just recently learned, and I had to read and translate many words that were new to me. However, I learned a lot along the way, and I did my best to accomplish everything to my full capacity.

Since I started writing this research, the percentage of refugees in the Netherlands has been changing constantly. In spite of this, nothing has changed with regards to the housing situation of asylum status holders. The pressure to find a solution to this issue remains high and the situation is unlikely to change in the short term.

I would like to thank the following people for their help. For starters, I would like to express gratitude to my tutors Pierijn van der Putt and Theo Kupers for their patience, enthusiasm, and constructive feedback with which they repeatedly pointed me in the right direction in the jungle called 'scientific research'.

In addition, I would like to thank everyone who has shown any interest whatever in my research activities and motivated me along the way. Constructing this final research report was a long haul, but it seems I managed to create something that could actually make itself useful at some point in the future. I am proud of that. I would also like to thank all my colleagues and my family for their support and encouragements.

I hope you enjoy reading my work!

Abstract

The Netherlands experienced a large influx of refugees over the past years, which peaked in 2015. Many of these refugees have recently had their temporary residency extended into a permanent residency. In spite of this, there is a disproportionately high percentage of unemployment among refugees and many experience a lack of social and academic integration. As a result, a large percentage of refugees are still dependent on governmental financial aid, and the socioeconomic status of refugees is more likely to be lower than the average socioeconomic status in the Netherlands.

Although refugee integration is a widely studied sociological topic, no effort has been made to apply the findings of such studies to the context of architecture. The goal of the present study was to consider research findings on factors and domains that facilitate sociocultural integration, and apply these to the architectural domain. More specifically, the study focused on the development of functional program and building characteristics intended to facilitate integration and produce a suitable living environment.

The results of the present study showed that asylum status holders need to have certain places in the building, such as common rooms in which they share work and study with the rest of the building's residents, who are of different nationalities and are also local residents. In this case, they integrate into society faster and also the problem of friction that may appear among the residents of the building disappears because they spend some time together and give them some awareness and educational lectures that make them accept each other and get closer to each other more.

Key words: Dwelling, social housing, refugee, status holder, integration.

Manifesto

Before I begin my story, let me start by thanking everyone before my story begins. When we talk about creating a city for a new generation of integration, we should understand that this new generation is a combination of natives and asylum status holders.

A major reason for the generation of integration is the surge in recent years of refugees coming from war-torn nations and who sought asylum in the Netherlands. Many people received these refugees with welcoming, open arms, but the situation was mired in controversy and political discussion, with various influential figures and politicians emphasizing the perceived burden on society these refugees, according to them, represented. With regards to housing, the controversy focused on refugees receiving a preferential treatment over Dutch natives who were looking for a home, which contributed to refugees being treated as outsiders. To some extent, this is true, as each refugee has his or her own story that is nothing like the story of most Dutch natives.

The refugees who arrived in the Netherlands these past few years ended up in cities they knew nothing about except for its name and location on the map. No one except them can imagine how hard it was and is for them to face their future without their past, which was lost along with their friends and relatives. We can only hope their present and future is and will be brighter. Therefore, I do not want this building to be a substitute for their lost homes, but rather to provide them with a living environment that gives them a sense of complete belonging to their new homeland, the Netherlands.

One of the refugee families who ended up in the Netherlands was my own family, who came from Syria about five years ago due to the ongoing war. My father, who used to conduct business visits to the Netherlands for a period

of over ten years, and my mother, who obtained her PhD in Economics in Belgium 25 years ago. Both of them did not expect that there would come a day on which they would be forced to leave their home, lose all that they worked for more than 30 years, and seek refuge in a country of which they did not speak the language or knew what the customs were. The important thing for them was securing a safe and better future for their children. After being separated due to having to leave Syria abruptly, my siblings and I were reunited after two years of waiting, which exhausted my parents psychologically, as for them, family means everything. They had to go through all the asylum request procedures and the reunification while being physically separated, and while being unable to speak Dutch. Starting from nothing, they had to learn the Dutch language and customs, and worked as volunteers in various fields, which helped them create a sense of belonging and which enabled them to communicate better, although it proved to be very difficult for my parents, who are in their fifties, to form continuous social relations, mainly due to the language barrier. I remember one day when we visited a Dutch family, my parents were both very shy, because they could not understand what I was talking about with the Dutch family. When I realized this, I turned into an interpreter to allow my parents and the Dutch family to communicate.

Regrettably, I arrived in the Netherlands after my parents did. I wish I could have arrived at the same time as my family did, or even before them, to help guide them better. As me and my siblings arrived when we were over the age of 20, this made it more difficult to adjust to everything. In spite of that, we were all able to overcome all the difficulties and challenges, and are working hard to make our dreams a reality. Dreams that were not meant to be fulfilled in Syria.

Coming to the Netherlands, we experienced a lot of positivity from people who took it upon

themselves to help us along the way in ways we would have never expected. The Dutch government agencies in particular provided a lot of care and attention, as did humanitarian associations. In short, we experienced and still experience the Dutch society as an integrated society. However, I also have to acknowledge the suffering of my parents, who spent 50 years of their life in Syria and are now facing many unending personal and social difficulties adjusting to life in the Netherlands. These are, however, common problems that all newcomers suffer, irrespective of where they are from.

Opening the Dutch borders to refugees is not the only solution to secure a better future for

them. Rather, an important solution is to provide refugees with a comfortable living environment that is designed to support them in their new journey to get to know the Netherlands, its customs and culture, and to permit them many opportunities for establishing new social relations. Eventually, this will lead to a fully integrated society. For refugees, this will help them realize that although success perhaps used to be a normal thing in their country of origin, it has now become the exception. Therefore, it is the responsibility of refugees to prove that they can coexist with and adapt to their new society and at the same time strive to be successful, as a word of thanks to this wonderful new country, instead of being a burden on it.



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Research

Introduction

This research report represents one instance of the overarching graduation project of the 'Advanced Housing Design' studio, of which the main goal is to investigate the future of residential buildings in the Netherlands. During the first quarter of 2020, after developing an urban masterplan, it was determined the location of the design project would be the Miervevier harbor (M4H) in Rotterdam. The present research efforts focused on ensuring housing in M4H is designed in such a way that the costs of living are low, but the living environment is comfortable and conducive to interaction and integration.

In particular, the present research focused on developing effective methods and techniques for housing from the perspective of young refugees, who represent a new wave of the populace. Many of these refugees have arrived in the Netherlands during the past five years, mainly due to the ongoing war in Syria (see Figure 1). In fact, Syrian refugees who are in their twenties and early thirties represent a large percentage of this group of refugees. Many of these refugees have a high level of education and a wide variety of professional skills.

With regards to these young refugees who arrived in the Netherlands from Syria, so far, there has been no reasonable and financially and

socially suitable solution to the housing problem this group of new Dutch residents represents, in spite of them having obtained residency permits that allow them to live in the Netherlands.

In line with the career-mindedness of many of these refugees and the fact that many of them used to live in urban areas and socially-lively cities, it is important to them to live in a busy city that presents many opportunities. This would foster a more rapid integration, which could lead to benefits for the Dutch economy, given the highly-educated background of many Syrian refugees. This makes Rotterdam particularly suitable, as there are many job opportunities. One further aspect that makes the M4H location preferential, is that housing prices in the city centre of Rotterdam are much higher, while job opportunities are abundant in both areas.

In spite of the need as a result of the large influx of relatively highly-educated refugees, there is currently no suitable solution to the housing problems this group faces. More particularly, it is not known what the optimal design of an accommodation would be that combined affordability with a push towards social integration. This cannot be accomplished without investigating the needs of these young adult asylum status holders. The results of this research will open up and broaden the scope of the public discussion on refugee housing.



Figure 1: Number of asylum requests in The Netherlands (1993-2017). Source: VVNL, 2017.

