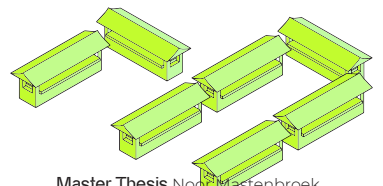
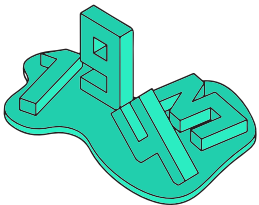
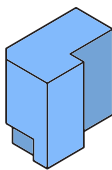


Welcome to the neighborhood!

a study for newcomers' sense of
'feeling at home'
in Bospolder-Tussendijken.



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MSc. Design for Interaction
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In collaboration with de Veldacademie

Master thesis

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October 2022 - May 2023

The word **neighborhood** will be mentioned 82 times in this report.

The meaning of neighborhood (neahdæl) originated mid-15c: 'neighborly conduct, mutual friendliness,' from neighbor (n.) + -hood.

Modern sense of 'community of people who live close together'

(Etymology, n.d.)



Preface

Welcome!

With this master thesis report, I will conclude my Masters in Design for Interaction. This brings my time at Delft University of Technology to a close.

The subject of migration is undeniably challenging. I first got in touch with the topic from a design perspective during my internship at social design studio Garage2020, through a project on minor refugees. It was a brief project that nevertheless sparked numerous conversations on how designers can play a role in rethinking the Dutch asylum chain. The thought of continuing to explore these ideas in a new design project has stayed with me ever since.

I feel grateful I was allowed to do so during my last month at IDE, channeling my ambition to bring about positive change through design. And in the process of it, get to know my neighborhood much better than I did in the previous two years.

I want to share my gratitude for the people that have made this project possible. First, I want to thank everyone that took the time to share their knowledge and personal stories through interviews and sessions; Soufiane for helping me arrange them and Temoor for the translations. Secondly, I want to thank my supervisors; Annemiek, thank you for posing critical questions that reminded me of the bigger picture and for sharing your knowledge on the topic. I hope to see a 'migration lab' at IDE someday! Stella, for your openness towards my ideas; your perspective on design often sparked me with new insights. Marthe, thank you for helping me bring this project to life and sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm for BoTu. And lastly, I want to thank my close friends and family; my parents for supporting me financially and emotionally during my studies as well as in advance for the soon to come looking-for-a-job period. My sisters for brainstorming together and assuring me in times of doubt. My roommates, fellow graduates and friends. Some of which are all three: Lena and Ruby. I feel part of this project is yours so thank you for all the help and inspiration - now it's time to spring-clean our place. Gijs, for patiently listening to my endless talks about the project and sticking with me through the highs and lows. And finally, Marie, Mats, Sanne, Mila, Rins, Hans, Hannie, Chris, Fem. Congratulations and good luck on your amazing graduation projects, I am thankful we share this journey. Witnessing the impactful projects of my fellow graduates and their willingness to tackle complex challenges, I have no doubt that the next generation of IDE will include future policy makers.

To close off, through this project I am hoping to nudge the Dutch migration system a step in the right direction and hopefully inspire you as reader, while I take you along the way.

Enjoy the read!

Noor Mastenbroek
22-05-2023



Do Ho Suh recreation of the front door of his childhood home.

Abstract

The Netherlands has been facing a crisis in its asylum trajectory, with the overloaded application center in Ter Apel drawing attention to the country's migration system. While a limited capacity in Ter Apel is one of the first hurdles asylum seekers face, it is only the start of a long trajectory that can take years to navigate. Although recent changes in the Civic Integration Act are seen as a step in the right direction - with a greater focus on personalized integration and municipal responsibility for guidance - critics argue that the process still lacks support for newcomers to build a social network and participate in society, leaving them struggling to fully participate in Dutch society (Frissen, 2021). It has been stated that the existing Dutch asylum procedure can frequently obstruct the formation of a sense of belonging in the new environment, thus impeding the process of integration. (Afdeling Buitengewone Zaken & OpenEmbassy, n.d.)

This project systemically researches the current Dutch asylum procedure of **newcomers** in the Netherlands through a social lens with the aim to explore and improve their integration process in the neighborhood by focussing on the sense of **feeling at home** (NL: *thuisgevoel*).

The research is conducted into two parts: *the journey towards a new home and its conflicts* and *the neighborhood as a new home and its opportunities*.

As the asylum chain is a trajectory with many steps, layers and stakeholders; it is a complex system and will be approached as such. A method designed to take on complex problems is the Transition Design Method (van Ael et al., n.d.) which will be used as a framework for the first part of the project. Part one includes numerous interviews with stakeholders and literature research. As an outcome, it defines ten important factors of feeling at home (referred to as *building blocks*) and reveals the things that happen in the asylum procedure that hinder this feeling. Seven conflicting areas (referred to as *tension fields*) are defined that occur during this process.

The second part explores the neighborhood as a new home and investigates opportunities to enhance newcomers' sense of feeling at home. The neighborhood Bospolder-Tussendijken (BoTu in short) is chosen as case-study due to the clients presence in this area. The client of this project is the Field Academy (NL: Veldacademie); a Rotterdam-based research platform for socio-spatial urban development. It has gathered a broad amount of knowledge on this specific neighborhood as an outcome of monitoring its activities as part of Resilient BoTu 2028, a programme that aims to drive significant improvements in the area and transform it into Rotterdam's first resilient community within ten years. Context-specific information was gathered through a field study in the neighborhood and a participatory session with newcomers themselves. By addressing the conflicts that were found in the housing process and translating those to opportunities for newcomers in BoTu, these findings have been used as starting points to propose three design directions.

The outcome of this project is the development of **Een kijk in de wijk** (ENG: *the Neighborhood Navigator*): an interactive maquette of the neighborhood that gives newcomers insight into the offer of community centers, activities, key figures and developments of Bospolder-Tussendijken through audio stories. Leveraging existing networks of locals and initiatives, the intervention aims to promote inclusion and encourage participation among newcomers. By involving newcomers in local initiatives, it seeks to facilitate connections, collaborations, and a greater sense of community.

This research project is intended to contribute to a deeper understanding of the integration trajectory of newcomers in the Netherlands and offer practical insights and interventions to enhance their sense of feeling at home in their new neighborhoods.

Figure 1. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London. Photos by Jack Hems. (2018)

Glossary

Throughout this project, I dove into a new domain of terminology. Below is a list of definitions with their explanation, to help you as reader to entangle the web of players you will come along. Our main player, that will most frequently be referred to as 'the newcomer' is assigned several different titles throughout their journey. The differences between these - sometimes based on position, sometimes on preference - are listed below.

Asylum seeker	A person seeking asylum abroad after fleeing their country of origin as a political refugee.
Caseload (taakstelling)	The number of refugees that employees are responsible for to find housing.
Civic integration (inburgering)	A process of courses a statusholder is obliged to participate in as part of an extended residence permit and naturalisation.
Client manager (klantmanager)	Every statusholder is assigned a consultant, a mentor from the municipality to guide them.
Mutation rate (mutatiegraag)	Amount of available housing for statusholders.
Naturalisation	The procedure for granting someone citizenship in a country they were not born in.
Newcomer	In this context, a newcomer is someone who was not born in the Netherlands, but has come here with the aim of staying indefinitely. In this report, it jointly refers to refugees and statusholders.
Immigrant	Someone who indefinitely moves to a foreign country.
Integration (integratie)	The economical and social inclusion and participation in the new environment.
Reciprocity (wederkerigheid)	The exchange within a relationship of mutual dependence and rights.
Statusholder (statushouder)	Refugees who are granted a (temporary) residence permit.
Target (taakstelling)	The assigned amount of work that should be completed by the end of the year
TVS	Taakstelling Volgstelsel, The shared system of COA and municipalities in which information is stored regarding the statusholder.
Warm handover (warme overdracht)	The 'handover' in responsibility over a newcomer between COA and the municipality
Promising groups (kansrijken)	Asylum seekers that are expected to get a residence permit.

Type of migrants

Status holders (Statushouders)	Have fled from their country. Status holders fall under the Participation Act. Status holders receive more guidance from the municipality compared to family migrants.
Family migrants (Gezinsmigranten)	Have no flight history. Migrate for their partner. The municipality has to do less for family migrants. They have to arrange the first part (broad intake) and PIP. But after that it is more up to the family migrants themselves to see 'how do you eventually pass the integration exam. After all, they still have to take an integration course (language course and exam), but they have to pay for this themselves.
Ukrainian refugees	This group has a different trajectory and different status at the time of writing this thesis. They are allowed to stay in the Netherlands for 90 days without a residence permit. They can receive temporary protection in the Netherlands through the European Union's Temporary Protection Directive (Richtlijn Tijdelijke Bescherming van de Europese Unie). Those who fall under this may stay in the Netherlands until March 4, 2024 (it is possible this date will change).

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Introduction

A crisis

The search for a new home can be a long one. In the summer of 2022, the asylum trajectory in the Netherlands got completely jammed. (Waarlo, 2022). The news was full of pictures of the overloaded application centre in Ter Apel, showing people sleeping outside while awaiting their turn to apply for asylum. The attention shed new light on the Dutch migration system. Although a limited capacity in Ter Apel might be one of the first hurdles asylum seekers face when arriving in the Netherlands, it is only the start of a long trajectory.

The process happening in between applying for a residence permit until a permit is granted can take someone years. When it is eventually granted, the process of integrating in the Netherlands should start. But, as Renée Frissen, founder of OpenEmbassy (Frissen, as cited in van der Linde, 2021), states: 'the Netherlands lacks an integration policy; it is focussed on civic integration'. She states that civic integration focuses on a limited set of skills that newcomers must master, but integration is based on the fact that people can only build a future in a new country if both they and the host society are receptive to it (Frissen, 2021). In an article in De Groene Amsterdammer she describes the Dutch migration policy as follows:

"Integration is aimed at enabling people to participate as fully as possible in society. In a broad sense. So that people can lead a full life. Because given that, whether we like it or not, people are here and the vast majority of them will stay, you better make sure they succeed. For the people themselves, but also for the Netherlands, the economy, the social cohesion in the neighborhood, there are so many factors that integration has an effect on."

Frissen, as cited in van der Linde, 2021

OpenEmbassy is one of several other upcoming organisations and initiatives that strive for a shift in the integration policy; going beyond the checklist of courses and requirements stated by the government and searching for ways to touch upon factors that contribute to day-to-day life of newcomers such as inclusivity, equality and social cohesion. This shift towards a more social participative migration policy has neither gone unnoticed by policy makers, resulting in recent changes in the Civic Integration Act.

A step in the right direction?

As of January 1st 2022, the Civic Integration Act has been deployed (Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, 2022). The type of integration and naturalisation - which is focused on learning the language, the Dutch values and functioning of the labour market- is now dependent on the age and assets of the newcomer and designed to be more personalised. Next to that, it has been decided that municipalities play a bigger part in this process and are responsible for the guidance during the integration phase. This asks for adaptation from multiple parties which results in new challenges.

Overall it is argued that the process with the deployment of this act still lacks the support for newcomers to build a social network. Frissen comments that the new law is still focused on civic integration and not on integration:

"Newcomers in the Netherlands are still having a hard time due to the lack of a proper integration policy. The final goal, letting people participate in society, is therefore not met."

Frissen, as cited in van der Linde, 2021



Figure 2. Harry Cock, De Volkskrant (2022)

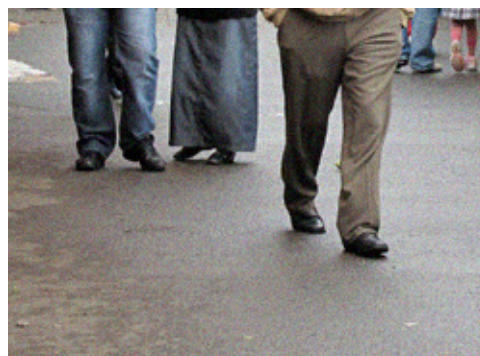


Figure 3. Photo of someone taking a step at the Grote Visserijmarkt - Gerard de Boer (2009)



The client: The Field Academy

This project is done in collaboration with the Field Academy - a research platform for socio-spatial urban development. In the last ten years, this organisation has been creating a link between the municipality of Rotterdam and educational institutes in order to build an elaborate network of people that contribute research related to the urban environment. By now, a broad network is established of public and private actors, students, professionals, and residents themselves spanning several neighborhoods in Rotterdam.

The Field Academy applies the research method called action research, where the findings are directly tested in practice to find out what works – here, the residents are engaged to act as consultants. The platform is created to contribute to build a better city, with the strive for community resilience.

“Resilience is about how well individuals, municipalities or organisations are able to handle changes, shocks and tension in their lives. How they respond to, recover from, adapt to or even transform in response to change.”

- Resilient Botu 2028 Programme

The scope

To frame the scope of this project to a realistic and fitting scale, the target audience as well as the context location have been narrowed down in consultation with the client, the Field Academy.

A newcomer in the Netherlands refers to an individual who has recently arrived in the country, often as a migrant or refugee, and is in the process of settling in and integrating into Dutch society. In the context of this thesis report, it jointly refers to refugees and status holders.

The focus will be on newcomers with a refugee background of at least 18 years old when arriving in the Netherlands. This has been decided, since the amount of minor refugees which go to a different asylum trajectory is only around 10 percent (IND, 2022).



Figure 4. De Veldacademie - Airotterdam (2017)

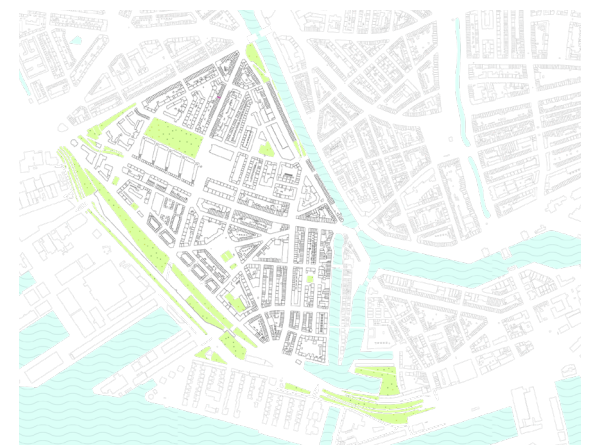


Figure 5. Plan of Bospolder-Tussendijken

The journey of this relatively small group of minors will be too broad to include within a project of this timeframe. The integration of newcomers is said to work both ways between current residents and the newcomers (Frissen, 2021), so both will be taken into account.

The neighborhoods Bospolder and Tussendijken, jointly referred to as BoTu, is chosen as a case-study for the proposed intervention. As the Field Academy has an ongoing project focused on increasing social resilience in this ‘twin neighborhood’, it is a fitting neighborhood in Rotterdam to use as case-study. With social cohesion as an important aspect of resilience (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019), this includes all current and future residents of the neighborhood.

The approach

This quote on the right of social design studio 'Afdeling Buitengewone Zaken' was one of the main results of the project called 'de Sociale Steen'. The project, in collaboration with OpenEmbassy, includes an exploration of the social perspective in housing for newcomers. A qualitative research was done together with eighteen newcomers to find to which extent they feel at home in their neighborhood. The study reveals that the current implementation of Dutch asylum procedure often hinders the development of a sense of belonging in the new environment, thereby affecting integration. In summary, when searching for ways to improve this sense of belonging in the future neighborhood of newcomers, it is important to research the newcomer trajectory preliminary to the moment of housing.

“The moment someone sets foot on Dutch soil, the mingling begins. Maybe not what we officially call integration, but the connection with the environment is starting to emerge.”

- Professional, VluchtelingenWerk NL

Based on this and several other sources pointing in similar directions, the research of this project was conducted in two parts. The first part focuses on **the journey towards a new home and its conflicts**, which includes an analysis of the various steps and stakeholders involved in the process, such as obtaining a residence permit and the search for a suitable home.

The second part of the research explores **the neighborhood as a new home and its opportunities**. This section investigates the potential for creating opportunities for newcomers to feel more at home in their new neighborhood. By exploring the conflicts and opportunities during the housing process, the research provides insights that facilitate improvement of the integration of newcomers in their neighborhood and help them develop a sense of belonging in their new home. Through conceptualisation, opportunities are captured in a design, fitting to the case study neighborhood BoTu and evaluated in context.

“Integration now mainly focuses on the moment that people are already housed somewhere. While actually in the housing process that precedes it, things are already happening that influence the extent to which people can feel at home in the Netherlands.”

-Afdeling Buitengewone Zaken (n.d.)

The methodology

Project aim

With the previously explained approach in mind, the aim can be described as:

in part one
the aim is to map out the current newcomer trajectory in their search for a new home and identify areas of opportunity coinciding with newcomers' feeling at home ('het thuisgevoel') in their new environment.

in part two
the aim is to propose an intervention that contributes to newcomers' sense of 'feeling at home' when settling in the Netherlands.

The twin-neighborhood Bospolder-Tussendijken in Rotterdam will serve as case-study for the physical environment.

Research questions

To be able to meet the aim of the project, a number of research questions have been formulated as follows.

Research question of part 1

What are the current tensions within the newcomer trajectory that conflict with feeling at home?

Subquestions of part 1

- 1. What are the desired factors that contribute to 'feeling at home'?*
- 2. What are the current steps in the newcomer trajectory from residence permit to moving to the neighborhood?*
- 3. Who are the other stakeholders involved and what are their relations in the current context? What is their behaviour?*
- 4. What are the tensions between newcomers and other stakeholders during the trajectory?*

Research question of part 2

What can be done to make the newcomers of the neighborhood Bospolder-Tussendijken feel more at home?

Subquestions of part 2

- 1. What are the characteristics and opportunities of the neighborhood BoTu?*
- 2. What intervention can make the newcomers feel more at home in BoTu?*

Project methodology

Below, the methods used to approach the project are explained.

Systemic design

The project can be described as a social design project with a systemic approach, utilizing the Transition Design Method as a framework for the system side of the project. This is a relatively new method designed to guide designers through tackling complex problems. This method, which is relatively new, acknowledges the shift in design from focusing on tangible objects to tackling abstract societal issues.

Design has evolved from a concrete, purely object-oriented practice to one that aims to address more abstract, complex societal issues as stated by van der Bijl-Brouwer and Malcolm (2020).

Complex systems, like the asylum chain, consist of interconnected layers such as economics, politics, and society, posing additional challenges for problem-solving. The Transition Design Method involves engaging all stakeholders to gain a broad perspective. The zoomed-out perspective and targeted interventions can provide another level of awareness that can be of help for designers to develop more comprehensive and cohesive projects. (Irwin, 2019, p. 975)

As the asylum chain is a trajectory with many steps, layers and stakeholders; it is a complex system and will be approached as such. In the context of the Dutch migration system, this systemic approach aims to understand the system's impact on newcomers and identify opportunities for designing interventions in the Bospolder-Tussendijken neighborhood. The method steps as seen in figure 6 below: framing, listening, understanding, exploring

Systems thinking is based on a method of reasoning called synthesis: considering things in relation to a larger system—or indivisible whole—of which they are part.