Problem statement

The problem that is central in the current research is that currently, young adult refugees, who arrived in the Netherlands during the last five to six years, are often forced to stay in refugee shelters or other temporary forms of housing and have to rely on financial aid. In fact, in 2014, more than 60 percent of refugees with a residency permit could not find paid work and still received social benefits (CBS, 2015). This is partly due to the strained housing market situation in the Netherlands. No suitable design solution that is affordable and promotes social integration has so far been developed. This is an undesirable situation, as temporary housing represents a constantly stressful burden of uncertainty, and refugees often have to wait for periods of up to several years before obtaining permanent housing, leading to problems such as study delays (Klaver & van der Welle, 2009). These shelters, furthermore, are often completely full due to the still-increasing number of refugees that arrive from various

countries. This prompted the utilization of vacant Dutch penitentiaries as a temporary solution, (Chris Weller, 2017). However, this solution is far from ideal, as it obstructs social integration due to, for example the travel distance to the city itself. So, in short, there is, at present, no solution for the housing problem of young adult refugees, which leads to a professional and educational suspension of the future of this group.

Several problems created by the refugee housing issue that pertain particularly strongly to young adults have to be expanded on in more detail:

- 1- The temporary housing problem causes psychological, financial, social, and educational problems for refugees: Temporary housing for refugees (e.g., asylum centres) have strict rules and refugees do not have many opportunities to work or study, which could have detrimental effects on their psychological well-being. In addition,

there are hardly any options for social interaction that do not involve other refugees. Lastly, refugees from different backgrounds, religions, societies, and cultures who live in temporary shelters frequently share small rooms, sanitary facilities, and kitchens. This promotes absence of privacy and cleanliness, leading to health problems and further psychological pressure.

- 2- Less social and professional integration after moving into permanent housing due to the long waiting period: the temporary housing conditions have a detrimental effect on the self-awareness of the residents. In addition, due to the long period of being unemployed while at a temporary refugee shelter, it is more difficult for refugees to find work than it is for non-refugees, leading to higher unemployment rates among refugees, even though their average level of education is considered high (Dourleijn & Dagevos, 2011). Furthermore, by treating a refugee who has an actual residence permit as a non-permit holder merely due to a housing issue could cause resentment and thus be detrimental for social integration.

Research Hypothesis

The goal of the current research report was to provide several solutions to create a comfortable and affordable living environment for asylum status holders in Rotterdam with taking into consideration all the problems and obstacles this group faces. It was, therefore, hypothesized that it is possible to design a housing solution for young adult refugees that is both affordable, comfortable and promotes social integration, as part of the M4H area.

Research questions

How to design social housing in an affordable manner that can provide the status holders a comfortable living environment and help them with the integration?

In order to answer this central research question, four sub-questions were formulated:

- How are the Dutch asylum procedures and housing status holders arranged in the Netherlands and to what extent is the Netherlands tolerant of refugees?
- What should a housing and living environment look like that allows refugees to socially integrate more strongly and without experiencing difficulties?
- How can an architectural environment be created that include both refugees and local residents?
- What are the specific special and social design needs of refugees with regards to house specifications and the scale of the build?

Relevance and position

This research is relevant for the Dutch government, as it seeks to clarify, specify and shed light on the housing problem among young adult refugees in the Netherlands who mainly arrived due to civil war in different countries, and seeks to illuminate the issues with social integration faced by asylum status holders in the first year before and after their departure from temporary housing (i.e., an asylum centre). In addition, the present study is important for the field of architecture, as it represents insights into how to design accommodation and housing that is suitable for groups of people who come from

a different cultural background and who may carry an emotional and psychological burden.

Lastly, the study is also relevant for the young adult refugees themselves, as the outcome will help in the efforts to find a solution to the refugee housing problem in the Netherlands. This research will be done by determining what consequences they face in their lives in order to find appropriate solutions to these problems and identifying elements that facilitate their integration faster.

Source analysis

With regards to the literature on refugee housing in the Netherlands, many studies have been conducted with a focus on the current housing situation of refugees, such as listing the current asylum centers in the Netherlands, and describing the problems refugees face with regards to waiting times (for permanent housing) and time spent without receiving any financial aid. Furthermore, many studies focused on ways of developing new temporary housing solutions for refugees. However, importantly, these studies and temporary solutions have not led to a solution to the problem of refugee housing, and in particular with regards to having temporary shelters located outside of a city. As a possible solution, it is proposed that a novel refugee housing design should adhere to two principles: (1) being located inside or close to a city in order to foster social interaction between refugees and locals, and (2) being constructed specifically with the purpose of housing refugees, as a more permanent housing solution.

With regards to this proposed solution, the current literature is lacking. Especially with regards to social interaction, it should be emphasized that refugees, when arriving in the Netherlands, have lost most or all of their social

contacts and have problems interacting with others, also in part due to loneliness and psychological issues. Lastly, as stated, most studies focused on temporary solutions, but none of them focused specifically on solutions to accommodate refugees close by or inside a city.

Methodology

In this study, a combination of quantitative research and qualitative research was used. According to Baarda, Goede, and Kalmijn (2007), quantitative research allows large-scale statistical insights into a topic. By using a structured data collection method, quantitative concepts are clearly defined according to the theoretical framework that is developed (Baarda, Goede, & Kalmijn, 2007). Qualitative research, on the other hand, is more in-depth and includes methods such as interviewing (Baarda, Goede, & Kalmijn, 2007). The purpose is to obtain insights that require interpretation by a researcher.

Instruments:

Several instruments were used in the current study.

Desk research. For the present study, desk research was conducted by using (1) various internet databases such as Google Scholar, (2) institutes that publish statistical insights, such as the CBS, COA and UNICEF, and (3) various books, dissertations and Master's theses on the topic. Various search terms were used: ... Literature sources were included in the study if they (1) directly concerned the Dutch refugee housing situation, or (2) described more general issues with refugee housing.

Social media. By focusing on social media posts (on Facebook and Instagram), the goal was to develop insights into the public opinion on refugees and refugee housing, which was helpful

when designing a form of housing that fosters social interaction between people of different cultural backgrounds. In addition to such social media posts, an effort was made to include documentaries and movies on the issue.

Interviews. To obtain insights into the perspective of refugees who arrived in the Netherlands and experienced the refugee housing situation first-hand, in-depth interviews were conducted with members of my family who are currently residing in the Netherlands after having fled from the Syrian civil war.

Clarification of terminology

Reading a book or any literature sources about the migration has been a bit confusing due to the different titles that are used. Therefore, the definition of these different terminologies will be explained here. The Dutch government classifies migrants based on their motivation for migration and, possibly, their search for better living conditions. According to Dutch law, there are twelve groups of migrants (CBS, 2019; Crimson, 2019) which some of them will be shown in the following table (see figure 2). After that, the research will be addressing the type of migrants who are status holder singles or couples without kids.



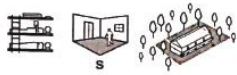








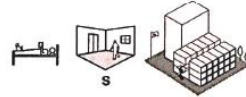


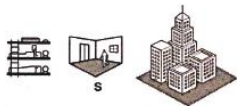

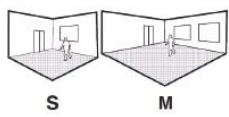




	Representation in culture & media	Migrant policies & legislation	Settlement places in the end-destination country
Refugee / Asylum seeker	 Unable and unwilling to go back / Searching for protection	 discourage refugees	 Shared space, small, isolated location
Labour migrants	 Working for a limited period of time	 Restrictive admission / free movement	 Shared space, small, isolated location
Expats	 Are required by a company to work for a limited period of time	 Welcome expats	 Individual space, big, in the suburb
Exchange students	 Studying for couple of years	 Welcome students	 Individual space, small, near the university
Illegals	 Unable to stay and work legally	 Encourage or force illegals to leave	 Shared space, small, in big cities
Creative migrants	 Working for couple of years	----- no official policy	 S M

Figure 2: Matrix of different categories of migrants are organized in terms of several aspects. Source: my own illustration based on information from CBS and Crimson's book.

	Migrants economy & work	Collective space & Private space	Amenities facilities
Refugee Asylum seeker	 <p>Not allowed during the period of AZC / Simple jobs + low-paid work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preferring private rooms - Shared spaces - Social relationships are crucial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sport facilities - music room - Shared kitchen - Hall for celebration
Labour migrants	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seasonal work - low-paid work 	<p>Cheap rent is better than the quality of the house</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared kitchen - Hall for recreation
Expats	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical companies - Embassies - High-paid work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Near city centre - The quality of the house is more important than cheap rent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parking - Restaurant - park - Museum
Exchange students	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cheap rent - Shared spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bicycle carage - Supermarket - Cafe
Illegals	 <p>Informal works</p>	-----	-----
Creative migrants	<p>Working in different sectors Architecture, music, design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preferring private rooms - Shared spaces - Social relationships are crucial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parking - Restaurant - Park - Museum

Chapter (1):

Refugees\Status holders and their housing situation over time

1.1 Definitions

It is important to have clear terminology about what different types of immigrants there are. The UNHCR indicates the terminology for referring to the different types of immigrants is often confused in the literature and the terms are often used interchangeably, even though they are inherently different (UNHCR, 2015).

Refugee:

According to Het Vluchtelingenverdrag (The Refugee Convention, 1951), a refugee is a person who, for a well-founded fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group or having a specific political motivation, resides outside of his or her native country, and who cannot or, on account of the aforementioned fear, does not wish to invoke the protection of that country or return to that country (Malmström & Guterres, 2016). The UN Refugee Convention grants specific rights to refugees with which recipient states must comply, which are based on the foundation that refugees should not be sent back to a situation where their lives are again at risk (UNHCR, 2015).

Asylum seeker:

Not every asylum seeker in the Netherlands is a refugee. An asylum seeker is someone who applies for protection from another country with the prospect of a better future, through submitting an asylum application. The country where asylum is sought then checks whether the asylum seeker falls under the United Nations Refugee Convention, which would make it mandatory for the asylum seeker to receive protection. Most refugees in the Netherlands started out as asylum seekers (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2020). Due to the asylum seekers are not really consistently dealt with as refugees (Winder, 1990).

Asylum status holders and permit holders:

Asylum status holders and permit holders are the same category of immigrants. 'Permit holder' is a more generic term which refers to

someone who has been granted a permit based on an asylum application. 'Asylum status holder', on the other hand, refers to the various permits that a foreign national can obtain. One such permit is a temporary or conditional residence permit, which implies the refugee has been granted the right to a residency in the Netherlands, based on humanitarian grounds (NRC, 1998). After being granted a residence permit, asylum status holders can start their integration into Dutch society. So, it is important that they start looking for work and / or training as soon as possible.

1.2 Historical point of view

In the following paragraphs, the recent history of immigration in the Netherlands is expanded on. In addition, people's opinions towards refugees and the extent of acceptance and rejection are investigated. Afterwards, the various procedures that refugees experienced are explained (see Figure 3). These procedures are grouped into three stages according to the time period in which they occurred. The purpose of this historical overview is to provide a clear narrative.

- A brief overview of the recent history of immigration in the Netherlands

Refugees who came to the Netherlands in the seventeenth century were from different countries such as Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. As a result of the expansion of the Old City with a large area, this led to the absorption of this large number of local and foreign refugees. But the living conditions were very poor, in other words, large families lived in one small room or in the basements, which caused many health and psychological problems.

In the First World War, after the German bombardment and subsequent capture of Antwerp in 1914, around one million Belgians fled to the Netherlands, which was a neutral country. The Netherlands greeted these refugee Belgians wholeheartedly and considered it an obligation to offer them a protected and suitable accommodation. Similarly, to the current refugee situation, there was a shortage of suitable housing accommodations. Therefore, in 1914, a 'Central Committee for the Protection of Interests of Refugees in the Netherlands' was set up for refugees. Various 'Belgian villages' were realised all through the Netherlands (Crimson, 2019).

The next mass refugee event in Dutch history that is relevant for the current study is the influx of Surinamese refugees, who came to the Netherlands in 1974. A special area was built in Amsterdam, De Bijlmer, in order to accommodate them and decrease the housing issue that resulted from this relatively sudden event. Importantly, the manner, design and style in which the buildings that made out De Bijlmer were constructed was not successful, as personal accommodations were completely separate from work locations, and the area lacked social activities and collective meeting spots for socialization. Consequently, the area was known for its bad living conditions and for the problematic situations that often occurred there. Eventually, the area turned into warehouses and stores and the municipality decided in 1992 to demolish a large part of the area altogether (Crimson, 2019).

Most relevant to the current study, over the last few years, the Netherlands faced a large influx of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Somalia. Due to a lack of proper accommodations, the Dutch government was forced to settle these refugees in office buildings after they were converted into houses, and in special temporary housing buildings that are intended to last for ten years. In addition,

housing complexes ('Startblok' complexes) were built. These Startblok complexes are interesting, as a new design principle was adhered to: half of the residents were refugees and the other half were native Dutch citizens. The complexes were a great success in terms of the integration of refugees into the Dutch society (Crimson, 2019).

In short, it can be concluded that refugee housing in the Netherlands has been a constant issue throughout recent history, irrespective of the specific circumstances that led to the increase in refugees. Failure to take into account the needs that provide refugees with a suitable and comfortable living environment, making it difficult for them to integrate into society, unlike what happened in the Startblok buildings recently, as these complexes resulted in many positives when all the necessary aspects were taken into consideration.

- For or against refugees?

Dutch people's opinions on whether refugees should receive preferential treatment when it comes to housing are widely divergent. Refugees are sometimes perceived as being prioritized when concerning housing. Some native Dutch people also perceive this as a threat, as it reduces the opportunity for locals to obtain housing. Likewise, when an asylum centre is built close to a city to help refugees integrate into the society (i.e., due to the close proximity to the city), this has, in the past, resulted in demonstrations by city residents who object to the location being used to house refugees (CBS, 2018). However, at the same time, many Dutch natives are happy with the arrival of a group of people from different cultural backgrounds to their neighbourhoods. Such positive reactions have resulted in people providing assistance to refugees, for example through volunteering to help out. One well-known organization that seeks to help refugees is Vluchtelingenwerk (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2017).

1.3 Asylum policies in The Netherlands

In the following paragraph, the steps and procedures refugees who arrived in the Netherlands relatively recently must undertake are described, starting from the day they leave their country of origin as a refugee up to the point of becoming an asylum seeker, becoming an asylum status holder and finally to the holder of the nationality.

- From their original country to be a refugee (past situation)

Many refugees left a war-torn home and hearth in the hope of a better life in Western countries such as the Netherlands (Factsheet Syrische vluchtelingen, 2015; Von der Dunk, 2007). When they arrive in the Netherlands, these refugees have to undergo multiple trials before they obtain the right to stay in the Netherlands (Von der Dunk, 2007; Bloemen & Vloeberghs, 2012;). Upon arrival in the Netherlands, the refugees are received by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) at the Ter Apel application centre. They are questioned by the employees of the application centre to determine whether they are genuine refugees. In principle, the application is then either granted, extended or rejected.

- From a refugee to status holder (current situation)

The responsibility for the reception of refugees after their arrival and transition into asylum seekers lies with the Central Organization for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA). The duties of COA are legally defined in the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers Act and mainly entail placing asylum seekers in a municipality, providing refugees with financial

aid, and making contributions to the relevant municipality where the refugees are placed (Huisvesting vergunninghouders, 2016). At the asylum seekers' centre, refugees wait for an update on their residence permit and residence status from the IND. It can take some time to obtain a residence permit, and during this waiting period, the asylum seeker can and will likely already start a process of social integration into the Dutch society. While the refugees live in the asylum seekers' centre, they are not allowed to work, but they usually start lessons to learn the Dutch language (Huisvesting vergunninghouders, 2016). During this period, the Dutch Council for Refugees has a task to provide social and legal support to asylum seekers during their asylum procedure. This interaction is, in fact, an asylum seeker's first real (social) experience with the Netherlands (Baltussen, 2012).

In the event of the approval of their request to stay in the Netherlands, the asylum seeker then becomes an asylum status holder. The COA connects the asylum status holder to a municipality, and the municipality then has an obligation to provide housing for the asylum status holder. Until such housing accommodation is available, the asylum status holder remains at the asylum seekers' centre.