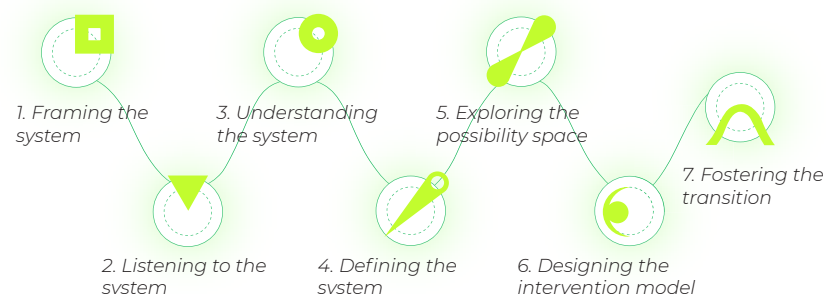
- Van der Bijl-Brouwer & Malcolm, 2020

and designing (van Ael et al., n.d.) are used as guidelines to map the system around the newcomer trajectory over time, its relationship and its conflicts.

Tension fields

Each step has been slightly adapted to fit the scope of this project. For example, the conflicts within the system are referred to as 'tension fields' as these terms cover the conclusions of the understanding of the system.

The Transition Design method covers an additional step where the conflicts or tensions that are found are used as a basis to define leverage points. Leverage points are specific spots in a complex system where making a small change can lead to big changes in everything (Meadows, 1999). However in the scope of this thesis, the tensions are used as a step towards design principles, rather than 'leverage points' as the aim for this project is not to tilt the system but rather to use the conflicts as starting points to design a case-study intervention.



Research methodology

Below, the methods used to approach the research are explained.

Being aware of your own position as designer and thus as a person is important when working on a project for newcomers. Your own cultural background and position of privilege can shape your assumptions, biases, and values, which can in turn influence how you understand and respond to the cultural differences and needs of the newcomers. Therefore, I find it important to acknowledge my position and incorporate research methods that help me to work respectfully and collaboratively and prioritise the needs of the newcomers. Participatory design and culture sensitive design are such methods.

Desk research & Qualitative interviews

This was followed by many in-depth interviews with the stakeholders that play a role in the timeline. An overview of these interviews can be seen in Appendix A & B. Next, there were a few 'to see how it's done' visits to places that surfaced while doing research. These were relevant because of their work with the target group or within the context of BoTu. Places include het Wijkpaleis (including an interview with co-founder Floris van Gennep), de Beroepentuin (Dave Pompe), 'het Huis van de Toekomst' (interview with Moni, employee and resident) about the contribution of their work.

Participatory design

Participatory design is an approach to design that involves active and meaningful participation by the people who will be affected by the design outcome. The goal is to create solutions that meet the needs and preferences of the end-users by involving them in the design process.

The research includes interviews with citizens on the street in Bospolder-Tussendijken. Next to that, several newcomers have been included in a participatory session to communicate their needs with regards to 'feeling at home' in the neighborhood. (Session Newcomers, p. 81)

Culture sensitive design

Culture-sensitive design recognizes that different cultures have different ways of understanding and interacting with the world, and that these differences can have a significant impact on how people use and respond to design. (van Boeijen & Zijlstra, 2020) By considering the cultural context of the end-users, designers can create solutions that are more effective, engaging, and respectful of the users' cultural backgrounds. Being aware of cultural sensitivity is especially important when designing for newcomers because newcomers often come from different cultural backgrounds and may have different expectations and needs than the dominant culture in the host country. This was kept in mind through the entirety of the project, as to avoid being ineffective, alienating, or even offensive to the newcomers.

Design methodology

The methods used to design the concept of *Een kijk in de wijk* are explained below.

Participatory brainstorms

Together with fellow design student an informal brainstorm was done to provide some fresh perspective when taking the step from needs to design directions (Appendix E).

User testing

To test the usability, experience and effect of concept for the designed intervention, a test was done with residents of BoTu (chapter Evaluation, p. 110) The insight were used to propose further recommendations to the concept (chapter Recommendations, p. 117).

Human-centeredness contributes to the systemic exploration of existing relationships and tensions in the problem situation, as well as to the design of new interventions

Figure 6. Diagram based on *The Systemic Design Toolkit methodology 7 steps* (van Ael et al., n.d.)

- Van der Bijl-Brouwer & Malcolm, 2020

The journey towards a new home and its conflicts.

The neighborhood as a new home and its opportunities.

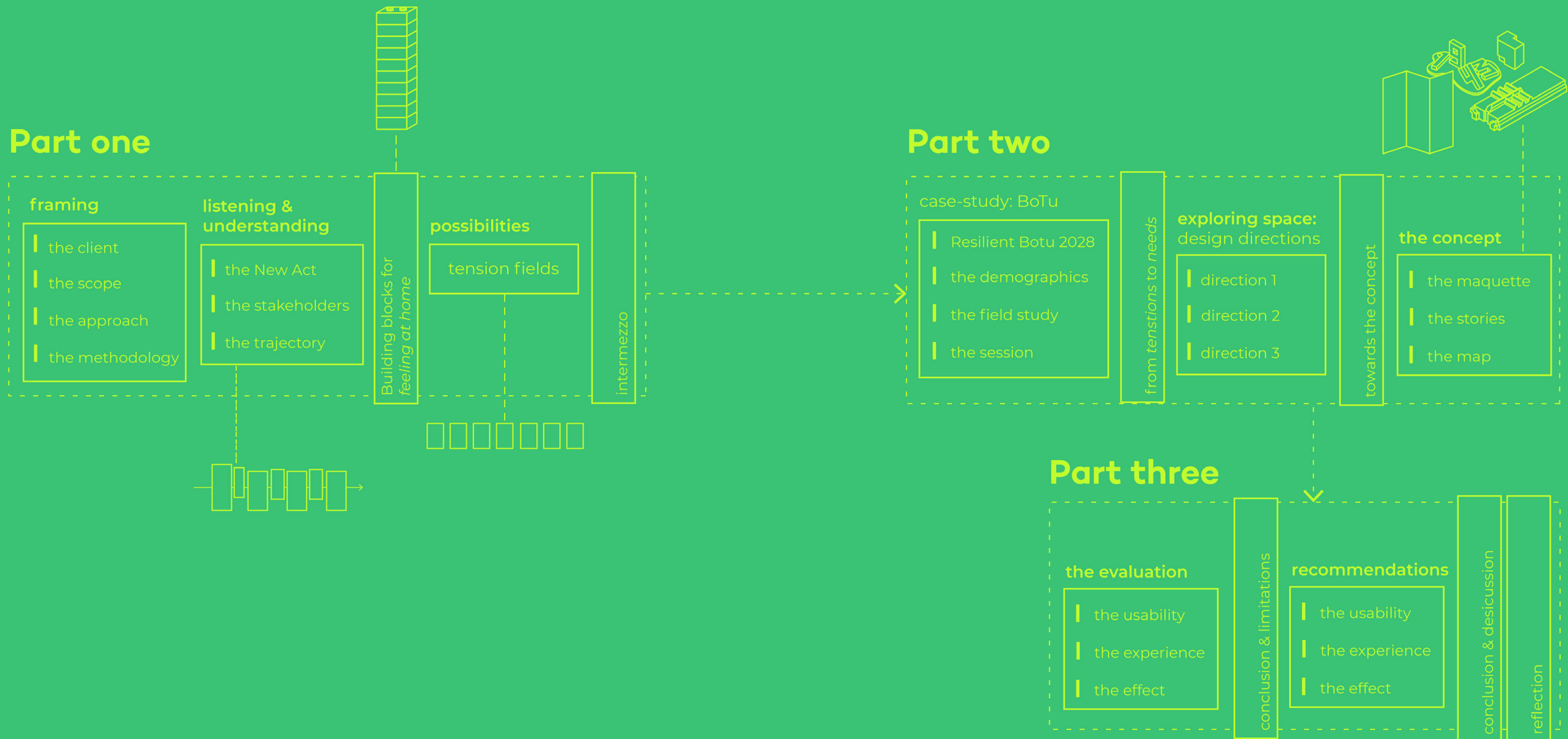


Figure 7. Diagram of the Project Overview ↗

The journey towards a new home and its conflicts.

Part one

Part 1 is about understanding the problem area and finding connection points for potential interventions. This is done by listening to relevant stakeholders, including newcomers, locals, and other key players. Through this process, in-depth information is gained on the newcomer experience in their search for a new home. Insights are mapped out to define conflicts in the system, without searching for solutions.

'THE MOMENT SOMEONE SETS FOOT ON DUTCH SOIL THE MINGLING BEGINS, MAYBE NOT WHAT WE OFFICIALLY CALL INTEGRATION BUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT.'

(Professional, VluchtelingenWerk NL)

The New Act

As of January 1st 2022, the New Civic Integration Act has been deployed (Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, 2022), resulting in a shift in the procedure and organisational responsibilities of the civic integration of newcomers in the Netherlands. The integration and naturalisation - which was mainly focused on learning the language, the Dutch values and the functioning of the labour market - is adjusted to be more dependent on the newcomer and designed to be more personalised. Next to that, it has been decided that municipalities play a bigger part in this process and are responsible for the guidance during the integration phase. This asks for adaptation from multiple parties which results in new challenges, such as that the integration process will now be dependent on the assigned municipality of the newcomer. The actants that play a role in this are still adjusting to this new state (as said by multiple employees of the Municipality of Rotterdam) and looking for new ways to improve. In short, we can identify the direct changes to the Act as follows.

Shift in responsibility

The municipality is now in control of the integration process instead of the newcomer having to arrange most things themselves. This shift in responsibility means that there is more assistance for the newcomers in general. Every status holder is assigned a client manager from the moment they are linked to a municipality. Now the status holder is in contact with the municipality already during their stay at the AZC. Later on, the assistance can sometimes be done locally, for example by meeting with clients in their own municipality or neighborhood after moving from the AZC. This shift in responsibility means that now the municipality has a part in the decision-making when it comes to regulations around the integration courses.

"The Director role of the municipalities has positives and negatives. Care and coaching can be provided more locally, but the offer of care and guidance now differs per municipality. Yes, you could be dealing with political colour for example."

- Professional, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland

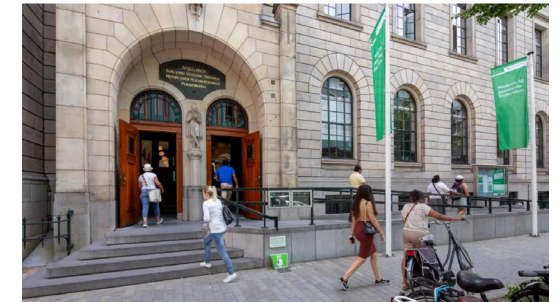


Figure 8. Entrance of City Hall in Rotterdam

Introducing the broad intake

The New Act introduces the broad intake, in which the PIP (the learning route of the person integrating) is determined.

Introducing the PIP

The New Act is designed to be more personalised for newcomers. Client managers from the municipality often mention that integration is 'maatwerk', tailored to the specific needs of the newcomer.

Therefore the act introduces the 'Plan Inburgering en Participatie' (PIP), a personalised 'Integration and Participation Plan' that includes a roadmap towards the aimed level of Dutch language, re-education or a possible job. This roadmap is created during intake meetings with the assigned client manager from the municipality, with the aim to create future prospects for the newcomer. The client manager is responsible for tracking the progress of the plan during the integration period.

Language level up

The level of Dutch that is generally required for the integration exam is increased from B2 to B1. Exceptions can be made for the required level of Dutch, as the municipality helps to estimate a realistic goal for each status holder (DUO Inburgeren, n.d.).

'Nieuwe wetters' versus 'oude wetters'

With the new law, a distinction is made between newcomers before January 1st 2022 and after. This first group is referred to as 'nieuwe wetters' (roughly translated new law goers) and 'oude wetters' (old law goers) by a client manager of the municipality. There is also an in-between group which falls under the old law, but is still in the process of completing their civic integration courses. The various groups, depending on their year of integration, are subject to different versions of the integration law and fall under different departments of the municipality.

"There are several versions of the Integration systems, depending on the year the groups fall under different regulations. There is the 2007, the 2013 and now the 2022 law. To the old laws, all target groups apply; but for the new law another department called 'Inburgering010' solely goes about family migrants."

- Professional, Municipality of Rotterdam

Overall, DUO describes the goal of the New Law as: 'The aim of the new law is that you, as a person integrating, can participate in the Netherlands as quickly as possible. And that you also find work as quickly as possible.' (DUO, 2022)

"The advantage is that you can now inventorize in cooperation with the municipality (because they are in charge) what we can do in the interim (waiting) period to still activate people and let them participate."

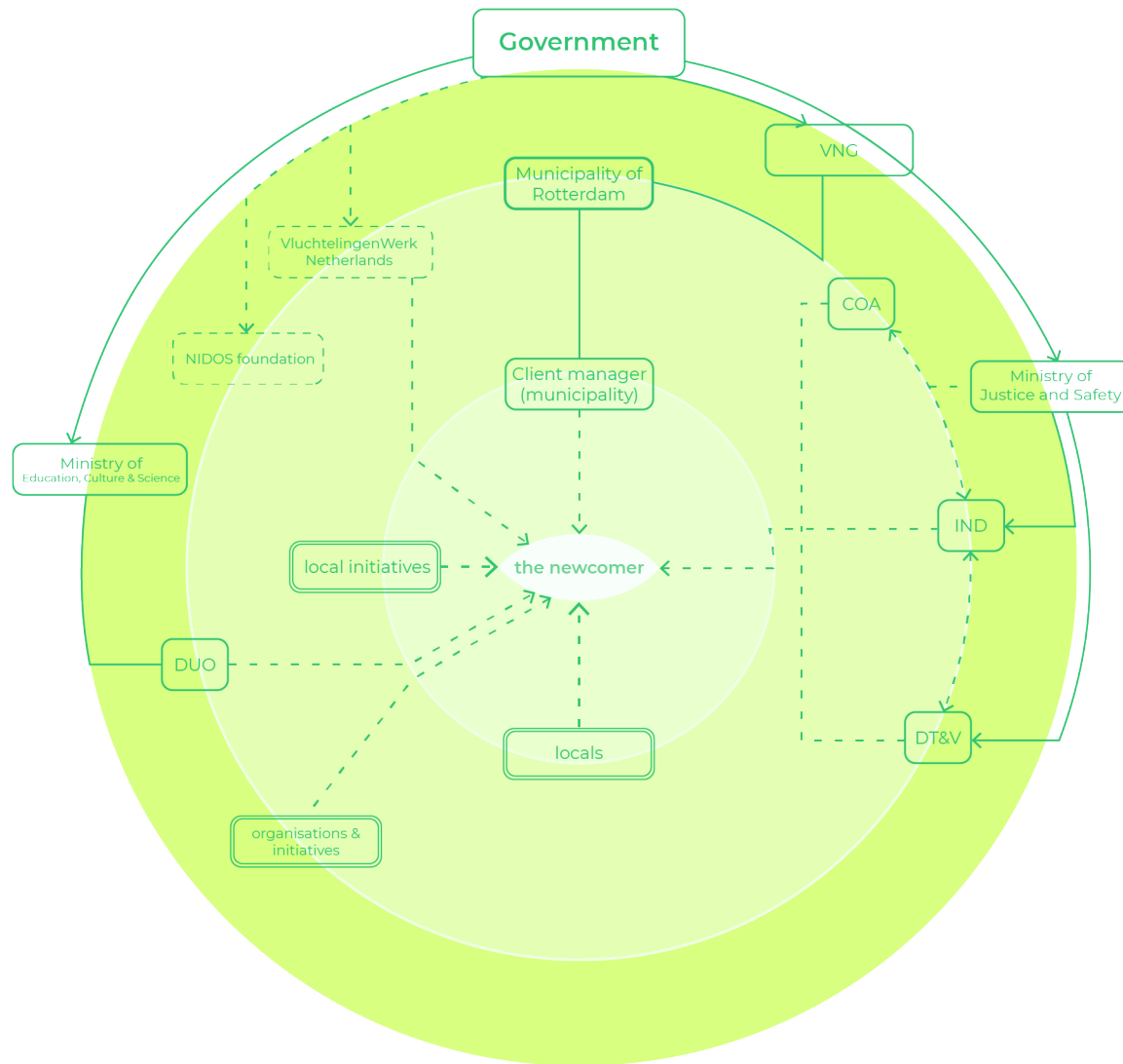
- Professional, COA






For this project, although still in the process of implementation, the New Integration Act is included in the newcomers trajectory as more and more newcomers will be subject to this latest version of the law. Thus, when designing for newcomers, it is important to keep in mind the latest changes in their trajectory.

The stakeholders

This section introduces the stakeholders involved in the newcomer trajectory, which is crucial for understanding the diversity of perspectives, opinions, and behaviors; the stakeholder map depicts those who actively contribute to the newcomer journey from receiving a residence permit to settling in a neighborhood.

It is a hierarchical system, which is shown from top (outer circle) to bottom (centre). The organisations can be divided in a few categories, dependent on their connection to the government and range of responsibility. There are formal organisations that are governmental, some that have a close partnership and organisations that are independent. Then some are active nationwide, while others are active more locally, such as on a neighborhood level. These relations are In the center, we have the newcomers themselves.



-  governmental organisation
-  partnership with government
-  independent organisation
-  falls under...
-  appointed by...

Governmental organisations

The stakeholders that fall under the government are listed below.

VNG

The Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) is the overarching organisation of municipalities in the Netherlands. As of January 1st 2022, the municipality of Rotterdam has received the 'directors role' regarding the integration of newcomers (chapter the New Act *Shift in responsibility*, p. 23). Therefore, on an organisational level, the municipality is now the biggest stakeholder during this 'final' phase of the integration.

Ministry of Justice & Safety

This ministry in particular, is responsible for maintaining the rule of Law in the Netherlands. It appoints several agencies and services that play an important role in the asylum trajectory, such as COA, IND and DT&V.

IND

The Immigration and Naturalisation service determines whether an asylum seeker is granted a residence permit or not.

DT&V

The Repatriation and Departure Service takes care of the return of a refugee, when a residence permit has been denied.

Partnership organisations

COA, VluchtelingenWerk Netherlands, and NIDOS are categorized as *zelfstandig bestuursorgaan* or independent administrative bodies. These organizations are established by law and possess public authority, either through an order in council or ministerial regulation. They operate autonomously and are not hierarchically subordinate to a minister within the central government (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, 2022)

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is a Dutch organisation that provides support and assistance to people from the moment they are seeking asylum in the Netherlands. It works in close collaboration with the government. The organisation assists with finding housing, accessing healthcare and education, and obtaining legal advice and assistance with their asylum applications. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland plays a large role in the guidance of asylum seekers and newcomers. It has many partnerships under which municipalities, employers' organisations, the Municipal or Community Health Service and so on (Professional, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland).

"The biggest role of VluchtelingenWerk is the provision of information and services in the country. That the refugees feel seen and welcome. So it's also the friendliness, the fact that we're approachable, that's also an important part of our job."

- Professional, VluchtelingenWerk NL

COA

The Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers is responsible for the housing of asylum seekers in the Netherlands. COA takes care of the refugees during their stay at one of their centres and is responsible for the transfer to the municipality of the asylum seeker. From the moment social housing is found for the (then named) status holder or newcomer, the responsibility of the COA comes to an end.

NIDOS Foundation

Single underage refugees (called AMV's) are taken into custody by The Custody Organisation: NIDOS. The role of this organisation is not further researched during this project, since they do not play a role within the trajectory of adult (18-plus) asylum seekers and newcomers.