The Dutch central government, province and municipalities have made agreements about the number of asylum status holders each Dutch municipality should (be able to) house. This number is influenced by the number of inhabitants of a municipality (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2018). After receiving housing, refugees can start their new life in the Netherlands (Huisvesting vergunninghouders, 2016). To help them along the way, they receive guidance by the Refugee Service.

To illustrate the procedure of being granted housing in the

Netherlands as a refugee, I asked my father about the period when he was released from the asylum seekers' centre and obtained housing. I also asked about the difficulties he faced when he lived alone in a new country which was unknown for him. My father's answer was that it was an indescribable experience to not know where he was, nor how, where and when he should do anything. This situation remained so until we were reunited. However, in the period after being reunited, my father and mother spent every day thinking about how they should secure a good life for my siblings and myself, and about how we should evaluate our educational level and complete our studies, or where and when we should do so, without losing time.

- From status holder to a nationality holder (future situation)

After receiving housing, such housing is often temporary. The first period of residency spans a maximum of five years. If the circumstances in the asylum status holder's nation of origin are improved, it is likely that after these five years, the residency grant will not be extended. If, however, the situation has not improved to the degree that a secure return and permanent stay

is ensured, a permit is granted to the asylum status holder that allows permanent residency in the Netherlands. To receive such a permit, an asylum status holder has to have met all the preliminary conditions that are required. For example, permit holders must have passed their integration exams within three years after arrival, and must have stayed in the Netherlands for at least the past five years. Then, the asylum status holder can apply for citizenship and obtain it after the King's approval (Al Temimi, 2016; IND, 2016).

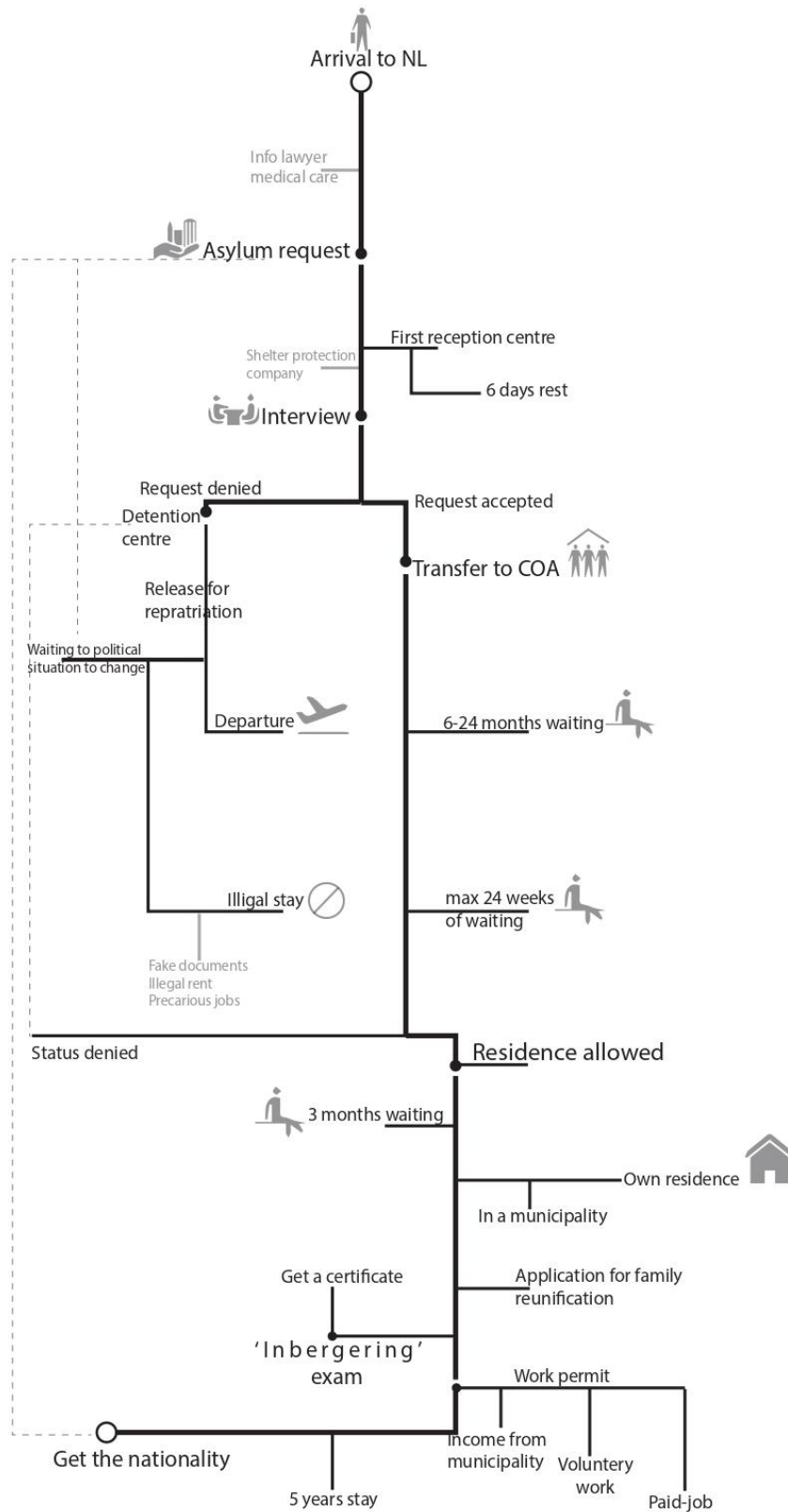


Figure 3: Asylum procedure in The Netherlands. Source: own illustration based on information from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/asielbeleid/>.

Chapter (2):
Integration into the Dutch society

2.1 Obstacles versus opportunities

For an asylum status holder, social integration begins the moment he or she is released from the asylum seekers' center. This illustrates one important issue: due to the limited housing availability, many asylum status holders have to remain at asylum seekers' centers that are often located on the fringes of a city for extended periods of time, barring any opportunities for fostering social relationships with Dutch citizens. In the present paragraph, these obstacles with regards to social integration are expanded upon, and opportunities and solutions to these issues are addressed and discussed.

As mentioned, asylum status holders usually have to wait for extended periods of time before receiving housing. This is an undesirable situation, as research has shown that long-term stays in asylum seekers' shelters has adverse effects on mental health and - as a result - hinders participation opportunities (Bakker, 2016; Gezondheidsraad, 2016; Schellingerhout, 2011). The Advisory Committee for Immigration Affairs (ACVZ; Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken, 2013), therefore, calls this extended waiting period 'lost time'. This lost time is characterized by a lack of privacy, uncertainty about the outcome of the procedure and few opportunities to participate in social activities. Such consequences of uncertainty and isolation also affect asylum status holders' degree of dependence and passivity: waiting and doing nothing becomes the norm.

Previous research has also shown that those who stay in an asylum seekers' centre for more than a year experience more symptoms of anxiety, depression and physical complaints than asylum status holders who stay in a shelter for less than six months (Laban et al., 2004).

Aside of fostering interaction rather than isolation, mastering the Dutch language is

another condition that is necessary for social participation. In fact, developing language proficiency is absolutely necessary, as this increases job opportunities and facilitates social contact (Bakker & Dagevos, 2017; Dagevos & Odé, 2011; de Vroome & van Tubergen, 2010).

A full integration into the Dutch society is, according to the Dutch government, the intended end result of the acculturation process. According to Graves (1967), three conditions must be met in order to facilitate integration. Firstly, through consistent exposure, there must be knowledge of the norms and values of the dominant culture (i.e., the Dutch culture). The second condition is the ability for an immigrant to identify with the dominant culture, so as to motivate change. Finally, the minority must feel that their goals are actually achievable because of having the same resources available to them as there are available to the majority. Ager and Strang (2004), however, believe that these three conditions are not sufficient to achieve full integration. They distinguish ten domains of integration. Each domain is a condition that must be met for the facilitation of integration (Ager & Strang, 2004). The ten domains are divided into four categories (see figure 4).

- Practical means (work - housing - education - health care)
- Social connections (social ties - social bridges - social links)
- Facilitation (security & stability - language & culture)
- Foundation (rights & citizenship)

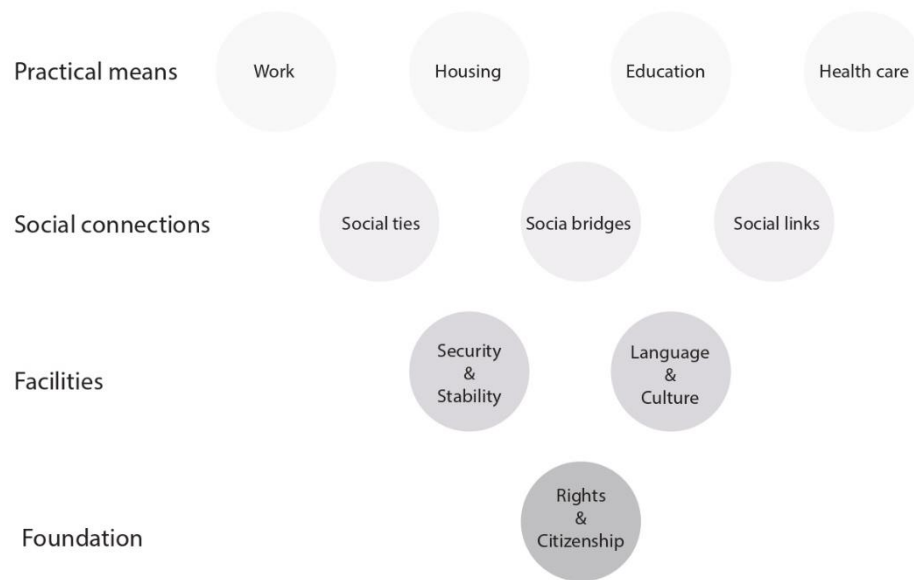


Figure 4: The conditions for integration into a new society. Source: Ager and Strang, 2004.

The first category of integration includes the practical means of integration. Its four domains (work - housing - education - health care) are recognized worldwide as essential aspects of integration. Therefore, asylum status holders in The Netherlands receive social guidance to help them in all of these four domains. As such, these domains should not only be seen as consequences of the integration process, but also as a stimulus for the process of integration.

The second category is that of social connections. For immigration, a particular focus is on the importance of social bridges, which is a concept that describes the relationships of someone with other groups or communities, and social links, which describe more formal contacts with institutions and companies, including with commercial companies and government agencies.

The third category includes domains that are essential for facilitating the integration process. The first domain concerns the language and culture of the dominant group (local

environment). The minority must master the language, but familiarity with the culture is also needed.

The last category describes only one domain. This is the foundation for all other domains: rights and citizenship. Without a vision of a new future, the entire integration process is of no use. Ager and Strang (2014) believe that an individual or group of people is successfully integrated if they:

- Have attained the same level of work, housing, health care and education level as local people
- Socialize with individuals within their own community and individuals from other communities
- Have knowledge of the language and culture of the dominant group and feel safe.

2.2 Responsibilities:

So far, the argument has been made that promoting integration and helping asylum status holders integrate quickly is the responsibility of everyone. So, when designing accommodations for asylum status holders, it is crucial to provide many opportunities for cultural exchanges and for fostering social interaction. In other words, social interaction should be considered from various facets:

- A person's own responsibility for his or her development.
- The municipality's responsibility for making necessary changes to provide asylum status holders with language training and work experience in advance, during their stay in an asylum seekers' centre.
- The responsibility of the architect who is responsible for designing the housing solution, which lays with securing architectural spaces at different levels that help and stimulate residents to interact and integrate, such as through having sufficient common areas. Schmal (2017) also mentioned that including places for workshops, shops, and work activities is important in order to stimulate social activities and personal initiatives (Heaming, 2017).

2.3 Binding ladder:

A new aspect to promote (social) integration is the binding ladder of Boonstra and Snel (2005). The binding ladder distinguishes between different degrees of intensity and effectiveness of inter-ethnic contact. According to this theory, the higher the intensity of social interaction, the higher the effectiveness. The binding ladder is a frequently-used sociological method to assess

the intensity of an intervention to promote integration. Such interventions can be classified as one of the four steps of the binding ladder (see Figure 5). The lowest step includes initiatives with a low intensity, whereas the highest step includes initiatives with a high intensity (Amir, 1994; Dagevos, 2007). In brief, the four levels can be described as follows:

- The first level: "meet one another". Examples of programmatic interventions with this objective are neighbourhood parties and multicultural festivals (Boonstra & Snel, 2005).
- The second one is: "getting to know one another". For meaningful relationships to emerge from these previous encounters, people must get to know each other, and the goal is to create mutual understanding and respect for each other. Examples include intercultural dialogues or events in which an ethnic group presents customs and traditions, such as a traditional costume (Dagevos, 2007; Boonstra & Snel, 2005).
- The third one is: "working together". This concerns for example codes of conduct and other agreements with the neighbourhood. Local residents may enter into a dialogue with each other to jointly improve the social quality of the neighbourhood (Boonstra & Snel, 2005).
- The fourth level is: "mutual help connections". These are initiatives that focus on establishing one-on-one contacts, with the underlying idea that bridging social networks can have a positive influence on disadvantaged groups. These projects actively work on the creation of meaningful relationships, but they often also improve the language proficiency of the immigrant participants (Dagevos, 2007; Boonstra & Snel, 2005).

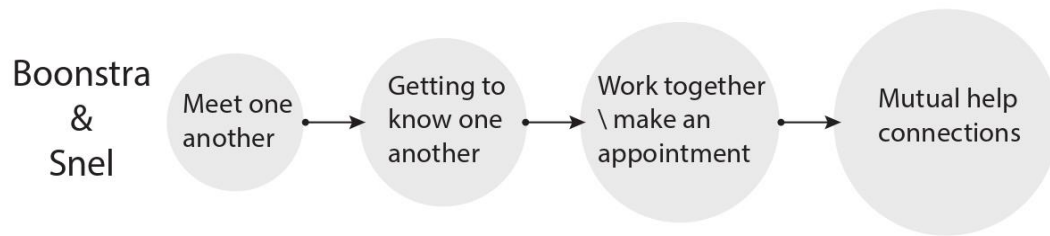


Figure 5: The four levels of the binding ladder of Boonstra and snel (2005).

Chapter (3):

Quantitative and qualitative demands for status holders' housing

3.1 Statistics & Households:

The coming paragraphs present statistics that give quantitative insights into the immigration situation of the Netherlands of recent years, in particular with regards to living in asylum seekers' centres. As can be seen in Figure 6, and in line with Figure 1, from 2013 onward, the number of immigrants is increasing rapidly until 2015. Today, around 16 thousand people of the 39.417 already received a residence permit but still live at an asylum seekers' centre, and approximately 23% of these asylum status holders live in emergency centres instead of regular asylum seekers' centres.

Figure 7 shows that the refugees who have arrived in the Netherlands since 2013 are mainly from Syria 37%, Eritrea 15%, or other countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran (48%). Around 80% of these refugees were given a permanent or temporary residence permit (Leekers & Scholten, 2016). Lastly, the majority of these immigrants are aged between 18-29; see Figure 8 (COA, 2016).

Asylum status holders usually rely on financial aid provided by the municipality. As such, it is important costs of living are not high (Priemus & Smid, 1993). Consequentially, when obtaining housing, most asylum status holders are housed in social housing and regularly receive placement priority (Klaver & van der Welle, 2009). Recently, due to administrative changes, the municipality became responsible for finding public housing for asylum status holders.

Concerning the requirements of proper social housing for asylum status holders, it can be said that there are relatively few requirements, as many asylum status holders are young and single, without children. In line with the social standards, the rent of social housing should not exceed 710 euros, (Social housing, 2021). per month in case the status holder does not have a paid job but receives financial aid from the municipality. As such, small starter homes designed for one or two households are the most ideal fit (Paul, 2009).