Independent organisations & initiatives

There are many independent organisations and initiatives that work hard to contribute to the guidance and integration of newcomers in the Netherlands. A few of the latest and most prominent in the Netherlands are listed below:

OpenEmbassy is a proactive organisation founded by René Frissen that strives to create a welcoming environment for newcomers in the Netherlands. It aims to facilitate the integration of newcomers into Dutch society in a sensible, fair, and seamless way. They do this firstly by providing information through a help-desk, through practical assistance and through 'action research' (actieonderzoek). Through these means, they work towards changing the system by advocating policies that promote inclusion and equal opportunities for all newcomers. (Open Embassy - Zinnig, Waardig En Vlot Je Weg Vinden in Nederland, 2022)



Figure 9. OpenEmbassy (n.d.)

NewBees is an organisation that strives for inclusivity by facilitating an all-encompassing integration program for municipalities. This includes providing guidance to newcomers on accessing employment opportunities and offering advice and support to companies in the area of Diversity & Inclusivity. Additionally, the organisation facilitates the placement of newcomers in traineeships to help them gain work experience, improve their Dutch language skills and build a social network. (NewBees, 2023)



Figure 10. NewBees team Rotterdam (n.d.)

WelcomeApp is a platform supported by an application where newcomers can find valuable connections to broaden their network, opportunities and information in the search for a new home. For example, the app shows events that are nearby and it serves as a medium to ask locals questions. At the moment, they are redefining their position to see whether they can take a more fixed role in the trajectory (Professional, WelcomeApp) (Welcome App, 2023)

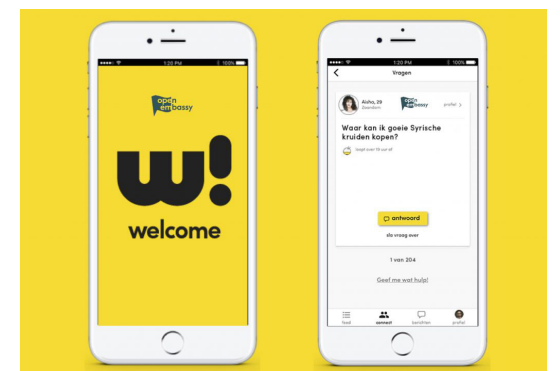


Figure 11. WelcomeApp & OpenEmbassy (n.d.)

The newcomer trajectory over time

By listening to the relevant stakeholders, in-depth information is gained on the newcomer trajectory. An overview can be found in the Newcomer trajectory timeline (p. 34). Existing initiatives, newcomers, locals and other stakeholders are 'listened to' by interviewing them. A first version of the timeline itself was used to structure the interviews, walking through the trajectory step-by-step with the stakeholder. This is to understand why things are carried out the way they are and what the consequences are for the newcomer as a result of this. This will provide insight into where there might be conflicts. In the next chapter (zooming in: seven tension fields) we will zoom in on several of these conflicts to conclude the understanding phase of the project.

Opinions and experiences will differ, therefore the system map is divided into three perspectives: the local perspective, the organisational perspective and the newcomer perspective.

1. Status determined

We start the journey at step 1 (Map 2, p3 4-35). The IND has been questioning the newcomers seeking asylum to determine whether they have the right to a residence permit. The newcomer receives the news, the story we are following in this thesis is the one with the good news; a residence permit is granted. It should be noted that this process likely has taken years already. Subsequently, DUO determines the civic integration duty of this particular person. Civic integration is usually mandatory, and the timespan that is given to complete the courses is three years.

“This decision however (integration duty), is dependent on the specifics of the situation and the conditions. DUO makes this decision, Inburgering010 verifies this decision.”

- Professional, Inburgering010

When awaiting a residence permit, newcomers are commonly staying at a Process Shelter Location (POL). They would then, once a residence permit is granted, move from the POL to an Asylum Seekers Centre (AZC) to await the rest of the procedure. However, with the limited housing options there might be a crisis exception:

“Normally asylum seekers who received a residence permit are meant to go from POL to AZC, but due to limited spaces during the crisis, people with different statuses can be mixed.”

- Formal Organisation, active nationwide

A cause for this shortage in housing and staff can be traced back to the time when asylum applications in the Netherlands declined. As a response, the national government immediately scaled down the organisational asylum system to demand. Now that registrations have increased again, it shows that the asylum chain was not prepared to anticipate and act to such change. Hence, a shortage in staff and housing.

“We need a stable asylum chain where you can build up and scale down with a future perspective.”

- Formal Organisation, active nationwide

2. Matching interviews

Now that the newcomer has moved to an AZC, COA is mainly responsible for the pastime of their residents. It is their task to conduct matching and housing interviews to determine someone's placing criteria. These interviews are conducted with the intent, as COA states, to find the right personal fit. This includes factors such as job opportunities, nearby family or acquaintances and housing availability.

While the idea of finding the ideal municipality for the future may seem appealing, the reality is that it can be difficult to achieve, particularly given the current crisis circumstances.

“As soon as an asylum seeker receives a permit, the COA links him to the municipality where he is to be accommodated. And those links are really done purely haphazardly, really purely a numerical choice; and this does not take into account the supply of housing in a particular municipality.”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

As a municipality is being assigned, in most cases there will be a move from one AZC to another. This can either be due to a lack of available housing or a deliberate action. Moving between asylum centres is often undesirable, since it is known to cause commotion.

“If a monastery is vacant and we ask if housing is allowed there, they all say yes to Ukrainians. But if we ask whether status holders are allowed to live there, they ask ‘are there no criminals among them? What about our daughters?’”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

“They (the azc) can have a contract for five years, when it ends the entire centre has to move to a municipality which is next in line. This causes many transfers.”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

As noted by a professional from COA, this can lead to individuals having to move between five or six different locations. Regularly having to move can cause an already uncertain situation to become even more unstable.

A stable situation is important for people, because it gives a sense of peace and security. That stable situation is affected the moment people are being housed outside the region where they are staying.

- Professional, VluchtelingenWerk NL

Nevertheless, in some cases a move can be planned deliberately to the best interest of the newcomer. This is what is being done in Oisterwijk, where a pilot is conducted to test the effect of **local connectedness** and **participation** in day-to-day life in an AZC. Status holders assigned to a municipality near Oisterwijk but still waiting for social housing assigned to them are already moved to the Oisterwijk AZC in order to let them integrate in the neighborhood as quickly as possible.

Although the pilot is an exception, the effect of regional placement has already showed some positive effects amongst the newcomers staying there:

“You notice people feel more involved in the region. People are already starting to look for a job while staying at the AZC. They do this because they know they will stay in this region.”

- Location manager, AZC in Oisterwijk

Although this early familiarisation has shown positive outcomes, the early access to **building connections with the surroundings** is challenging in some cases. As stated by a youth consultant for status holders from the municipality in Rotterdam:

“It is known to which municipality they are linked, but not to which district. So it's hard to act on that. They don't know where they will end up living and we don't know. So connecting to the neighborhood becomes difficult.”

- Youth consultant, Municipality of Rotterdam

3. Waiting waiting waiting...

There is no doubt there are many waiting periods in between the different steps. This could include waiting for a verdict, a placement, housing etcetera. Procedures that are officially allowed to take a maximum of two weeks, can in current circumstances take months. These long periods of nothingness and uncertainty can have a negative effect on the newcomer in question:

“Because of the long waiting times in the AZC, people are almost a bit dulled or turned off. Then after a year and a half you suddenly have to encourage them to do things.”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

Even though some of these periods can be filled with other meaningful pastimes such as pre-integration, it often leaves gaps, standing in the way of continuity.

“The continuity is a problem, so some people stay in the AZC longer than necessary. This means they have completed the pre-integration process, but that the integration process can not start yet for whatever reason. And then you have this period where people are kept on hold.”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

4. Pre-integration

Pre-integration is a step that can be taken to get a head-start in the mandatory civic integration courses from within the AZC. This is however quite location-dependent. The municipality in Rotterdam states that “It depends whether pre-integration is done from the AZC, the municipality of Rotterdam is not really involved in this.” It is not clearly confirmed why this is the case but - as suggested by a status holder consultant in Rotterdam- it could be dependent on the accessibility to a nearby AZC which is quite far in distance. By the inconsistency in answers amongst the municipalities, it is clear they are still adjusting to their new role in the integration trajectory. This location-dependence appears to be an obstacle more often:

“If you are in an AZC in Den Helder and you are linked to the municipality of Tilburg, you could do the pre-integration, but for the integration-well, you are not travelling from Den Helder to Tilburg everyday to do the integration courses.”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

5. A warm hand-over

The roughly translated 'warm handover' (warme overdracht), is the meeting between the newcomer, an employee of COA and an employee of the assigned municipality in which the three get acquainted. The personal information of the newcomer that has been gathered through interviews has been saved in the TVS (Taakstelling Volgstelsel), referred to as the blue folder. In this meeting, this is handed over to the municipality as they now carry part of the responsibility over their future resident. Whether the warm hand-over takes place at the AZC or later, differs. As stated by COA, the sequence of actions in the trajectory is still being considered:

"We need to think more about the future. What can you do at the front of the 'warm handover' to offer prospects to the status holder? What can you already start partly on location and what in the municipality where you will eventually live."

- Professional, COA

6. Pastimes and participation

There are various ways to spend time at the AZCs while awaiting procedures. In some cases, this type of activities are consulted together with the municipalities as part of the New Act adjustments.

"The advantage is that you can now inventories in cooperation with the municipality (because they are in charge) what we can do in the interim (waiting) period to still activate people and let them participate."

- Professional, COA

At around 40 AZCs in the Netherlands, there is a participation counter (meedoenbalie). A participation counter offers (voluntary) work and activities in cooperation with local partners (Meedoenbalie in Het Azc, 202). In short, there are three forms of participation available at the centres (Location manager, COA)

"What we hear from our clients a lot is 'In the AZC we are just waiting. Old traumas resurface. There is just a lot of tension and people are also like: I just want to get to work. I just want to do something instead of sitting still.'"

- Professional, WelcomeApp

7. Broad intake

The New Act introduces the broad intake, in which the learning route of the person integrating is determined, the PIP. There are three different routes (Rijksoverheid, n.d.):

1. The B1 route

a route for language and (volunteer) work. Those who are subjected to the common integration duties are required to speak and write Dutch at level B1 within three years. They can simultaneously participate through (volunteer) work.

2. The Education route

a route mostly for junior newcomers (under the age of 27). They learn the Dutch language at level B1 or higher. Next to that, they will be prepared to follow mbo-, hbo- or university level education.

3. The Z-route (self-reliance route)

a route for whom route one or two is estimated to be too difficult. They are required to learn the Dutch language at lower level A1. The people assigned to this group are prepared to participate in Dutch society in a supposedly less challenging manner.

In some municipalities, such as Rotterdam, the broad intake process starts at the AZC, while in other municipalities this may not be possible due to the lack of nearby AZCs.

Activities on location. Here you can do certain jobs in exchange for a small financial compensation. This could be as simple as keeping the surroundings of the AZC clean by picking up waste.

Volunteer work together with external partners. Such as taking care of the garden of an elderly home.

Paid work. This depends on what is possible with regards to experience, educational background and work permits.

8. Integrating and moving to the neighborhood

Whether integration has begun earlier on in the form of civic integration courses or participation, the time to mingle in day-to-day life starts when moving to a municipality. This can be a stressful time in the beginning, since there are many new impulses and things to arrange such as furnishing the house, organising finances and keeping up with mandatory integration courses (Professional, VluchtelingenWerk). The move of a status holder to a municipality is organised by the municipality. According to an integration coordinator at the municipality of Rotterdam, this is somewhat in the shape of a workshop.

The available assistance of a newcomer in this phase changes from guidance around the corner in the AZC to consultation meetings with the assigned client manager every other week. Moreover, a social network to fall back on has generally not been built yet and the guidance of organisations such as VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is not infinite. For many newcomers, the transition between regular guidance and being -so to say- self-reliant is harsh, resulting in the search for additional aid elsewhere. Some external organisations think the term self-reliance might be used prematurely.

"Well, we are assisting 1000 refugees here in Rotterdam and none of them is self-reliant. So the conclusion that people are ready for society after two years is completely wrong."

- Founder, Foundation Refugees for Refugees

"I once called VluchtelingenWerk Nederland with another question, but they told me over the phone that they couldn't help me anymore. Without informing me when their guidance would stop. I mean, I am an independent person so I figured out myself eventually but a warning or more gradual transition would have been nice."

- Newcomer in Bospolder-Tussendijken

It is not the case that the newcomers are guided through the neighborhood or anything.

- Integration coordinator, Municipality of Rotterdam

Self-reliance is a buzzword used by the municipality. The idea is nice, but the execution less so.

- Employee, Welcome App



Figure 12. Status holders moving - Sem van der Wal for ANP (2023)

The role division between newcomer and mentor is questioned by Halleh Ghorashi, professor of Diversity and Inclusion and Elena Ponzoni, post-doc and researcher at the department of sociology at VU University in Amsterdam - both coordinators of the Refugee Academy. In a paper on the complementary contribution of citizen-led initiatives to the inclusion of refugees in Dutch society, they vouch for more flexibility when it comes to the boundaries of caregiver and -taker.

“Seeing inclusion as a process of becoming means not to pin yourself down to specific roles and positions, but to always keep looking for ways to shape your own role in relation to the other. When does the other person need help? When should we fill in the roles differently or turn them around?”

- Ponzoni, E., Mars, K., Ghorashi, H., 2020

This states that the way to independence lies not merely in the transition between guidance and self-reliance, but ditto in **reciprocity**: the exchange within a relationship of mutual dependence and rights. This exchange can bring out qualities otherwise hidden, as well as create win-win situations.

“Being guided and learning ‘how it works’ from local residents is an important need for refugees, especially in the beginning. But when the hierarchical relationship between the helper and the receiver solidifies, equal co-creation becomes impossible. Only by breaking through this hierarchical relationship can hidden talents and sources of creativity in the recipient (refugees) become visible.”

- Ponzoni, E., Mars, K., Ghorashi, H., 2020

“Reciprocity. It’s about giving and taking. There are many creative makers here for a low rate of rent. In return, they teach people who want to do things about their field.”

- Founder, Wijkpaleis

9. Participation and language

As mentioned by Frissen in the introduction of this report, civic integration is mainly focused on work and language. Simultaneously, the New Act is intended to be more participative and encourages learning through doing. This could for example be through participatory activities in which there is contact with Dutch speaking locals. There are several independent organisations that encourage this such as Beeworks, where newcomers are guided towards jobs as soon as possible. In contradiction with this, regulations such as integration duties can be an obstacle:

“With Beeworks, people have started a trajectory and can have the prospect of a job. The tricky thing about this is that they also have to integrate. That is a pity, because then they cannot work, while working is the ultimate integration.”

- Formal organisation, active nationwide

“My boss doesn’t like it when I have to take time off from work to follow integration courses.”

-Comment from newcomer, client of Welcome App

It is said that status holders are initially very much held back from the market because they have to integrate. Comparing this to Ukrainian refugees for example, 40% is working after six months. Amongst other refugees, from the people that have been granted a residence permit in 2014, around 5,5 years later 41% had a job, of those 73% worked a part-time job and 84% had a temporary contract. (CBS, 2019)

And this is not the first time comparisons have been made between the treatment of Ukrainian refugees and status holders. As said by an employee from VluchtelingenWerk:

“In my opinion, the way we approach Ukrainians should be how we approach all refugees. It is complicated, it has to do with support of the surroundings and legal considerations.”

- Professional, VluchtelingenWerk NL

It is found that the difference in treatment does not only have to do with regulations. It can also be seen amongst the support of local citizens:

“We see that there was a lot more understanding for them [Ukrainian refugees] from the beginning, very different dynamics. They found work very quickly.”

- Professional, COA

Organisations such as OpenEmbassy and Welcome think that volunteering or working is a great means to improve **Dutch language** skills. Withholding newcomers from the job market because mandatory language courses stand in the way is in that case counterproductive. Some are of the opinion that there can be a disconnection between language in the classroom and language in day-to-day life, which can cause a lack of jargon or social factors of a certain context in real-life.

“The words you learn in the language courses are not practiced in practice and are not sufficiently connected to practice/ the real environment. The classroom alone will not prepare you to actually take the step to go to the doctor for example.”

- Professional, WelcomeApp

“Someone came here [het Wijkpaleis] who worked at the Bijenkorf as a clothing maker, but it didn’t work out there. Here, he was able to easily learn the jargon of making clothes from one of the entrepreneurs and he is now on his way to start independently.”

- Co-founder, Wijkpaleis



Figure 13. 'Gemeente krijgen regie op inburgering terug' - ANP (2018)

Building blocks for feeling at home

Now, there is a better understanding of the integration system with all stakeholders involved, it is time to go back to the initial goal of 'feeling at home' in Bospolder-Tussendijken. This chapter explains how insights are clustered into ten building blocks, these clusters are themes that are recurrently mentioned by stakeholders as important factors for someone settling in the Netherlands.

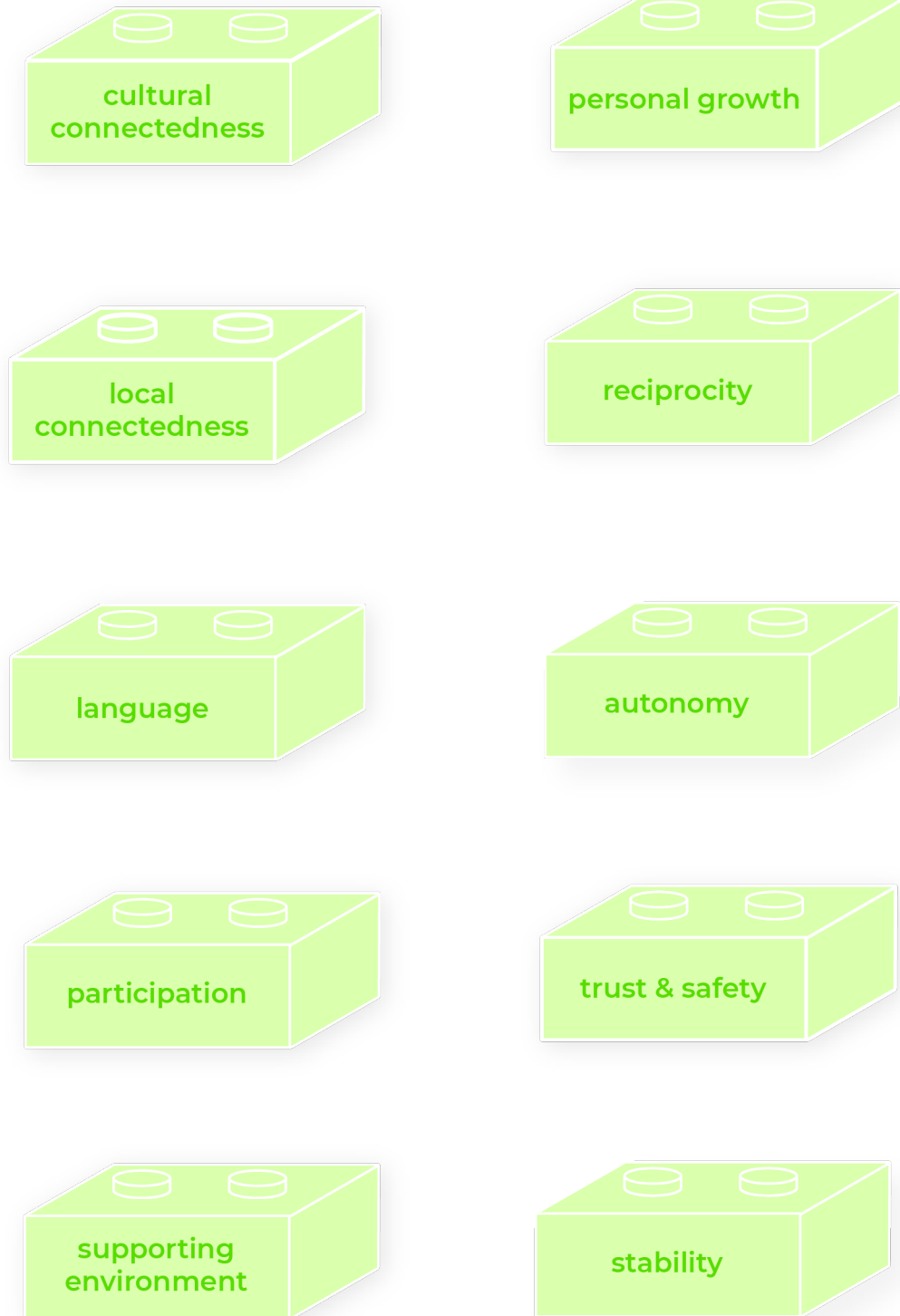
From the start of this project, the goal has been set to design for **feeling at home** instead of successfully integrate because the latter goal implies that only newcomers must adjust themselves to fit in with the existing culture and society. On the other hand, designing for feeling at home encapsulates a human-centred approach and focuses on creating a welcoming environment that is inclusive and accommodates newcomers' needs, allowing them to feel comfortable and accepted.

It recognizes that the integration process is a two-way street, where both newcomers and the host society must make efforts to create a harmonious and inclusive community, encouraging cultural exchange rather than adaptation.

But what are the desired factors that contribute to feeling at home? (*Subquestion 1 of part 1, p.17*). Ten building blocks for feeling at home were formulated as shown on the left page and listed under *Building blocks of feeling at home*. These terms were translated from recurring themes in the stakeholder interviews (Appendix A&B). The building blocks were then compared to OpenEmbassy's 'Indicators of Integration'.

Of course, the skills one learns during civic integration are important, but integration requires feeling at home.

- Frissen, 2021



Building blocks of feeling at home

- Language** be able to communicate through Dutch language
- Local connectedness** connect with locals and the local environment
- Cultural connectedness** connect with people with a shared identity
- Participation** contribute to society through participation
- Personal growth** have the chance to be yourself and blossom in the future
- Supporting environment** receive a supportive attitude from the people around you
- Trust & safety** feel physically safe and familiar with the environment
- Stability** feel secure financially, healthwise and living wise
- Reciprocity** exchange within a relationship of mutual dependence and rights
- Autonomy** be able to act independently and make decisions based on own free will

Figure 14. Building blocks of feeling at home

Indicators of integration

Although again 'integration' is used, OpenEmbassy sets a social meaning to this term. They proclaim that 'civic integration focuses on a limited set of skills that newcomers must master. Integration is based on the fact that people can only build a future in a new country if both themselves and the host society are receptive to that.' (Frissen, 2021)

Based on a framework by Alison Strang that is applied in The United Kingdom explicitly targeted at integration, OpenEmbassy has constructed fourteen 'indicators of integration' (figure 15). Frissen (2021) emphasises that the indicators are meant as instruments to test whether a certain offer matches with the needs of the newcomers; they are not meant to be used as a checklist that every newcomer must fulfill in the same way.

While in the process of formulating the building blocks for feeling at home, the indicators of integration were discovered and consequently used as inspiration. This resulted in several considerations as listed below.

With the criticism on self-reliance (The Newcomer Trajectory, Map 2, p.34-35), this term has deliberately been left out. With the claims made in the previous chapter, *Reciprocity* and *Autonomy* are found to be more fitting building blocks.

Rights are incorporated in reciprocity and autonomy, as these two terms cannot work without equal rights.

Initially, welcome beginning was stated as a separate building block, but 'supporting environment' already implies this as a result of which this is left out.

Once a first selection was made, the building blocks were evaluated by professionals in the field (one youth client manager at the Municipality of Rotterdam and one employee of Inburgering010) who confirmed all building blocks were important factors. Later on, the building blocks were tested in a session with newcomers (Part two, Session Newcomers) on its importance to the sense of 'feeling at home' in a neighborhood.



** The term 'building block' is used because it serves as a reference for foundational components and their interdependence on each other. Each block must be stable to cohesively create a solid foundation. It secondly is the component out of which a home is built, which is a fitting metaphor for this context.*



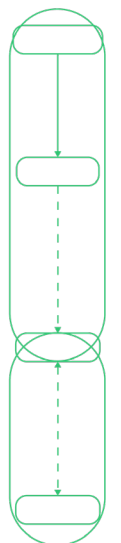
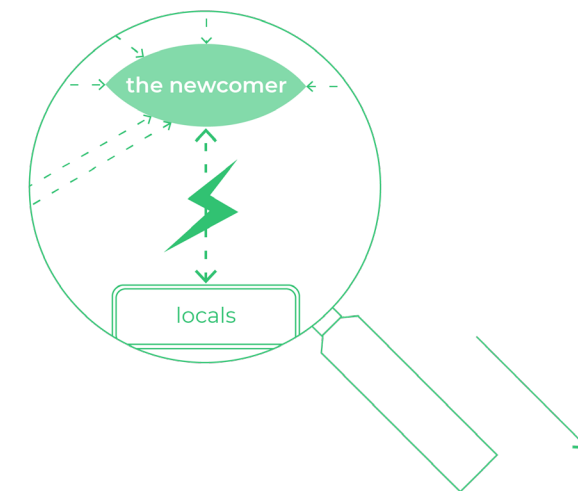
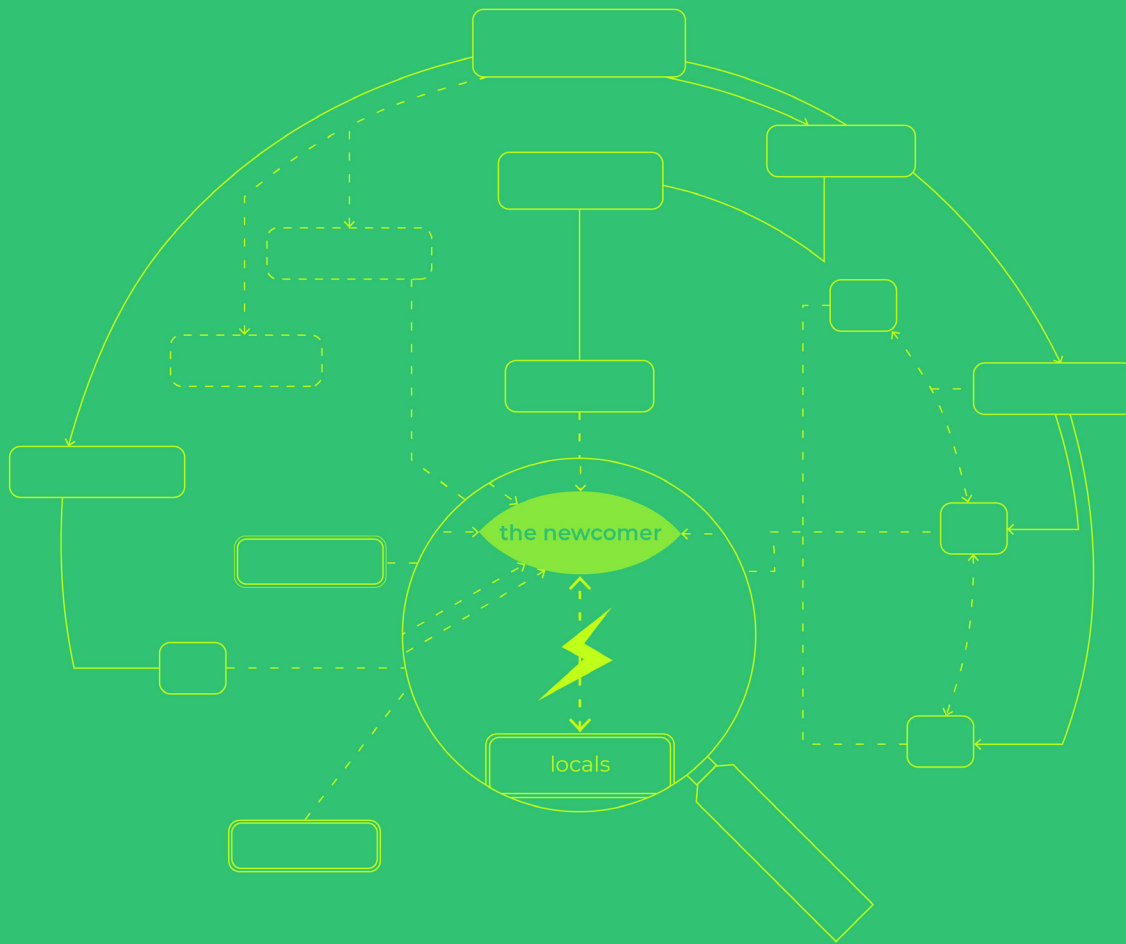
The building blocks were - as suggested by Frissen (2021) - used as instruments to test whether a certain situation matches with the needs of the newcomers. In the context of this thesis, they were used to answer the question: what behaviour in the newcomer trajectory causes tensions by conflicting with the building blocks for feeling at home? (Research Questions of part 1, p. 17) Seven fields of tension were identified in the next chapter Zooming in: seven tension fields that conflict with one or more building blocks.

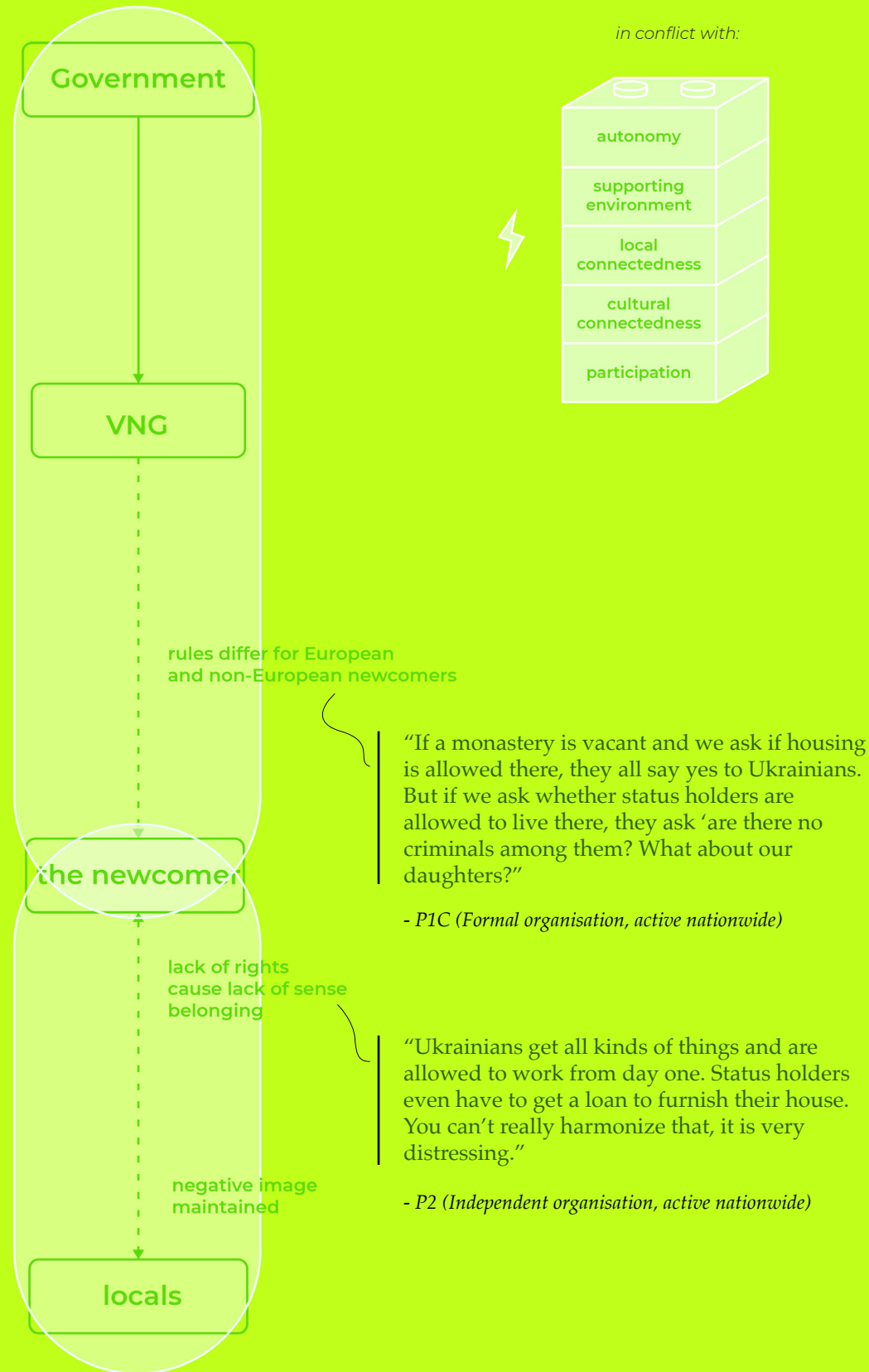
Figure 15. Indicators of Integration framework with added text in black by me, based on Strang et al. (2019) (OpenEmbassy, 2019)

Zooming in: seven tension fields

Within the whole system, there are some areas where the actions of some stakeholders cause conflicts or blockages in the newcomer's progress. In transition design, such areas can be called tensions. Each tension 'field' is illustrated here with quotes from the interviews presented earlier and is briefly explained on the right hand page. It can be seen as *zooming in* on the stakeholder map, focussing on the relation between a few stakeholders at once. The zoomed-in part of the stakeholder diagram is visualised on the left hand page.

Most quotes are left anonymous as some of the content can be sensitive.





Support European newcomers versus Outsiders

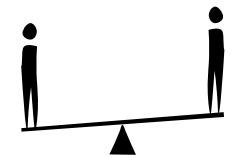
"The unequal access to facilities has resulted in not feeling quite part of it: home is about social rights to feel at home in a country."

- Eline Westra, PhD researcher at the political science department.



The support towards newcomers differs between the European newcomers (at the time of writing this is mostly from Ukraine) and non-European newcomers.

Ukrainian newcomers are allowed to work and do not have to go through the trajectory of obtaining a residence permit. Non-European refugees have to go through the entire asylum seekers trajectory in order to be granted a residence permit and complete an integration course to obtain the same rights as a Dutch citizen. Due to limited capacity in staff and housing this has created a crisis which results in years of waiting time, preventing them from working. Around 40% of Ukrainians are working within six months of their arrival in the Netherlands. Amongst other refugees, around 5,5 years later 41% has a job, of which 84% a temporary contract (CBS, 2019). Limited rights cause limitations in participation, which contributes to a negative image of locals towards refugees. This image reappears in politics, creating a continuous loop that maintains negative perceptions. Consequently, a negative stigma continues to exist around non-European refugees, despite the fact that some refugees utilise their time productively and make positive contributions to society, while others may engage in disruptive behavior. This unequal treatment of rights creates a gap.



Ukrainian refugees can participate quicker due to a difference in rights between European and non-European refugees.



Lack of rights have the effect of not feeling quite part of it.

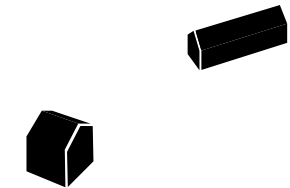
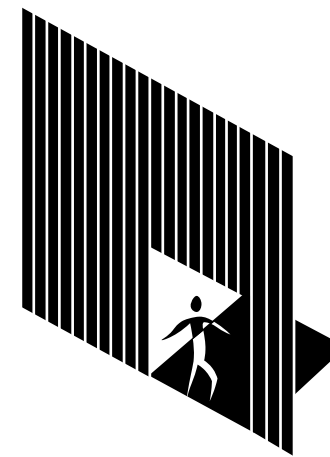


Support of newcomers is a vicious cycle of rights, locals and politics, resulting in a negative image that is maintained.

Building connection versus Risk of rejection

"The growing support for rightist anti-migrant political parties across Europe has made it difficult for politicians to be receptive towards asylum seekers. By the end of the 1980s, several countries, including the Netherlands, had chosen to isolate asylum seekers in remote asylum seeker centres while considering their applications."

- Halleh ghorashi - unexpected agency



The isolation of AZCs make it difficult for newcomers to build a connection with the surrounding communities.

AZCs are often isolated from society, creating a gap between centers and day-to-day life.

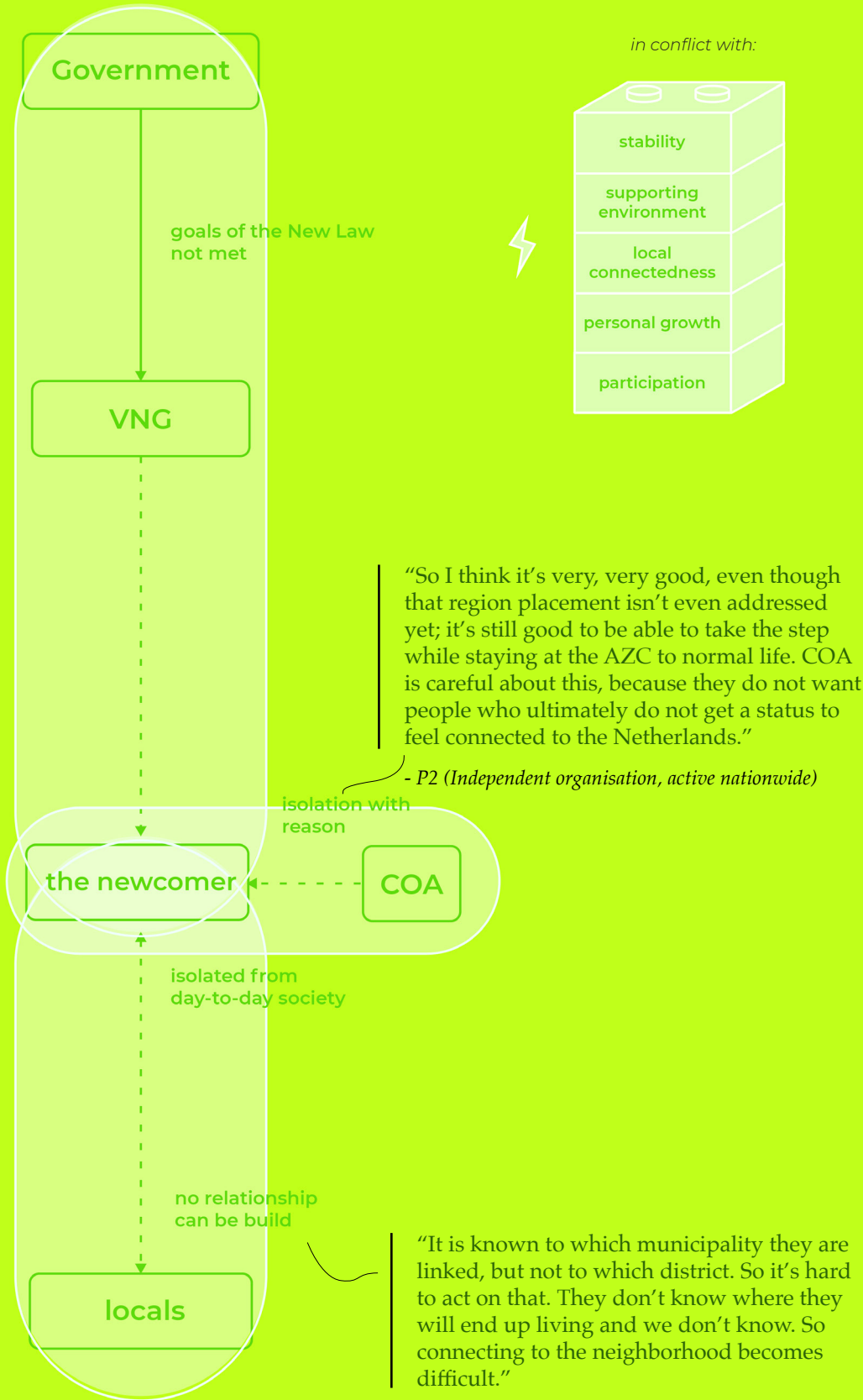
One of the goals of the New Act (chapter: The New Act, page 23) is to let newcomers participate as quickly as possible. However, years can go by before the future municipality of a refugee is known. As AZCs are usually isolated from society, a large gap exists between the refugees in an AZC and day-to-day life. This makes it difficult to participate earlier on, although early participation has been proven to be of positive influence on several factors, among which learning the language, building a network and personal growth. The lack of participation can be due to various reasons. First, COA can be hesitant to let refugees build a life in the Netherlands while still having the risk of not being allowed a residence permit. Next, the isolated locations of AZCs might also be enforced by the negative image regarding refugees (tension field 1). This attitude can make it difficult to find housing closeby.