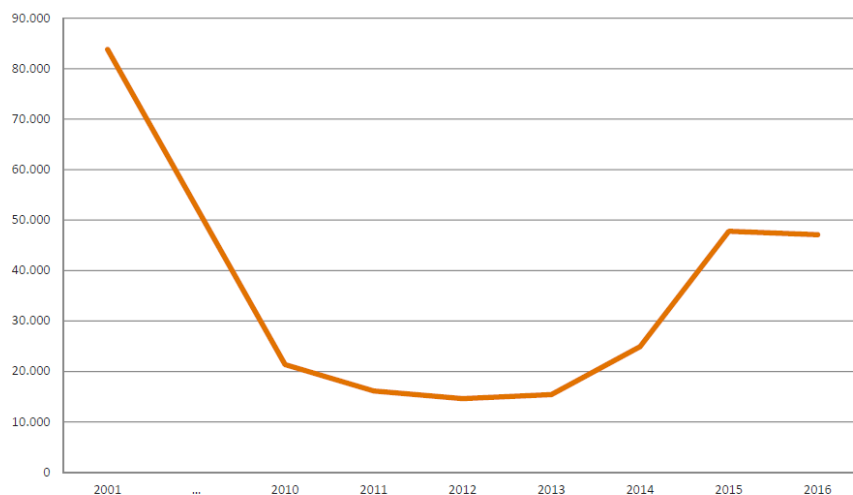


Figure 6: Number of status holders staying in Dutch asylum seekers' centres (Twynstra Gudde, 2016).

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total	Percentage
Total	9,838	21,811	43,093	8,422	83,164	100%
Syria	2,232	8,748	18,677	1,451	31,108	37%
Eritrea	851	3,833	7,359	437	12,480	15%
Other	6,755	9,230	17,057	6,534	39,576	48%

Figure 7: Recent Dutch immigrants, divided by major nationalities (Vluchtelingenwerk).

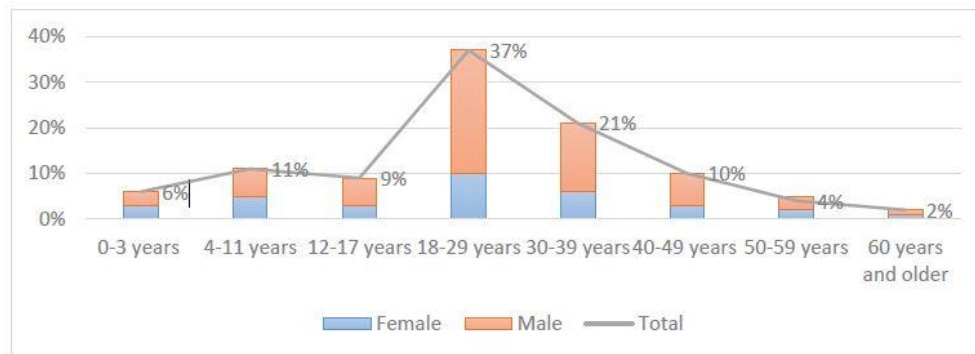


Figure 8: The percentage of people residing in asylum seekers' centres, by age (COA, 2016).

3.2 House division comparison

To design proper accommodation for the recently-arrived asylum status holders, it is important to take into account the living environment that the asylum status holders are used to. To provide an overview of the cultural differences with regards to housing design, typical Syrian and Eritrean houses were compared with a typical Dutch house. The focus in this comparison was on the Syrian and Eritrean nationalities, as these represent the most common groups of refugees. The comparison can be found in Figure 9.

In the Dutch house:

- Open kitchen;

- Routing to sleeping room goes through living room;
- Balcony is for both living and sleeping room;
- Same WC for user and guest;

In the Syrian house:

- Living area in one section and sleeping area in another section;
- Closed kitchen;
- Balcony connected to the living area and balcony connected to the bedroom;
- Different WC for user and guest;

In the Eritrean house:

- No separation between bedroom and living room;
- One bed room used by more than one person;
- Open kitchen;
- One bathroom;

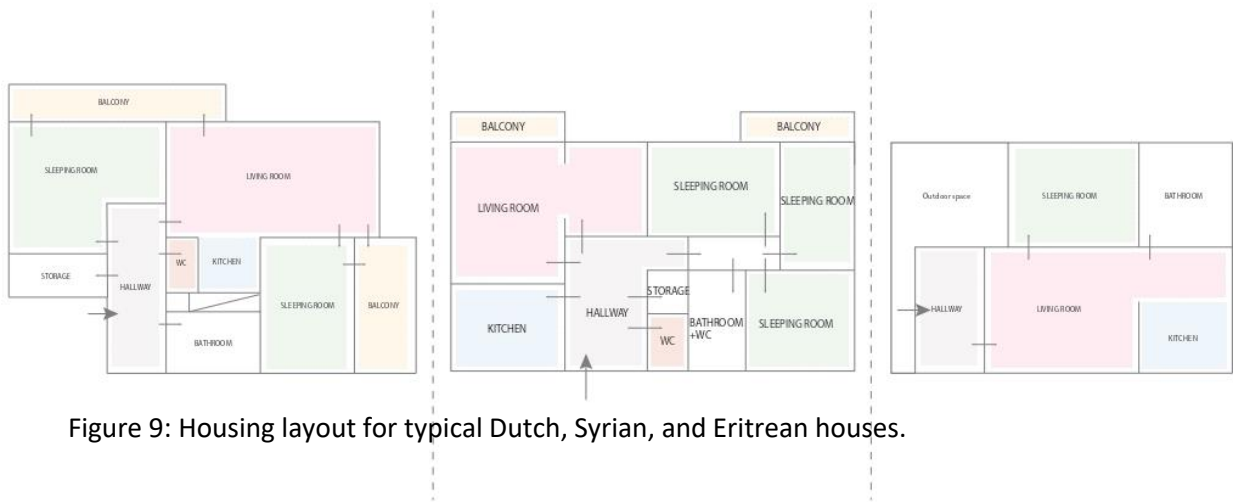


Figure 9: Housing layout for typical Dutch, Syrian, and Eritrean houses.

Chapter (4):
Architectural strategies

4.1 Affordability & flexibility:

The previous sections have argued that asylum status holders need affordable and integration-promoting houses. 'Affordable' in this sense does not mean 'uncomfortable'. To foster integration, the housing designs should incorporate cultural values the asylum status holders were accustomed to in their country of origin. In the case of affordable houses (small houses), the building block can include lots of houses and as a result, house companies or private owners benefit from that when they get the rent from a large number of residents.

As referenced previously, the homes should be designed in an affordable way. A flexible room setup, where different target group can occupy the house by compacting the floor plan which is a way to guarantee the affordability as a way to build for a group of people where the specific person conditions are not known yet.

According to Bhatta (2009), "affordable housing is a dwelling considered affordable for people with an average income". Milligan (2007) defined 'affordable housing' as "a dwelling which is suitable for the necessities of a range of low income households, so those with low or moderate income can meet the rest of their essential living expenses". Other definitions are more extensive. For example, the Maribyrnong City Council (2009) defines 'affordable housing' as "a well-located energy effective dwelling, suitable to the requirements of a household". Such more extensive definitions also focus on saving energy and on efficient utilization of rooms. Therefore, any housing design that seeks to accommodate asylum status holders should be flexible and provide the opportunity for changing the layout and making in-home adjustments without having to spend a lot of money on renovations (Friedman, 1987; Pantelopolous, 1993). For instance, this can be achieved by adding the area of the loggia to the house to make it bigger. To summarize, Attenveld and Liesker (2010) have developed

methods for increasing affordability while not having to sacrifice comfort:

- When there are common rooms, such rooms could serve to reduce the size of the house;
- Small houses in the building block means more houses and therefore a higher population density, leading to more social interaction;
- Compact spaces could be composed inside the building by providing circulation spaces which can be utilized as meeting areas for residents (Schmal, Scheurman, & Elser, 2017);
- Homes should be flexible;
- There should be a reliance on technologies that reduce the cost of heating and cooling;
- Homes should use prefabricated or local materials.

4.2 The needs of residents with regards to building requirements

Next to affordability, it is important to meet the needs of the asylum status holder residents, who should be able to live in a comfortable environment with no issues due to cultural differences they might experience, especially when interacting with locals.

An important topic that relates to having people live together in one building and interact socially is the friction that may arise. Ethnic segregation in neighbourhoods and districts is generally seen as undesirable (Entzinger & Scheffer, 2012).