Some organisations fear a solid connection to locals and surroundings might hinder repatriation.



Participation with locals and its surroundings is proven to have a positive effect on integration.



"So I think it's very, very good, even though that region placement isn't even addressed yet; it's still good to be able to take the step while staying at the AZC to normal life. COA is careful about this, because they do not want people who ultimately do not get a status to feel connected to the Netherlands."

- P2 (Independent organisation, active nationwide)

isolation with reason

isolated from day-to-day society

no relationship can be build

"It is known to which municipality they are linked, but not to which district. So it's hard to act on that. They don't know where they will end up living and we don't know. So connecting to the neighborhood becomes difficult."

- Youth consultant status holders 1

Local guidance versus Location dependence

“The director role of the municipalities has positives and negatives. Care and coaching can be provided more locally, but the offer of care and guidance now differs per municipality. This could have to do with political colour.”

- P3 (Independent organisation, active nationwide)



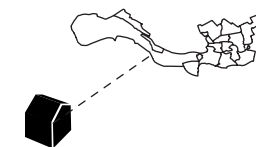
Newcomers receive more and local guidance due to the New Integration Act.

The new role of municipalities means a local difference in the guidance of newcomers.

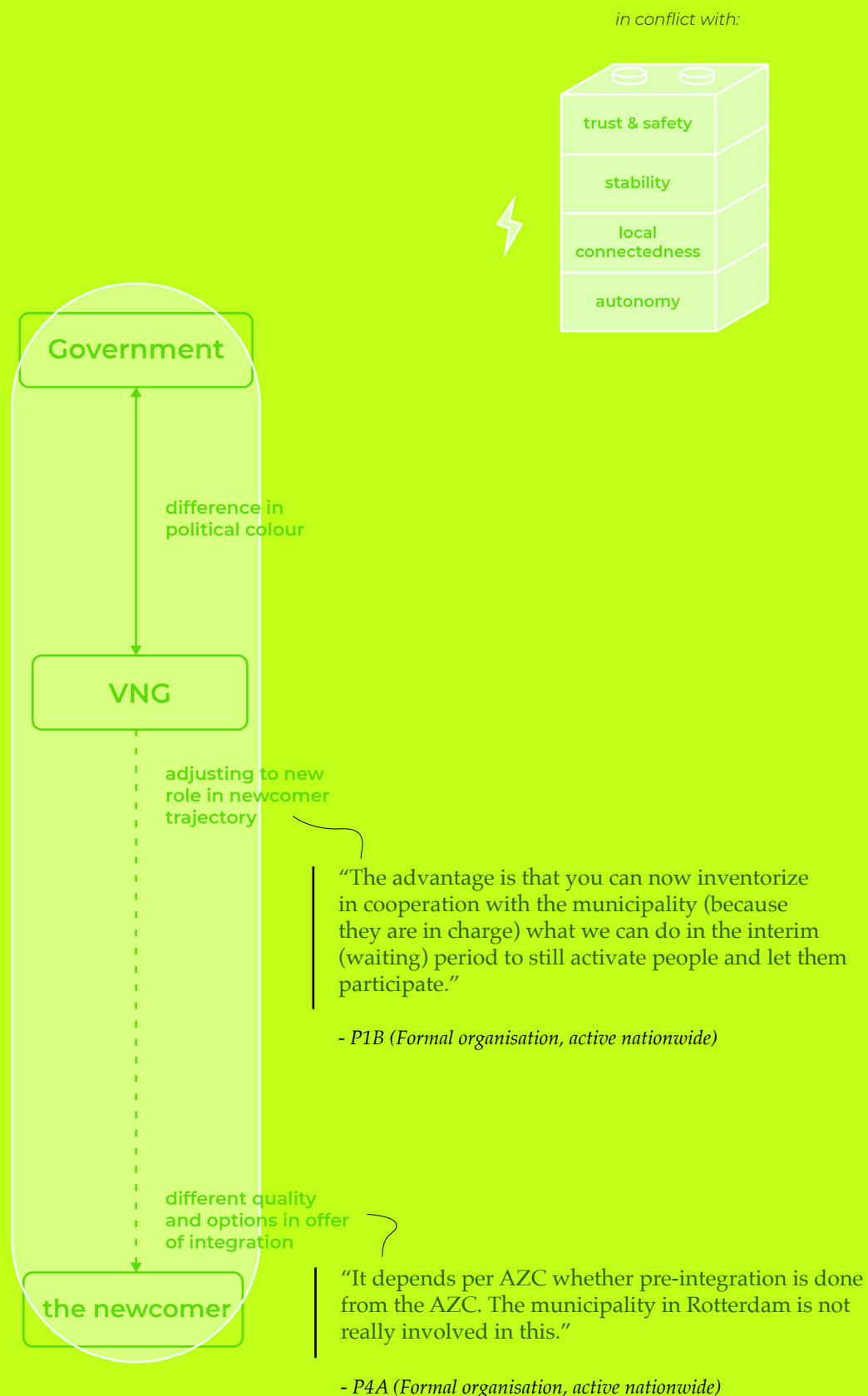
Now that the municipalities have a new role in the newcomer trajectory, they are in charge of the integration of newcomers in their municipality. This shift in responsibility means that there is more assistance in general, such as that the status holder is in contact with the municipality already during their stay at the AZC. On the other hand, it also means the municipality has a part in the decision-making when it comes to regulations around the integration courses. This local guidance causes local differences. The choices made regarding this can be out of practical considerations, for example whether facilities are closeby or not; but also based on political considerations, such as the political colour of a municipality. This results in a difference in quality of guidance for the newcomer, dependent on the location they are assigned to.

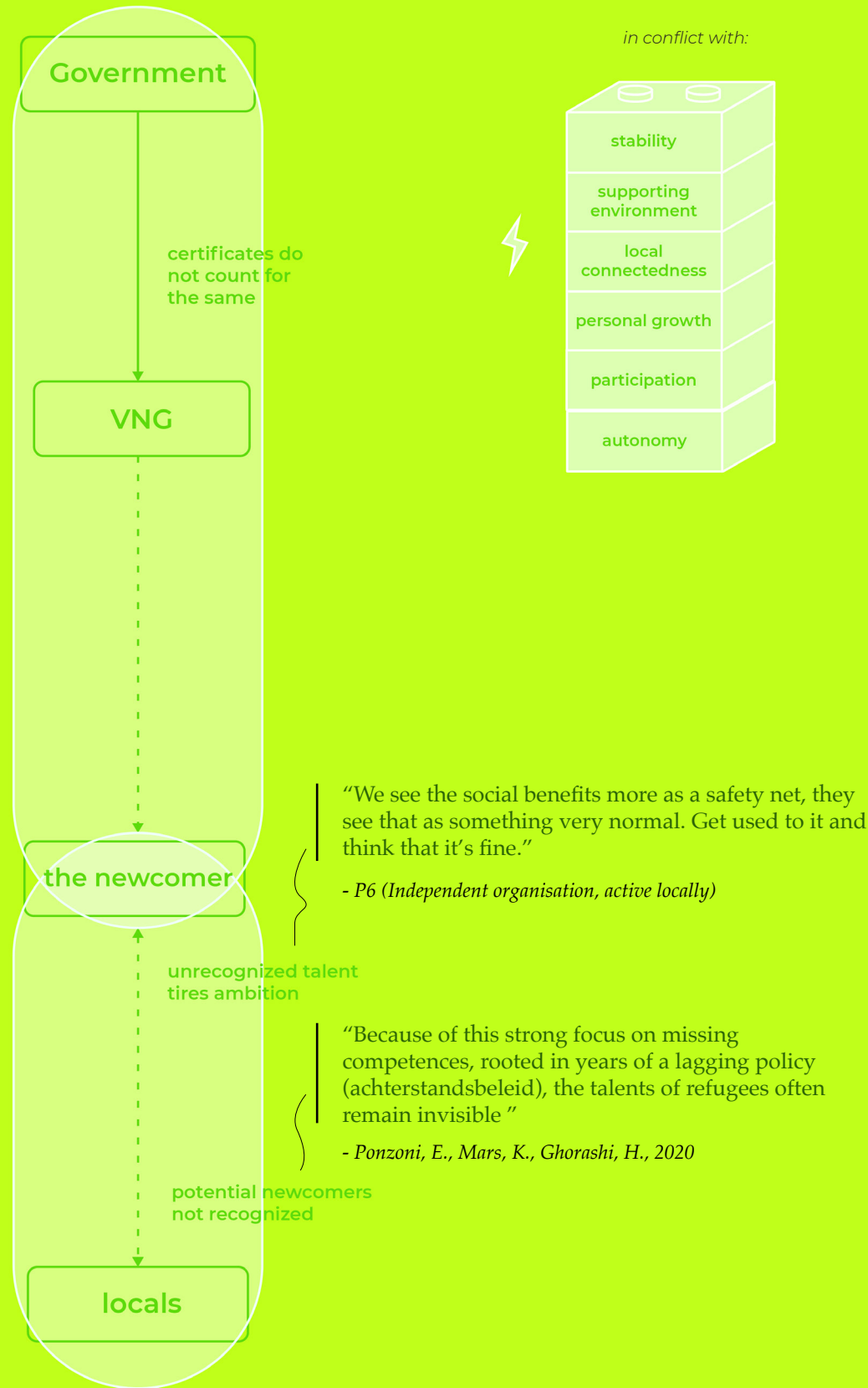


The way municipalities fill in the integration course, differs per location.



The distance of AZCs relative to a newcomer's future municipalities play a role whether (pre-)integration and participation can be offered.

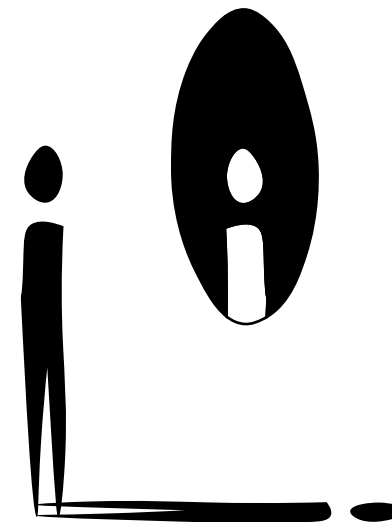




How life was versus How life can be

“They are not, they cannot be who they were in their country of origin. Whether they realize it or not, they are becoming something else.”

- Ponzoni, E., Mars, K., Ghorashi, H., 2020



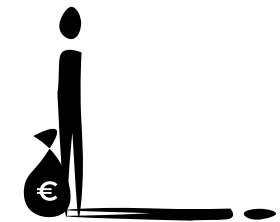
Newcomers in the Netherlands cannot live the same life as back home.

Newcomers in the Netherlands often have left behind an entire life with a circle of family and friends, traditions, rituals, an education or job; a certain status. But once in the Netherlands as part of the asylum trajectory, focus lies mainly on regulations, limits and permits, and degrees obtained in the country of origin are often not valid anymore.

The motivation to start putting in work can be difficult to fuel when the personal ambitions of the refugee are not seen or acted on over long periods of sitting still. There is ambition to work amongst newcomers, but there should be some affinity with this. Also, a paid job would replace the free social benefits status holders receive. This form of stability can be hard to step away from, making the threshold to work even higher.



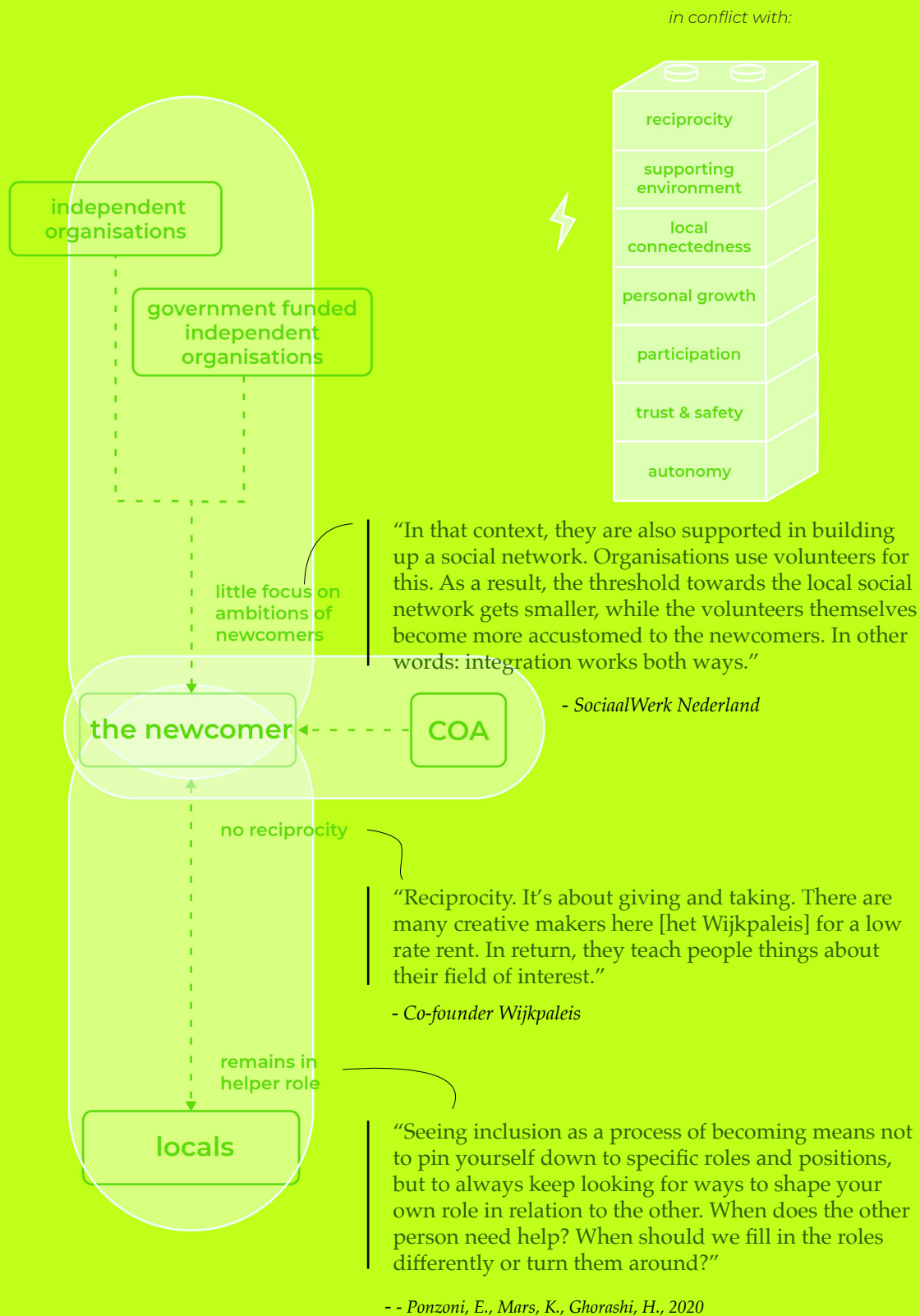
Degrees do not count for the same here.



Social benefits are a starting point instead of a last resort.



No affinity in work can cause a lack of motivation.



Self-reliance versus Reciprocity

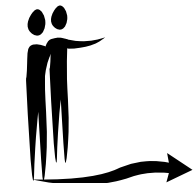
“Being guided and learning ‘how it works’ from local residents is an important need for refugees, especially in the beginning. But when the hierarchical relationship between the helper and the receiver solidifies, equal co-creation becomes impossible. Only by breaking through this hierarchical relationship can hidden talents and sources of creativity in the recipient (refugees) become visible.”

- Ponzoni, E., Mars, K., Ghorashi, H., 2020



There is a harsh transition between newcomers being guided and being labeled self-reliant.

The asylum chain in the Netherlands is full of hierarchical power dynamics. At some level, this is unavoidable as newcomers are a vulnerable group in need of guidance when arriving in the Netherlands. But when this role division remains over time these power dynamics solidify, hindering opportunity for a collaborative relationship. In addition, there can be an unnatural harsh transition between regular guidance and self-reliance, as the in-between is rarely explored. When moving from the AZC, instead of having guidance around the corner this now comes down to scheduled meetings every other week. As most refugees have not yet developed a strong support system and will face more limited guidance, they often seek help from other external organisations. Some of these organisations believe that the idea of self-reliance may be applied too early.



Reciprocity is needed for an equal relationship.

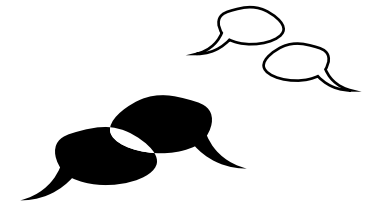


There is a harsh transition between assistance and self-reliance. Newcomers are regularly labeled ‘self-reliant’ before being so.

Practice in class versus Practice in practice

"The words you learn in your language lesson are subsequently not practiced in practice and are not sufficiently connected to practice. But the classroom alone will not prepare you to actually take the step to go to the doctor for example."

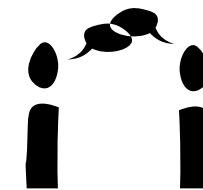
- P7 (Independent organisation, active nationwide)



Language jargon can differ per context.

Civic integration duties can stand in the way of participation.

It is said that status holders are initially very much held back from the market because they have to integrate. However, the civic integration courses can sometimes stand in the way of participation. This is conflicting, because participation or 'learning by doing' is often considered to be the ultimate integration. Several organisations believe that volunteering or working is a great means to improve Dutch language skills. Withholding newcomers from the job market because mandatory language courses stand in the way is in that case counterproductive. Some are of the opinion that there can be a disconnection between language in the classroom and language in day-to-day life, which can cause a lack of jargon or social factors of a certain context in real-life.