Regardless of the fact that social blending is a fundamental part of metropolitan living arrangements, it remains indistinct at what spatial scale housing diversification might work best. When individuals from various backgrounds, ways of life, and household compositions live close to each other, the development of close social ties is not automatically ensured. From one perspective, living in socially-blended conditions may create

social bridges between occupants of various backgrounds. Another perspective is that this could create a social distance between residents. The following paragraphs will provide insights into how these seemingly opposite arguments (social convergence versus social distancing) relate to the characteristics of the living space, such as the home's design and the common spaces in the building.

Some studies show that housing should be designed in such a way that is mindful to the location in the building that specific houses are located. For example, the housing units should be designed coherently, which could significantly reduce the perceived differences between residents of different backgrounds and thus contribute to creating a strong social bridge between them (Groves et al., 2003; Norris, 2006; Roberts, 2007). When the appropriate design is found, this design will then help overcome prejudice, because it "accentuates the similarities between the residents rather than the differences" (Arthurson, 2013).

Several researchers previously emphasized the importance of including a common area in a residential building that is designed to house people of various backgrounds and origins in order to foster social bonding (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010). It turns out that common places such as parking lots, corridors, and hallways have the ability to encourage the formation of such relationships and can help increase informal interactions between residents (Tunstall & Fenton, 2006). Joseph (2008) emphasized that proximity creates frequent interactions and helps identify common needs and interests.

It has also been shown that, when living in one building, the way of life of residents with various backgrounds and ethnicities may also be affected by the way they meet each other (Matejskova & Leitner, 2011; Nast & Blokland, 2014; Roberts, 2007). Valentine (2008) noted

that the presence of common rooms in the building, such as a shared living room or a shared workplace, enhances or creates opportunities for communication and meeting others on a daily basis. Jupp (1999) argued that the presence of these spaces in a building reduces prejudice and decrease the distance between residents.

For the purpose of designing asylum status holder housing, the Startblok buildings are highly suitable reference projects, as half of the residents in the Startblok buildings are refugees from Syria or Eretria and the other half are local Dutch students or starters. Due to the success and positive results of this project and the absence of any problems among the residents, the same idea has been repeated several times in different areas in the Netherlands.

The method that was applied in the design of these buildings in order to achieve harmony between residents of different backgrounds and to avoid friction is by giving regular educational and awareness lectures to the residents. In addition, potential new residents are not only interviewed by residents, but also by a social administrator who can advise the residents on whether or not to include the applicant. The purpose of the lectures is to ask residents about their experiences in the housing project and to make them aware about their options for participating in social activities, in addition to providing knowledge about what they can expect and what is expected of them. In terms of design, the spaces within the building are well thought-out, and the layout of the residential complex can prevent many potential problems and inconveniences from occurring.

The Startblok project followed various policies to be able to achieve more successful social integration and more harmony among residents. The most important policy that has been implemented in the building is to place the

dwellings of both refugees and local residents adjacent to each other and randomly throughout the building in order to avoid separation between them. Another policy was to give the residents complete freedom to organize everything in the building on their own, for example, organizing meetings and celebrations, in addition to distributing various tasks of the building among them, such as cleaning and arranging common places. This is in order to enhance the feeling among the residents that they are all equal and that each should be helped regardless of race, gender, religion or background. Some of the tasks that were self-organized by the residents were music events, language exchanges, movie nights, parties, and running groups. Many positive results were achieved from these activities in particular and from the whole project in general. For example, compared to the national average, the Startblok building reported fewer incidents occurring.

To conclude, specific features related to the design of homes and public spaces and facilities can intensify the formation of social bonds between residents. From the Startblok project, it can be concluded that the distribution of residents among the apartments should be randomized except for making sure that residents of various backgrounds live near each other. In addition, the presence of leisure facilities, corridors and outdoor spaces that promote different uses by residents of different background should be emphasized (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010; Roberts, 2007). Moreover, it was found that it is important to give the residents awareness lectures on an ongoing basis in order to break stigmas and prejudice. Lastly, it is important to give residents full responsibility for taking care of the building and organizing meetings.

For the current design, this means that on the building level, first, all the homes of status holders and local residents will be randomized to

different places in the building while ensuring their proximity to one another, in order to achieve the maximum possible mixture of backgrounds. Secondly, on the ground floor of the building, where there is a common place for working and studying, some outreach and development lectures should be given to all residents of the building in order to provide them with information on their duties and rights towards each other and with tips on how to accept each other regardless of ethnicity, nationality, religion, and background. In addition, on the second and the third floor of the building, there should be a centre that the municipality or any other organization can rent to hold workshops, volunteer work activities, and to be able to give Dutch language lessons in order to make it easier for the asylum status holders to communicate with others.

Design hypothesis:

In this paragraph, all the preceding arguments coming from the literature research are applied to the current design. Consequently, the results of the design hypothesis that fits with this design should express a clear understanding of the requirements of the target group (asylum status holders) and how to translate these requirements into a practical and useful design. The way the design hypothesis was structured was to break it down into four small paragraphs, which are:

- Because (the things that we already know or have seen);
 - We believe (ideas);
 - Will result in (outcomes);
 - We will know this is true when (there is evidence);
- The Netherlands currently copes with a housing market shortage, which complicates

housing the increased numbers of refugees. Also based on what I have witnessed personally, having a long stay at an asylum seekers' center affects someone psychologically, socially, financially, and educationally. In addition, the main problem that all new refugees suffer from is a lack of social integration, which leads to difficulties in finding paid work or in the ability to communicate and strengthen social relations due to weak linguistic skills and a lack of knowledge on the Dutch culture.

- I believe that there are basic necessities that a person must possess in order to be able to integrate, such as a job, home, education options, and health.

- Achieving integration is the responsibility of the asylum status holder, the municipality, and most importantly, our role as architects. Theoretical findings should not remain theoretical, but should be translated into designs that are actually brought into existence. Consequently, if I assume that the design of a residential building in the city of Rotterdam takes into account all the previously mentioned criteria for fostering social integration, this will provide an architectural environment for status holders to help them secure their first steps towards the future.

- I will make sure the architectural spaces enhance people's social relations. For example, when creating common rooms in the plinth of the building where I will ensure asylum status holder residents will be able to participate together with locals in social activities, or be able to set up or be part of various workshops that are intended to foster knowledge about the Dutch cultural values and other essential information. I also expect that by securing work places for these people in the plinth, they can showcase their skills or even have small halls for celebrations. Lastly, I will ensure the design incorporates a shared living in which residents of one floor share the kitchen, study room, or

outdoor places on the roof that are suitable and encourage interaction between residents; see Figure 11.

- **Program:**

Internal community (Internal contact): creating joint activities and social structures, spatial facilitation, for example, a living room, study\reading room or kitchen in the upper floors and outdoor spaces with seating areas (Cooper & Sarkissian, 1987), in addition to creating encounter spaces in the circulation areas or in the entrances (Frauenburo, 1997), because designing such collective spaces leads to more social integration (Karsten, 2017) and desired interaction between residents (Becker, 1976).

Adding public functions (External contact): attracting various ethnic groups to mix in with the residents of the building and allow them to communicate with each other without any form of separation by adding functions such as a small library, a hall for different cultural celebrations and parties, a café\language café where people spend time together and teach each other their own language, and a workshop place.

- **Building characteristics:**

1- Provoking encounters: the design and the conscious distribution of functions distribute the program across the building in such a way as to create dynamism and activity, from which encounters and interactions arise such as:

- Mixing living and public functions;
- Eyes on the street: the relationship of the building with the street through balconies, loggias, and windows;
- Designs for pedestrians: a number of entrances at the street level, presence of seating space and environmental factors such as trees near the sitting area on both sides (street and quay).

2- Transparency: connections between the inside and outside as a concept in the ground floor to create a sense of connection for residents and outsiders. This enables visibility from the outside, sight lines in the plan, and continuous routes.

3- Transition zones: gradual transition from public to private. For instance: the public functions in the plinth should be large units (restaurant, café), which means that offices (small units) should not be in the plinth because this is not necessary.