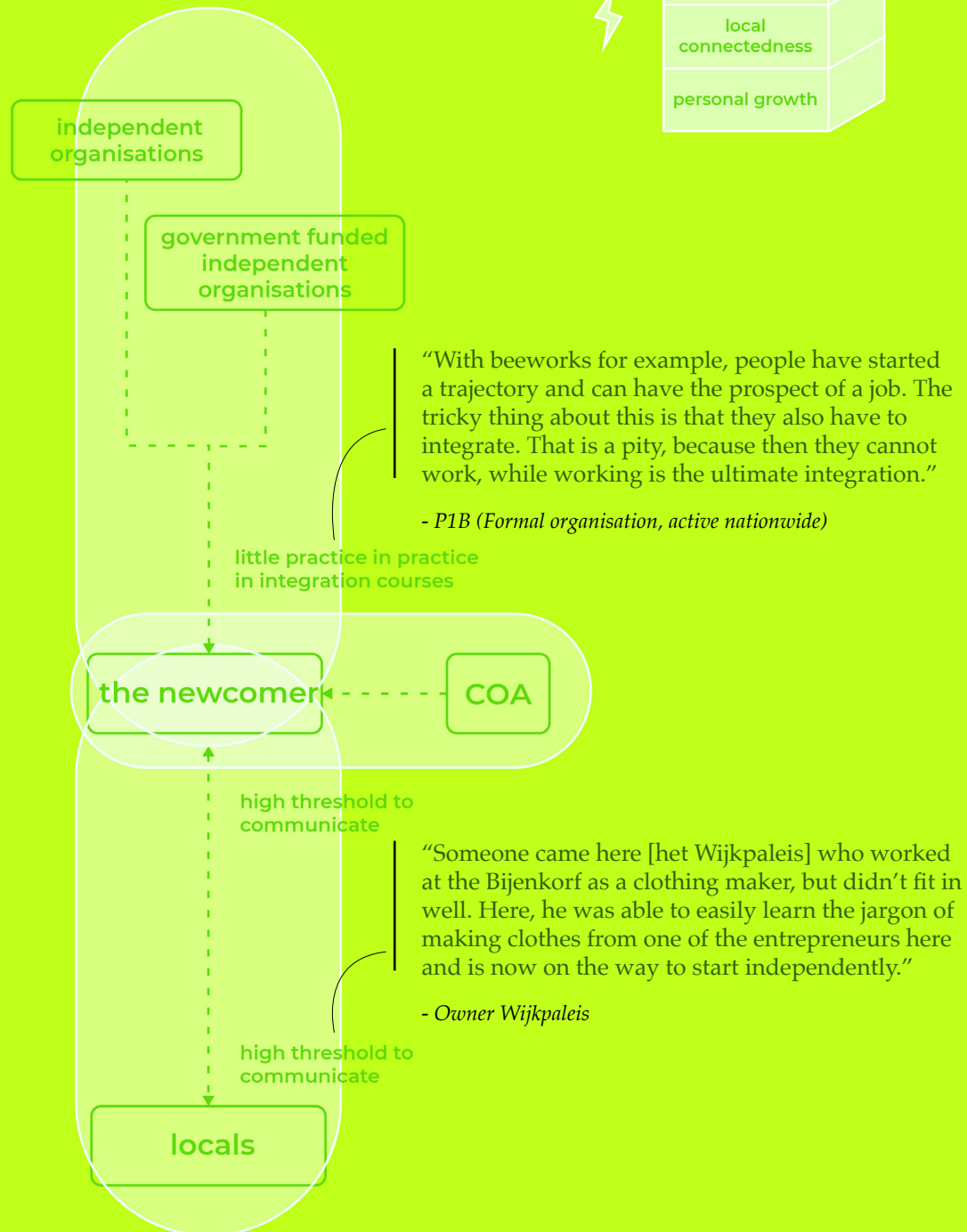


Learning by doing or practice in practice is known to be effective when learning a language.



Integration courses can stand in the way of a job.

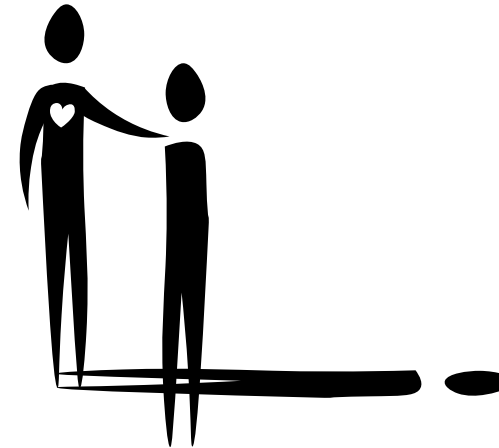
in conflict with:



Help from the heart versus Help from professionals

"You have organizations that want to help from the heart, but have never been trained in social work. The wrong guidance can do a lot of damage."

- P6 (Independent organisation, active locally)



The hierarchy amongst organisations guiding newcomers results in different kinds of help.

It is very important for newcomers to receive the right professional guidance, as they usually have little social network closeby to fall back on. There are many regulations to comply with and their economical situation can be unstable, creating little room for error for helpgivers when dealing with this vulnerable group. However, as stated in the previous chapter (The Newcomer trajectory, Integration and Moving to the neighborhood), once moved out of the AZC newcomers frequently reach out to small organisations for additional guidance.

These organisations are often dependent on the government for funding. Professional experience is not a requirement to receive this. This comes with the risk that the quality of guidance is not monitored. Next to this, due to the financial dependence, there is no equal relationship between the government and the organisation in question. This makes it difficult for these initiatives to maintain a critical stand towards the government, in cases when this is needed. This can result in the newcomer not getting the help it actually needs.

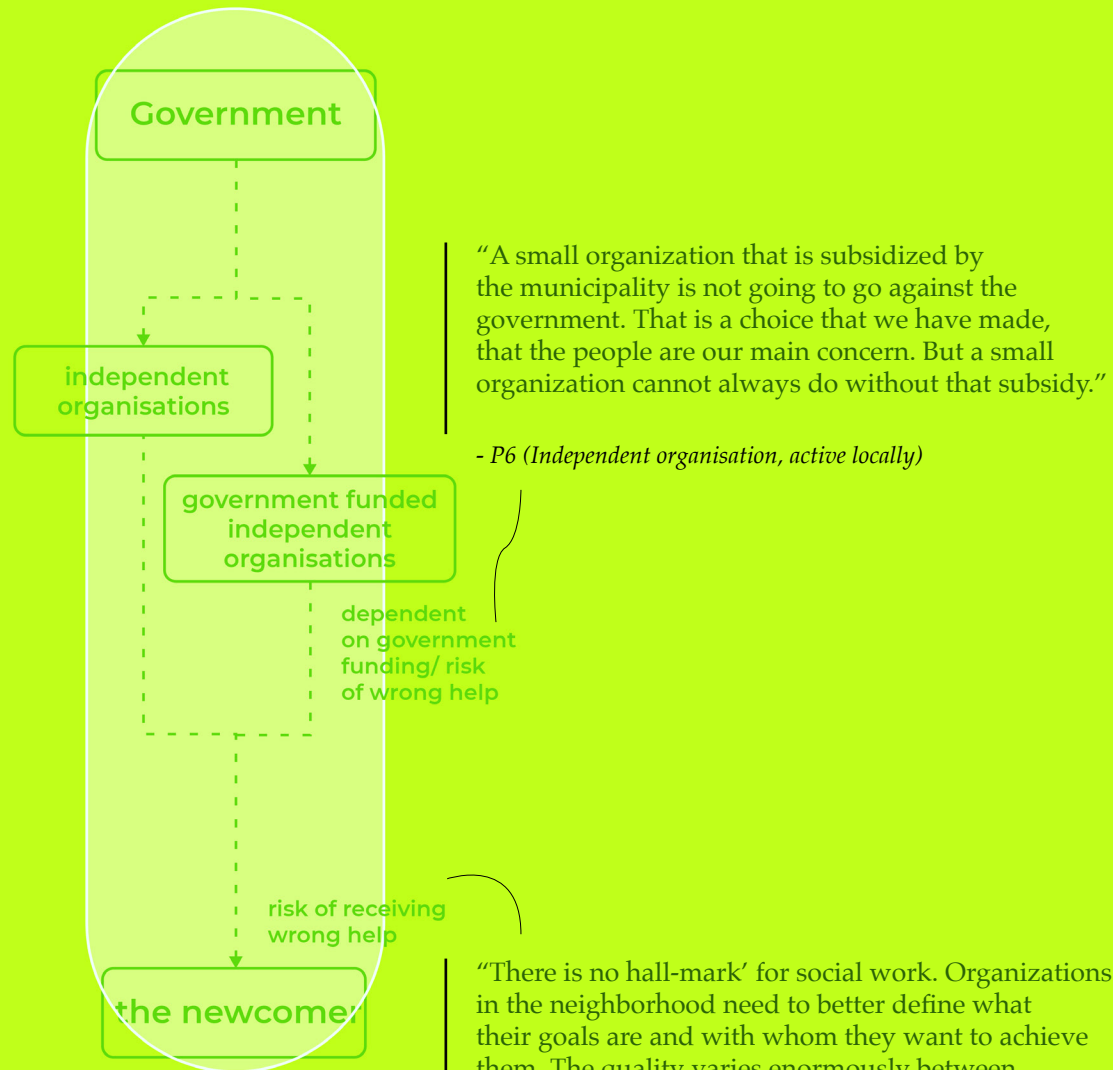
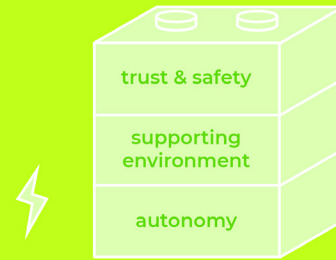


There is no hallmark for social work.



Government funding can create unequal relations.

in conflict with:



"A small organization that is subsidized by the municipality is not going to go against the government. That is a choice that we have made, that the people are our main concern. But a small organization cannot always do without that subsidy."

- P6 (Independent organisation, active locally)

"There is no hall-mark' for social work. Organizations in the neighborhood need to better define what their goals are and with whom they want to achieve them. The quality varies enormously between organizations."

- P6 (Independent organisation, active locally)

A story: the status of a status holder




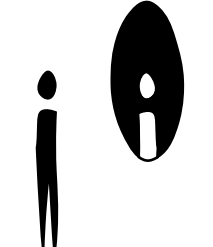


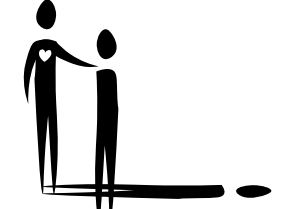
The big news: Ahmad can stay!

It is unbelievable to receive the news after all these years of constant worry that the dream of a better life could be taken away. The uncertainty and moving around from place to place. The Netherlands will actually be his future home, his new life can start. All the waiting in the azc brought up memories of his past home and family. But this time it's with excitement, finally some good news to share over the phone.

He sits down for a few meetings with his COA supervisor. Ahmad is told he will get a municipality assigned to him, but that it might take a while to find him a house due to the shortage. A few months passed, the municipality they wanted to place him in did not have any housing available. The excitement from before has disappeared together with the prospect of his future home. All this waiting gave him time to think and bad thoughts returned. He sometimes checked the 'participation counter' at the center to find distraction. But the work that fit his interest was scarce and some of the activities at the center felt a bit childish.

But then finally, they found him a house in Rotterdam! No more moving around from azc to azc. It would be good to get to know what Rotterdam is like for himself, because so far day-to-day life has been isolated from society, separated from all others. What will the city be like? What will the people be like? He thinks of the locals that were protesting against refugees around an azc, and hopes his neighborhood will be more welcoming at least. Ahmad is glad to be linked to the municipality of Rotterdam; the city is certainly bigger than the one nearest to the azc where he's been staying and he always had to take a bus and walk far. He had followed a pre-integration course at the center, but with all the waiting, it feels like ages ago and the things he learned have faded. A friend of his had already found a job, but his boss didn't like it when he had to leave work for his integration course. Therefore, he would search for a job later, but the thought of a job interview made him nervous already. Practicing basic Dutch in class amongst other newcomers is one thing, but to a native is something else. Besides that, the degrees he gained in Afghanistan appear of little value here. It was hard to feel ambitious when so little seems possible with these unusable papers. It has been a few months now in BoTu and Ahmad has realised that with his own house, comes his own responsibility. He is so used to being helped, but there won't be supervisors around the corner anymore to help him translate a form. The lack of control and agency he has had over his own future over these past years, has made it difficult to suddenly feel secure and self-reliant. It will take some time to adjust to this new home.

A story to draw a picture of how the conflicts might have its effect on a newcomer. Ahmad in this story is fictional.

<p>Support European newcomers versus outsiders 1</p> 	<p>Building connection versus Risk of rejection 2</p> 	<p>Local guidance versus Location dependence 3</p> 	
<p>How life was versus How life can be 4</p> 	<p>Self-reliance versus Reciprocity 5</p> 	<p>Practice in class versus Practice in practice 6</p> 	
<p>This chapter concludes part one. Now there is a better understanding of the <i>status of the status holder</i> after their trajectory. The gained knowledge will be applied in the next part. Part two will delve into the neighborhood itself, as it is a crucial area where the client can make an impact and where various opportunities exist within identified areas of tension. To accomplish this, a thorough understanding of the context is necessary. The most relevant areas of tension will be pinpointed and translated into specific needs that are relevant for the neighborhood. Keeping in mind the insights that will be gained on BoTu, a concept will be proposed to fit the neighborhood as well as the needs derived from the research of part one.</p>			<p>Help from the heart versus Help from professionals 7</p> 



Intermezzo

A story on how social rights, or the freedom of it, have an effect on individuals and a nation as a whole.



Figure 16. *Rose Island - the Story of a Micronation*, n.d.

Isola delle Rose, Giorgio Rosa 1968

Rose Island was a unique project created by Giorgio Rosa in 1968, located off the coast of Rimini, Italy. This self-proclaimed micronation was created to embody the principles of freedom and self-determination by challenging the traditional power structures of nation-states. The island's inhabitants developed their own rules and regulations, to be free from the constraints of Italian law, and sought to create a utopian society based on the principles of equality and individual liberty. The Italian government saw Isola delle Rose as a threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and after around ten months of existence, the free nation came to an end.

Rosa's experiment of freedom challenged the very notion of what it means to be a citizen and highlighted the oppressive nature of traditional power structures. The government's reaction to the island's existence highlights the potential for conflict and violence when the boundaries of nation-states are threatened. Ultimately, the story of Rose Island illustrates the importance of questioning the status quo and pushing back against the limitations imposed by borders and regulations in the pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

'THE UNEQUAL ACCESS TO FACILITIES HAS RESULTED IN NOT FEELING QUITE PART OF IT: HOME IS ABOUT SOCIAL RIGHTS TO FEEL HOME IN A COUNTRY.'

The neighborhood as a new home and its opportunities.

Part two

In part 1, the goal has been to frame, listen to and understand the complex problem in a broad context while suspending the need to solve. In part 2, the solution space will be explored and a fitting design intervention will be proposed. We will zoom in to design for a specific context; adjusting the scope to the neighborhood of the newcomer. The neighborhood Bospolder-Tussendijken is chosen as the area for the design intervention.

'WE SEE THAT INTEGRATION OF NEWCOMERS IN NEIGHBORHOODS OFTEN FAILS TO GAIN MOMENTUM. TIME FOR A NEW APPROACH!'

(Afdeling Buitengewone Zaken & OpenEmbassy, n.d.)

A case-study of: Bospolder-Tussendijken

Why zoom in on a neighborhood level?

The neighborhood is the first environment with a stable housing situation for newcomers. It is also the first opportunity where newcomers come in close contact with the local community and seen as the start of 'settling' in the Netherlands.

Why Bospolder-Tussendijken?

The client has a current presence in this area with the ongoing Resilient BoTu 2028 project (Resilient BoTu 2028 Programme, p. 69), which allows them to exert their influence in this neighborhood.



Figure 17. Map created of Bospolder-Tussendijken in its context in Rotterdam

BoTu demographics

Bospolder and Tussendijken are two small districts in Rotterdam - as we know by now - commonly referred to as BoTu. The area accommodates over 14,000 residents and 7,000 households. Despite their small size, these districts have a high population density and are characterised by a very high level of diversity, with 80% of the population being 'new Dutch' and almost 70% having a non-Western background. As a newcomer to this neighborhood, you are likely to identify people who share similar backgrounds. (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019)

Additionally, these districts have a relatively young population, with a higher proportion of 0-14 year olds than average in Rotterdam, and a lower percentage of residents aged 65 and over.

However, many households in BoTu face severe financial challenges, with an alarmingly high rate of unemployment. Almost three-quarters of households are categorised as 'low income'. This has resulted in Tussendijken and Bospolder ranking second and fifth, respectively, on the list of the 20 poorest postal codes in the Netherlands. (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019)

At the same time, you can see gentrification seeping through. But despite the increasing number of well-educated people relocating to the suburbs of the district, the inner residential areas remain extremely vulnerable. The two often remain quite separate. An observation done by the Field Academy is that they often see that these young urban professionals / well educated people that come live in Bospolder-Tussendijken, choose not to mingle certain parts of their lives with BoTu. For example by bringing their kids to higher rated schools outside of BoTu.

More than 60% of the housing stock in these districts is made up of social rental housing in the lowest segment, which is often aged and neglected, with maintenance overdue. Therefore and despite these adversities, the Resilient BoTu 2028 program is actively helping its residents to overcome the challenges they face.

Demographics on newcomers in BoTu

Getting information on the whereabouts of newcomers in Bospolder-Tussendijken was a challenge. After multiple unanswered e-mails and calls there eventually was a response from IOS (department intake desk support status holders, in Dutch: *afdeling intakeloket ondersteuning statushouders*) with an overview of the newcomers housed by them, specifically in BoTu. This showed an indications of 44 newcomers (of 18 years or older) being housed in BoTu in the year 2021-2022 (Appendix C).

However, there are several limitations to it. Under which that the overview showed IOS-housed newcomers and they were unsure whether this included all newcomers within my target audience. Secondly there would be no guarantee where and if they would still be living there. This, and because any additional information would be confidential, an elaborate overview of their whereabouts can unfortunately not be given in this report. It has however, provided an indication.

Resilient BoTu 2028 Programme

Since 2016, the city of Rotterdam has placed an emphasis on increasing its overall resilience. One of the key components of this initiative has been the development of a comprehensive strategy for addressing social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities. As part of this broader strategy, the Resilient BoTu 2028 (BoTu 2028) programme was created with the aim of applying the Rotterdam strategies to the district Bospolder-Tussendijken.

“The start of the ‘Resilient BoTu 2028’ programme was a visit to Brownsville, New York, in 2018. There we saw what is possible when residents and organizations work together to raise the neighborhood to a new level, to make it resilient. Thanks to them, Brownsville has become a safer place, where people now look to the future. This has touched us, but above all, it has inspired us.”

- Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb (Municipality of Rotterdam 'Resilient Botu 2028', 2019)

The BoTu 2028 initiative, a collaboration between The Field Academy, the municipality of Rotterdam, residents, and district stakeholders, aims to drive significant improvements in the area and transform it into Rotterdam's first resilient community within ten years. In numbers, this means that the initiative seeks to increase BoTu's social index to match the urban social average. The social index comprises four components: capacities, environment, involvement, and bonding and is a key component of the initiative's approach. In 2018, Bospolder scored 94 and Tussendijken scored 84 on the social index, while the Rotterdam average was 105.

To achieve this goal, the programme seeks to empower the residents of BoTu by helping them develop the skills and resources necessary to overcome challenges and changes in their lives. It recognizes that resilience is about more than just the ability to adapt to change in one's personal life. It also encompasses the capacity of the community to respond to changes in the larger context, such as those related to energy transition and climate adaptation.

BoTu 2028 counts as a testing ground for the entire city of Rotterdam and therefore it is important to monitor any changes and developments that the neighborhood is undergoing. This is the role of the Field Academy. They do this through regular visits to the district to maintain an up-to-date inventory of the current projects and initiatives. Next - in

collaboration with the various stakeholders, educational institutes and graduate students like myself - qualitative data is gathered and exchanged. The Field Academy employs the action research method, which involves testing the findings in practice to determine their effectiveness. Residents are engaged as consultants to ensure their active participation in the process. (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019)

“Resilience is about how well individuals, municipalities or organisations are able to handle changes, shocks and tension in their lives. How they respond to, recover from, adapt to or even transform in response to change.”



Image of the new residences 'The Hudsons' that depicts the gentrification of BoTu. Photo taken by me.



Image of old residences 'the Oijingsflats' showing a less wealthy side of BoTu. Photo taken by me.



Image of the Dakpark community garden in BoTu
Photo taken by me

In this part, two developments will be discussed that seem worth mentioning as they help to get a better understanding of the current happenings in Bospolder-Tussendijken and Rotterdam as a city.

‘Binding met de buurt’

During my research into the neighborhood of Bospolder-Tussendijken, I realized that despite being a resident myself, I had limited knowledge of the neighborhood’s activities. I had moved to BoTu at the beginning of the lockdown period, which lasted for two years, during which most things came to a standstill. After the lockdown ended, I occasionally received flyers about neighborhood developments or invitations to resident-led initiatives. However, it was mainly during this project - with the Field Academy’s knowledge gathered while monitoring for the BoTu 2028 program- that I discovered a new side of BoTu.

Because despite various challenges, Bospolder-Tussendijken scores high on ‘binding met de buurt’ (ENG: connection with the neighborhood) compared to other neighborhoods in Rotterdam. The amount of requests that people of BoTu place to start new resident-led initiatives is high on average. (Municipality Rotterdam, 2019)

With the help of the Field Academy’s work, a broad overview has been mapped out of the initiatives that are active in BoTu. For example there are already nine places that are considered ‘living rooms’ or community centers of the neighborhood. And there are many more resident-led initiatives. (Appendix B-C, p.33).

An example of an activity is a sewing workshop for residents (in community center: Huis van de Toekomst)



Figure 18. Picture taken during a visit to Huis van de Toekomst



Image of the Park 1943,
where you can now barbeque
thanks to the Park council
Photo taken by me.

A local shift

During the desk research on BoTu, visits to local community centers like the Wijkpaleis, and interviews with professionals from the municipality of Rotterdam, a recurring theme emerged: a focus on local engagement. In Bospolder-Tussendijken, eight district representatives have been appointed to voice the neighborhood's concerns and decisions, receiving a small compensation for their role. These representatives play a crucial role in the local community and are responsible for allocating available funds to initiatives, a task previously handled by the district manager as stated by Marleen, district manager (NL: *wijkmanager*) in BoTu.

Together with a status holder youth consultant, the question arose whether the support for newcomers would become more locally oriented with the changes brought by the New Act. While occasional local meetings had taken place, it was not consistently implemented for every client manager. However, discussions within the municipality of Rotterdam are underway to enhance local presence.

In line with this, the Municipality of Rotterdam has introduced a governance model called *Wijk aan Zet*, aiming to empower residents to have more influence over their district's development. This model grants district managers increased responsibilities within the organization and promotes the establishment of neighborhood "hubs" to enhance the municipality's visibility and awareness of local affairs (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2022).

'They actually always come to us [here at City Hall], we are not actually present in the neighborhoods currently, but I think that will happen. That is also something that is being discussed at the moment, to have more visibility.'

- Youth consultant status holders (2)



↖

Figure 19. *Wijk(k) aan zet*, Dijkstra N.E. (n.d.)



Image of christmas lighting in de Grote Visserijstraat, hanging all year round on request of an active resident, (and my neighbor)
Photo taken by me.



Image of the Roozoldervox Status in BeTo
Photo taken by me.

Having gained an understanding of the demographic facts of Bospolder-Tussendijken, the next step is to include the residents and locals of BoTu themselves. To achieve this, a field study was conducted and a closed session was held with newcomers in the neighborhood. The purpose of these activities was to gather their perspectives, test certain findings and presumptions gathered in part 1, and to gain a better understanding of the people that the design is meant to be for.

Field study

To hear what the residents of BoTu have to say, a small field test was done on a Thursday. Every Thursday and Saturday there is a big market at the Grote Visserijplein, a square in Bospolder-Tussendijken. The market attracts many local residents - which seemed as a perfect opportunity for a chat.

During the field research, two standpoints were tested with the local citizens as a conversation starter. 'In BoTu everyone feels welcome' and 'In BoTu everyone feels at home' with the goal to get insight on the perspective of locals towards these topics.

Fifteen people (groups counted as one) were spoken to on and around the market square of BoTu, randomly approached. The audience consisted of people that lived here for many years and some residents that were fairly new. As it was raining, it was quite hard to strike a long conversation. However, there were some findings on the incentive explained below.



Skim through the field research booklet if you get the chance!

* it is not recommended to do field research when it is pouring rain.

“Volunteering made me feel at home.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

“I believe there’s a community centre over there somewhere?”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

“It helped that I already have quite a lot of friends living nearby.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

“It’s nice to have a little anonymity[...] We do know the man at that vegetable shop Nador over there and the one at the launderette. It doesn’t have to be just living either you know.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

Key takeaways

Most locals in Bospolder-Tussendijken feel at home in the neighborhood. Almost everyone feels welcome too, with the exception of two people at a temporary food stall. They were the only people spoken to who did not live in the neighborhood themselves, but were here just to work. It was said this was due to the attitude of residents towards them, which was 'not always welcoming'.

□ **Neighborhood involvement** Four of the people interviewed mentioned that their involvement in some kind of volunteer work or community centre played a factor in their sense of feeling at home in the neighborhood (home care, visitor of community centre and volunteering activities). For one person, volunteerwork was the main reason for feeling at home.

Amongst new residents, the awareness of community involvement seemed a bit less.

□ **Cliques** It was mentioned twice that people are in cliques/ groups a lot.

□ **Friends nearby** A few residents were fairly new, all of Dutch origin. For some it took some time getting used to, but they did feel at home eventually. Factors of influence were knowing people in the neighborhood.

These insights have given a bit of a feeling on the local perspective and the 'connection with the neighborhood' (binding met de buurt) seems present in BoTu. The next chapter will focus on the newcomers' view.





Session with newcomers

Together with three newcomers and their client manager a participatory session was conducted in Pier 80 (the public community centre in BoTu). In preparation for the session, props were prepared to serve as conversation pieces during the session and to overcome the language barrier through visual aids.

The aim

The aim of the session was to test the following questions with newcomers:

- ◊ How important are certain factors to 'feeling at home'?
- ◊ What activities that coincide with this are found difficult and what easy?

Method

The test was done with the use of several 'props' (figure 20,21,23, 24). The cards on the left page (figure 21) state examples that refer to the building blocks for feeling at home (Chapter *Building Blocks*, p. 43) related to the context of a neighborhood. For example the cards 'shops with products from home country' and 'have friends from home country' refer to the building block **cultural connectedness**; and the cards 'have a routine' and 'have a house with your own furniture' refer to **stability**. The newcomers were asked to position each card either close to home or far away to indicate their importance to home (figure 23).

The second set of cards (figure 24) was used to ask what kind of activities they were struggling with and what activities were potentially conflicting with each other.



Figure 20. Photo of the setting of the session

Figure 21. Overview of cards used to test the factors found important for feeling at home

Participants

The group of participants was gathered with the help of youth consultant status holders Soufiane and consisted of:

- ◊ **one male of 25 years old** moved to BoTu area around 1 year ago, Afghani
- ◊ **one male of around 30 years old** moved to BoTu area just a few months ago, Syrian
- ◊ **and one female of around 30 years old** moved to BoTu area just a few months ago, Syrian (the latter two were together)

Time & place

The session was held on a Friday afternoon at Pier 80, the local community center where these particular newcomers occasionally met with their client manager on Fridays. The duration of the session was about 1,5 hours.

Language barrier

To overcome the language barrier, the cards served as support. Each card showed the translation in Farsi and Arabic (the two languages spoken amongst the participants) or was visually supported with an image that represented the meaning.

Hi Noor, hope you doing well and all is good.
Okay send me please, I try my best. 10:05



Figure 22. Screenshot of Whatsapp chat. Thanks to Temoor for helping me translate to Farsi and Arabic.

Results & Insights

With regards to language, it could be challenging throughout the session to speak Dutch because of the language gap between the newcomers. Newcomer 1 was nearly fluent, while newcomer 2 and 3 were beginners. What struck out, was that newcomer 3 could actually speak better than it seemed at the beginning of the session as she was increasingly speaking more compared to being very silent in the beginning. The visual cues and translations certainly helped. Several other insights are listed below.

“It is easier to ask for help if you can also help someone yourself.”

- Newcomer 1

“A place like Pier 80 is good.”

- Newcomer 3

“Many people find that (applying for a job) difficult or scary” “Yes”

- Newcomer 1 and 2

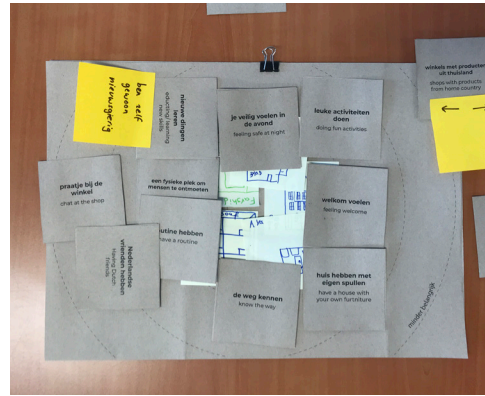
“I speak Dutch to my neighbor”

- Newcomer 2

Another surprising comment was by newcomer 1. He stated that he did not find it necessary to have friends of his country of origin. He pointed out that he did not care where they were from, but that it can definitely be helpful to have Dutch friends. Another notable finding was that the community centre where we had the meeting was not necessarily introduced to the newcomers as a community centre; although the newcomers there had a fair share of meetings there:

“I spoke to one of my juniors recently and he knew the building [Pier 80] but did not know what it was, so I explained to him that it is for the residents but also for you and that you can go here for all kinds of things. He knows that now. Last week I happened to see him sitting here and he was drinking a cup of coffee and talking to another local resident. That’s nice to see.”

- Youth consultant, Municipality of Rotterdam



← Figure 23. Photo of props during session, showing the cards placed in the circle close to home.

□ **Reciprocity in relation to others**
Talking about the relation between helping out and being helped, it was said the two are linked.

□ **A place** to go to is valued, due to its physicality.

□ **Challenging** activities that were named were *finding a job / working together with doing what you enjoy*. Additional comments were that they felt they need to be good at Dutch when looking for a job. Secondly, Newcomer 1 stated that when he starts looking for work (he is wrapping up his civic integration) he finds it important that he will enjoy the work.

□ **Local connections** are being made by communicating with the neighbor in Dutch, but these are low-key.

The session has confirmed several assumptions that were made with regards to the challenges newcomers face when settling in the neighborhood. The building blocks were tested with more practical examples that fit the context of BoTu. Some seemed more difficult to achieve than others.

Especially the challenge surfaced of pursuing work / something that they enjoy doing (personal growth / autonomy). The assumption that cultural connectedness entails ‘having friends from the country of origin’ seems too blunt. Additionally, ‘having shops with products from their home country’ is valued but not a challenge. It was mentioned that they just go to Aldi. Finally, ‘asking for help’ was not considered difficult, but nevertheless easier when being able to do something in return.

These findings were taken into account in the next chapter *from tensions to needs*.

Figure 24. Overview of props used in session with various activities →

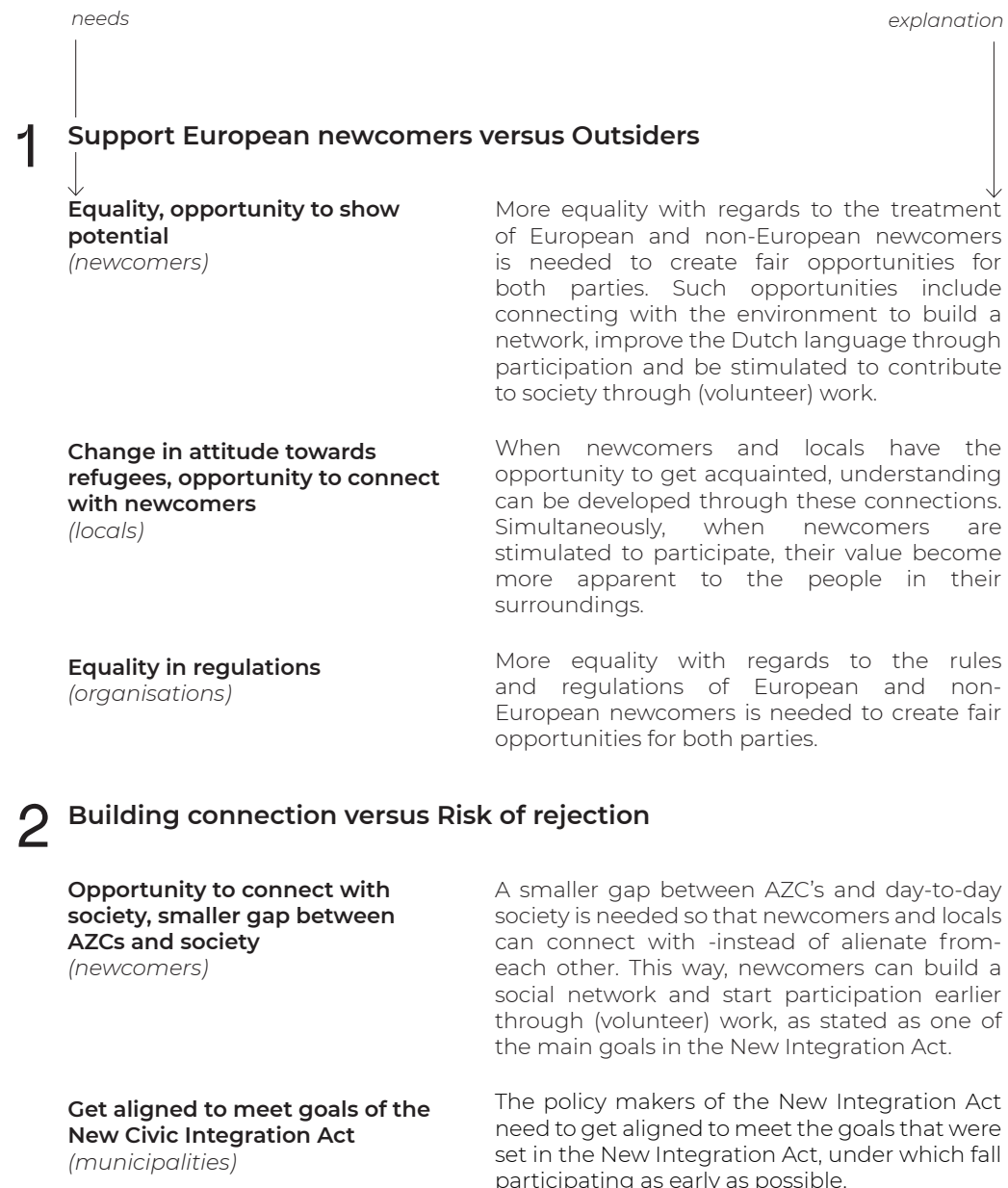


From tensions to needs

Familiarizing with the locals and newcomers in Bospolder-Tussendijken was a necessary step to formulate the needs of the target audience. The insights gathered in the field study, the session as well as the previous insights from Part 1 have all been taken into account when taking the step towards design principles. With all findings kept in mind, the needs for each of the tension fields were formulated.

'The diversity of perspectives meant that tensions would emerge between stakeholders. Rather than viewing these tensions as obstacles, multiple interviewees mentioned how surfacing these tensions is key to finding a way forward.'

- Van der Bijl-Brouwer & Malcolm, 2020



3 Local guidance versus Location dependence

Continuity, clear overview of options and equal offer
(newcomers)

More equality is needed with regards to the guidance and activities that different AZCs and municipalities can offer. The difference creates unclarity and makes planning for the future a challenge.

Aligned expectations regarding integration
(municipalities)

The various municipalities and AZCs need to be well aligned in order to make consistent decisions when it comes to participation or integration. Municipalities and COA need to adjust and align their expectations by communicating well, as to avoid unfair local differences.

4 How life was versus How life can be

Opportunity for newcomers to pursue ambitions, shift in attitude towards social benefits
(newcomers)

Instead of focussing on missing competences, newcomers should be stimulated to pursue their personal and professional ambitions. Therefore, a shift in attitude towards social benefits is needed, so that the skills of newcomers are put to use - for the benefit of society and personal growth.

Focus on valued competences
(organisations)

The organisational point of view should motivate newcomers by shifting their focus from missing competences (such as declaring certificates from the newcomers' country of origin as invaluable) towards valued competence. *What are someone's personal values and skills?*

5 Self-reliance versus Reciprocity

Shift in helper-giver role, reciprocity
(newcomers, orginsations, locals)

There is a need for reciprocity amongst newcomers, organisations and locals to make equal co-creation possible. This could benefit all parties: for the newcomers to feel more independent and valuable and for the organisations and locals to value the newcomers and gain more from the relationship.

6 Practice in class versus Practice in practice

More relation to real world practice of the language integration course (newcomers, organisations)

There is a need to practice the Dutch language in practice. This includes that the jargon of the language in class needs to be applicable to the desired context as to be comfortable in expressing oneself within day-to-day encounters in work and social environments.

7 Help from the heart versus Help from professionals

Receive the right help (newcomers)

It is very important for newcomers to receive the right professional guidance, as they usually have little social network to fall back on. There are many regulations to comply with and their economical situation can be unstable, creating little room for error when dealing with this vulnerable group.

Balance between government dependence and independence (organisations)

There needs to be a right balance between government dependence and independence amongst organisations that assist newcomers. Organisations are likely to require funding from the government. However, this should not create a power relation in which an organisation can not act in the best interest of the newcomer when this goes against the will of the government.

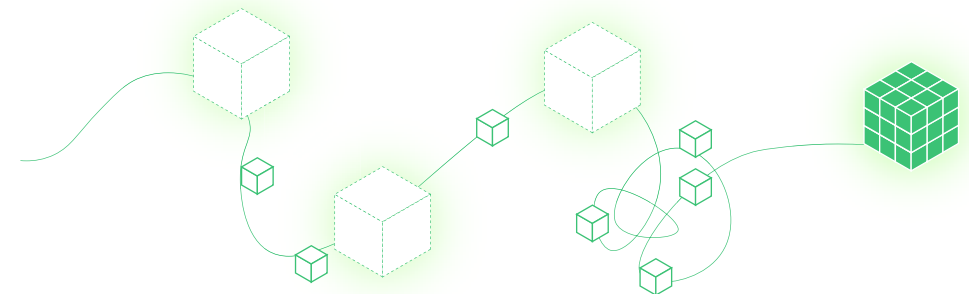
Monitor on quality of help (government)

There is no hallmark for social work, meaning the quality of the given guidance does not have to be proven on paper. Vulnerable groups such as newcomers are heavily reliant on this guidance, making the quality of guidance even more important.