- Examples:

There are a few reference projects (see figure 10) that are relevant to the current research:

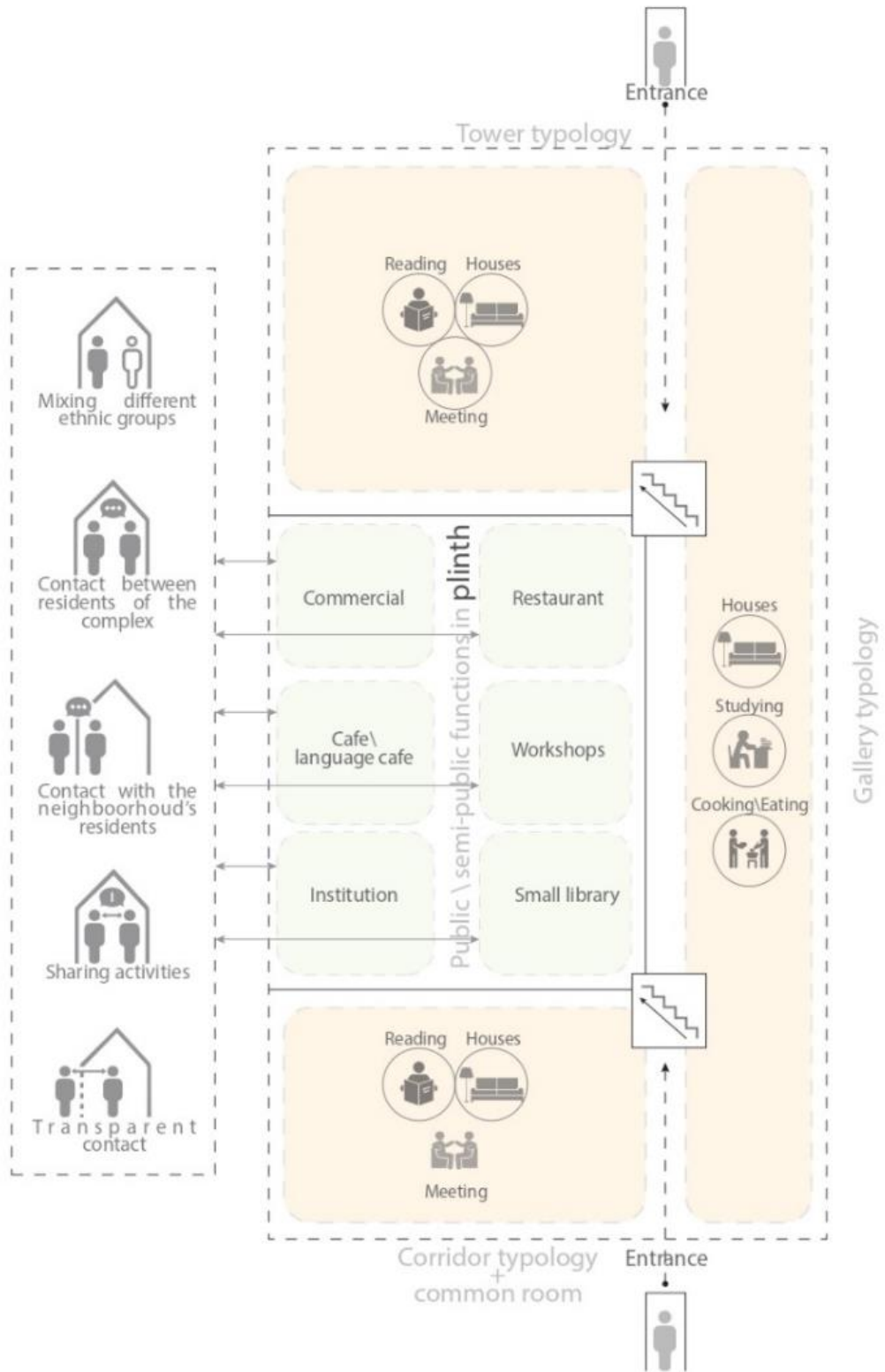
- Refugee Company (social enterprise for refugees), Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 2015: This project helps refugees to rebuild their professional lives by offering a variety of projects and workshops.

- Seedz (support and training program for refugees), Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2016: Seedz has four categories of business units, such as related to culture and food, engineering, sports, and a business training academy. It is aiming to enhance the skills and entrepreneurial capabilities of the newcomers.

- Migration lab (itinerant workshop for urban interventions), The Hague, The Netherlands, 2014: The migration lab organises multilingual workshops for documenting intercultural communication with refugees and local communities, along with education and cultural activities.



Figure 10: Refugee company, Amsterdam - Seedz, Rotterdam - Migration lab, The Hague. Source: Crimson, 2019.



Picture 11: Some functions should be included within the building to provoke interaction between the residents. Source: own illustration.

Conclusions & recommendations

This chapter discusses the results of the graduation research and answers the central research question: How to design social housing in an affordable manner that can provide the status holders a comfortable living environment and help them with the integration?

The four sub-questions that were designed to help answer this main research question were:

- How are the Dutch asylum procedures and housing status holders arranged in the Netherlands and to what extent is the Netherlands tolerant of refugees?
- What should a housing and living environment look like that allows refugees to socially integrate more strongly and without experiencing difficulties?
- How can an architectural environment be created that include both refugees and local residents?
- What are the specific special and social design needs of refugees with regards to house specifications and the scale of the build?

To answer the first sub-question, it was clear that there are many procedures someone has to go through when requesting asylum in the Netherlands and in order to obtain the right to stay in the country. During this period, the refugee remains in asylum seekers' centers until a decision is made on whether or not to grant him or her a more permanent residence. However, during this period, refugees are not allowed to work, and as result, they do not have any option to start the process of social integration. After being granted a residence permit, asylum seekers become asylum status holders. Then, the COA plays a big role in connecting them to a municipality. In terms of housing, asylum status holders are commonly placed in social housing. After being housed the task of the municipality is passed on directly to

the local housing association, which prepares the house for use and places a status holder in the house via COA.

Concerning the second sub-question, it was found that there are several conditions that should be met to implement integration. One of these conditions is that there must be knowledge of the norms and values of the dominant culture. The other condition is the ability to identify with the dominant culture to motivate change. It was also found that these conditions are not enough, and other domains were proposed as well to facilitate social integration, such as related to working, housing, education, health care, social connections, security, and language.

Designing a building block which can be occupied by everyone and not specifically by asylum status holders from specific nationalities was a challenge because of the many elements that had to be taken into consideration to achieve a comfortable living environment for the residents. To stimulate integration between residents from various ethnic backgrounds, feelings of discomfort and friction should be removed as much as possible. To do this, people with various ethnic backgrounds should be placed in between each other (with regards to housing) as much as possible and should be given a responsibility to perform various chores around the building. In addition, it is recommended to provide residents with awareness lectures that increase their degree of acceptance of one another and closeness to each other.

In order to answer the fourth question, it became clear that it is essential to have commercial functions in the plinth. To accomplish this, small halls can be set up to be able to accommodate people who wish to celebrate with their neighbourhood residents and organize social gatherings. In addition, several public functions should pertain specifically to asylum status holders, such as

having a language café where status holders can sit with their local friends to learn each other's language. Common rooms are also needed in the building, such as study and dining rooms, in which the residents can sit together.

- **Recommendations**

To be able to properly design homes that suit asylum status holders, it is important that more studies are conducted on this topic. Ideally, the result of such study efforts should be a guideline which allows architects to, for example, provide a specific selection of ethnic backgrounds and immediately list the most ideal circumstances for housing these asylum status holders. If the needs of asylum status holders with regards to housing

are not properly identified, social integration will be significantly more difficult. It is important to gather, bundle and propagate this knowledge to the rest of the world so that potential housing providers and local residents also get a fair picture of the target group.

Another idea which needs further research and rethinking relates to solving the problem of status holders being provided with public housing that is intended for a whole family. Given that many of the asylum status holders are relatively young and single, such houses are simply too big and the rent is high. So, research should also focus on ideal ways to design social housing that is intended to accommodate people of various backgrounds together, as roommates.

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