Exploring directions

As it usually is - the process of getting the final concept was iterative. The needs derived in the previous chapter will be used as a starting point. The ideation phase, or exploring and designing phase included an exploration of existing initiatives (Appendix H), talks with professionals in the field and a brainstorm with fellow design students (Appendix E). This resulted in three design directions. Along the way of defining and materialising the concept, several alternative sub-ideas as well as existing concepts surfaced. Eventually a final concept was shaped out of an accumulation of findings.

First, the three design directions are illustrated. Then some sources of inspiration are discussed which have helped merging the design directions into a final concept described under *Towards the final concept*. (p. 91)



Three design directions

Below, three concept directions are explained: Practice in Practice, Building Connection / Closing the gap and How life can be / affinity & work. Each direction states the principles it was based on and subsequently illustrates an idea for a concept that fits the direction. For every direction there is one or more existing initiatives (Appendix B-C, p. 33) that relates to it; these are briefly named. Finally, the tension fields and the needs are listed that the concept touches upon.

Direction 1: Practice in Practice

This design direction is focused on applied integration with a 'practice in practice' focus on language, based on several principles:

- ◊ Many newcomers and residents in BoTu have difficulty with the Dutch language. Around a quarter of the residents in BoTu has a low understanding of Dutch (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019).
- ◊ The Dutch language is an important building block for both integration and a feeling of home.
- ◊ The language course is rarely practiced in real situations, maintaining a high threshold to speak Dutch in actual situations.
- ◊ Language courses can miss the jargon of a particular field of interest.

Concept idea: Wijkjargon

Learning the Dutch language while getting to know your neighborhood. A card-set introducing the jargon of BoTu.

The concept idea in this direction is 'het wijkjargon' (the neighborhood jargon). When arriving in the new neighborhood, in this case Bospolder-Tussendijken you receive 'wijkjargon' as a welcoming gift. This consists of a card-set specific to the neighborhood of BoTu. Each card shows information on something you could come across in the neighborhood. This could, for example, be a card about the market on the Grote Visserij square. One side of the card shows an image together with a description of the place. The other side of the card shows several examples of conversations that fit the context



of the market. How to order a certain amount of carrots or how to ask for a bag for instance. The cards will be accompanied by a map to show the locations of the highlighted places. The newcomer gets familiarised with the area while lowering the threshold to interact.

- » To improve your Dutch language level, while interacting with the environment.
- » To be stimulated to explore your surroundings and get familiar with your new neighborhood.
- » To choose the jargon of the language of a specific field of interest.
- » To lower the threshold of real-life communication.

Touching upon needs:

More relation to real world practice of the language integration course. Adjust jargon of language to the field of interest.(newcomers). (tension 6, p. 59)

Opportunity to balance work and integration courses (organisations)(tension 6, p. 59)

Direction 2: Building connection - Closing the gap

This design direction is focused on closing the gap between Asylum Seekers Centres and society, based on several principles:

- ◊ There is a need to close the gap between asylum seekers centres and the outside world.
- ◊ There is a lot of 'waiting time' at the azc, activities are important for the mental health.
- ◊ Participation is a good way to learn (both work and language, learning by doing and building a network)

Concept idea: BoTu Participation Lobby

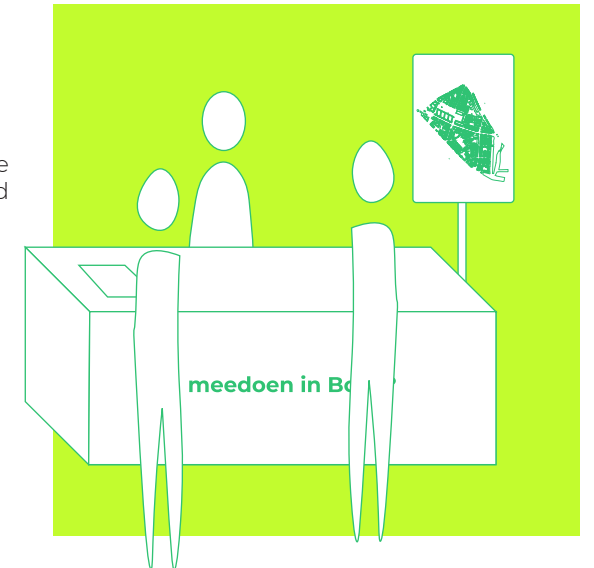
Familiarising newcomers with participation opportunities in BoTu through a lobby at the AZC

The BoTu participation lobby is intended to familiarise newcomers with Bospolder-Tussendijken from an early stage. The lobby is a place without a fence, where residents of the AZC as well as outsiders are welcome to walk in and out. At the participation counter, newcomers can ask about the offer of (voluntary) work or activities that is available in BoTu. There, they can be assisted into finding the right fit between personal interests and type of activity. Simultaneously, employers or local residents can walk in when they have something to offer; this could vary from anything participatory such as voluntary gardening, art projects, interviews, social gatherings, language practice or paid jobs. An employee of the AZC is needed to manage the counter and monitor whether the activities are 'newcomers friendly' to avoid exploitation. Next, the lobby space can function as a studying or working place for residents and outsiders. Newcomers and locals can gather to study, help each other with paperwork or other pastimes.

In line with building blocks:

- oo Language
- oo Participation
- oo Local connectedness
- oo Personal growth

Existing initiative touches upon this design direction: Woordkaarten used in the Beroepentuin (Appendix H).



- » To provide a place for locals and newcomers to connect from an early stage.
- » To motivate newcomers to participate in activities that fit their interests.

Touching upon needs:

Opportunity to connect with society, smaller gap between AZC's and society (newcomers) (tension 2, p. 51)

Change in attitude towards refugees, opportunity to connect with newcomers (locals) (tension 1 & 2, p. 49-51)

In line with building blocks:

- oo Participation
- oo Local connectedness
- oo Personal Growth
- oo Stability
- oo Supporting environment
- oo Autonomy

Existing initiatives that touch upon this design direction: Participation counter at pilot Oisterwijk, project LOBBY by ABZ (Appendix H)

Direction 3: How life can be - Affinity & work

This design direction focuses on the pursuit of affinity and ambition within a job.

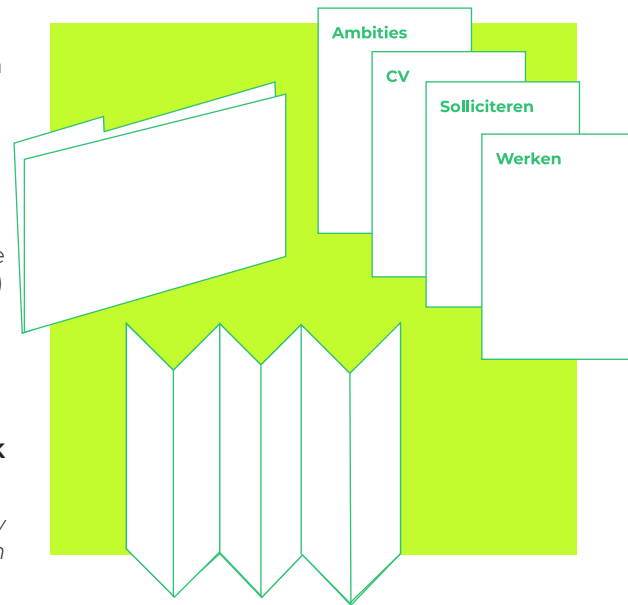
- ◊ The ambitions of newcomers are rarely recognised. Newcomers have trouble finding a job they enjoy.
- ◊ Status holders start on welfare. This is often seen as stability rather than a backup. Many stay on benefits.
- ◊ Newcomers have difficulty compiling a CV and find applying for a job scary.
- ◊ There are often hurdles about things in the workplace. (e.g. newcomers not being on time)
- ◊ Participation is a good way to learn (both work and language, learning by doing and building a network)

Concept idea: Social benefit to work Roadmap

A manual 'from benefit to ambitions'. A step by step roadmap towards participation, built on ambitions.

This manual serves as a step by step guide towards participation in the form of work. By dividing the main goal of getting a job into smaller achievements, the journey from social benefits to being independent becomes more gradual. The starting point for this are the ambitions of the newcomer. What do you enjoy and what are your skills? The newcomer is then guided through setting up their own CV towards the Dutch standards and building on the gaps to improve this. This could be done through, for example, voluntary work. A next step could be applying for jobs and job interviews. The guide informs on the do's and don'ts and how to prepare for job interviews in the Netherlands. Finally, there is guidance on job security. This includes frequent workflow norms and values as to inform on possible cultural workflow differences.

- » To make stepping off social benefits a manageable goal.
- » To motivate newcomers to pursue their ambitions.



Touching upon needs:

Equality, opportunity to show potential (newcomer) (tension 4 & 5, p. 55-57)

More relation to real world practice.
Opportunity to connect with locals.
Opportunity for newcomers to pursue ambitions. (newcomers) (tension 1, 4, 6, p 49-59)

In line with building blocks:

- oo Personal Growth
- oo Autonomy
- oo Stability
- oo Trust & Safety

Existing initiatives that touch upon this design direction: Newbees, MDT, House of Skills, Beroepentuin, BeeWorks, OpenEmbassy (Platform Newcomers & Work) (Appendix H)

Towards the final concept

The three design directions show distinctive qualities. Design direction one shows feasibility and viability, as the product would be simple to manufacture, additionally its implementation would entail minimal behavioral change among stakeholders. In contrast, design direction two seeks to achieve a substantially greater impact than direction one but appears less viable. The introduction of a lobby in the AZC would require disruptive changes among stakeholders and would be challenging to execute within the timeframe of this project. Lastly, design direction three aims for a sizable impact and appears more feasible than direction two when it comes to making it tangible. The concept is also still adaptable to a variety of contexts and it touches upon the most tensions fields, an important aim when it comes to the intended effect. Thus, it seems as the most promising direction among the three.

Before taking the step towards a final concept, several existing examples have been explored to not only prevent from 'reinventing the wheel' but also to gather some additional inspiration that have helped to finalize the designed intervention. Below are three examples of things that have inspired me to get to the final concept, starting with 'the sociale kaart'.

Sociale Kaart the social map

This design direction is focused on applied The 'sociale kaart' is an online platform that shows services, products and activities that are offered in your area. On the website of sociale kaart (Digivers, 2021) they explain the platform as such (figure 25). When asking whether client managers refer to any tools that might help newcomers get familiar with the area, one client manager partly active in BoTu mentioned: 'There is a social map. It shows everything there is within a neighborhood.

It's meant for everyone.' (Youth consultant status holders, Municipality of Rotterdam). When looking up the map of Rotterdam however, it is noticeable that for one, it was hard to find and two, it is targeted mostly at an audience with disabilities such as a physical or mental disorder, blindness, dementia and such. Therefore, it does not seem to be targeted at anyone but mostly vulnerable groups under which 'refugees/ status holders/ newcomers' are not named. The idea of having one collective platform that shows the offer in the area is however interesting.

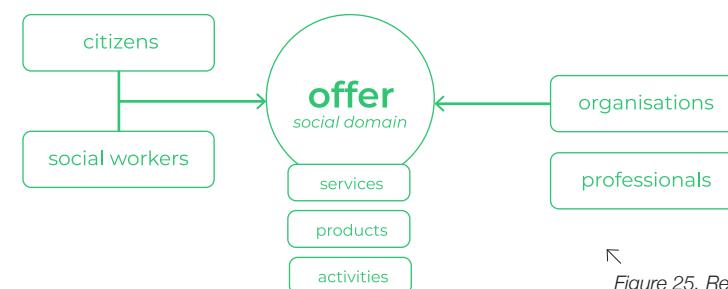


Figure 25. Redrawn diagram of (Digivers, 2021)

Social cohesion of BoTu

a collection of initiatives

In the regular meetings with Marthe from the Field Academy, it became apparent that Bospolder-Tussendijken is a rich neighborhood when it comes to its initiatives. A lot has been done and is being done when it comes to resident-led initiatives, running community centres and neighborhood developments. The Field Academy has been monitoring the neighborhood's activities to test the social impact of the initiatives over the years (see chapter Resilient BoTu 2028 Programme, p. 69). This has resulted in an extensive collection of initiatives of which most include local residents of the neighborhood. This existing network of local residents seems like a strong quality of BoTu to benefit from.

Collection of initiatives

The Field Academy is continuously working to collect data of these activities and make a clear overview of all the active places and people that contribute to the neighborhood one way or another. To make other residents aware of the existence of the neighborhood's activity is an important aspect to the social impact of the initiatives.

Wijkcollectie

Foundation 'wijkcollectie' is a platform that stores and collects stories of people in the neighborhood together with citizens, entrepreneurs and artists. The goal is not only to function as a storage place for stories, but also to ignite new connections and collaborations. The stories differ in content, but all include a key figure that tells about their personal experience of living in BoTu and their relation to a certain initiative, community centre, organisation or neighborhood development. Wijkcollectie has already made a sizeable collection of inspiring stories that take place in Bospolder-Tussendijken. (Stichting Wijkcollectie, n.d.)

Design in Dialogue

Architecture studios 51N4E, Denkstatt, and Endeavour collaborated on a research project called Design in Dialogue at ETH Zurich, which explores an inclusive approach to architecture valuing diverse perspectives and complexity. This approach involves actively involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, utilizing interactive models to foster engagement, as a tool for conversation.

Design in Dialogue aims to prioritize the interconnectedness between elements rather than focusing solely on individual components. In a time when complex challenges often lead to isolation and defensiveness, the project aims to foster connections among administrations, citizens, experts, and users through the design of urban and architectural projects. (Johan Anrys, 51N4E)



Figure 26. Design in Dialogue, Chapter 2 - 51N4E, Denkstatt and Endeavour

When exploring design direction three, it was found that the step towards formal work is a complicated one. For one, taking the step towards formal work is often done after finishing civic integration as the courses take time out of the week, making it difficult for newcomers to work full-time. Since working part-time collides with the social benefits, it is preferred not to. Secondly, potential job opportunities mostly lie outside of Bospolder-Tussendijken. (observation of the Field Academy) However, this led to the idea of exploring informal forms of activities and participation. BoTu is full of resident-led initiatives, community centers and active key figures open to include new residents.

The 'Sociale kaart' is an example of a platform that shows what is offered nearby. The information that is needed to make a similar or elaborate version of such a tool in BoTu, has been and is being collected by the Field Academy and Wijkcollectie, thus creating an opportunity to benefit from these collections. Finally, in contrast to these online examples, Design in Dialogue is an interesting example of a tangible tool to engage stakeholders. As this is less dependent on digital skills or language, incorporating tangible features could provide a more intuitive usage of the concept.

As a result of brainstorming these insights, the concept of *Een kijk in de wijk* was developed.



Image of the complete map of BoTu scale 1:1000, deciding on the size of the prototype. The green square covers the area of the final prototype.
Photo taken by me.

1:1000



Image of an exploration of the colour scheme in spraypaint.
Photo taken by me.

hier loopt de Schie



Schiedamseweg



Een kijk in de wijk

/ the Neighborhood Navigator

Discover your local offer.

Neighborhoods often already have an extensive network of locals and initiatives that have come into existence over the years. The existing network of initiatives and locals can serve as a powerful tool to promote inclusion and participation among newcomers. Additionally, their involvement in local initiatives can foster relationships with other community members, to create new connections or collaborations.

The following pages will describe the intended user scenario of *Een kijk in de wijk* in four steps.

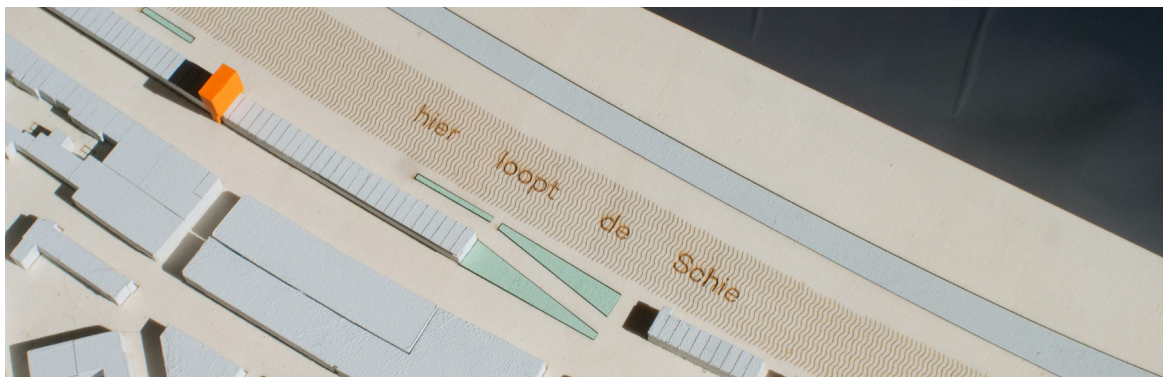
Next, each element of the concept will be explained one by one in further detail.



Een kijk in de wijk (or Neighborhood Navigator in English) is a concept stationed in Bospolder-Tussendijken that showcases the places that contribute to the local community.

WHAT?

An interactive maquette of the neighborhood that gives newcomers insight into the offer of community centres, activities, key figures and developments of Bospolder-Tussendijken through audio stories.



WHY?

To stimulate newcomers to participate in their local community. Build a network, learn new skills, get help or get inspired.

Intended user scenario

Een kijk in de wijk is stationed at the local community center: Pier 80. Bospolder-Tussendijken has quite a few community centres or 'huizen van de wijk'. Pier 80 is one of them and distinguishes itself with its 'walk-in' policy. Compared to the other semi-public centers, this one is a public place for everyone. Pier 80 is also part of the 'Heart of BoTu'. The Heart of BoTu consists of the Visserij square, Park 1943, the five Gijsingflats, the Zelfregiehuis and two primary schools. (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019)

Next, it is also a place where several client managers of the municipality meet with the newcomers who's house is situated in the nearby neighborhood. One of the client managers that was interviewed, works on location in Pier 80 every friday to meet with the people in his caseload that live nearby.

In the intended scenario, newcomers of Bospolder-Tussendijken are pointed towards *Een kijk in de wijk* by their client manager. Or they have already spotted the brightly coloured maquette during a visit to the community center, when meeting there for consultation.

Newcomers can simply walk up to the maquette to start exploring Bospolder-Tussendijken at their own pace. In the case that this is the first interaction that the newcomer has with the concept, guidance on the usage is required. This is where the two-sided roadmap comes in. The roadmap is one of several elements that make up *Een kijk in de wijk*.

The concept consists of the following elements:

1. The 1:1000 scale maquette of the neighborhood (Bospolder-Tussendijken)

2. The stories in the form of audio stories, supported by an Activities & Translation booklet with translations of the stories and options for enrollment of activities

3. The two-sided roadmap with a map of BoTu with the showcased places and a journey map to guide the user

Finally, a fourth feature is an online application. This is not included in the scenario, as this first version of the app does not include any additional features. The prototype of the application has been used in the evaluation to test whether there is any interest in an online version of the concept (Evaluation, p. 110).

The next page shows a step-by-step user scenario.

Pier 80, the local community center



Figure 27. Close up of the maquette showing the main community center (Pier 80)



1. orientate to find what you are looking for.

The newcomer notices a stack of roadmaps that is presented next to the maquette. When a newcomer folds it open, the roadmap (routekaart) is revealed that explains that the maquette showcases important locations in the neighborhood. The newcomer now understands what the various colours indicate and that placing a coloured object in the circle will start an audio story about that place.



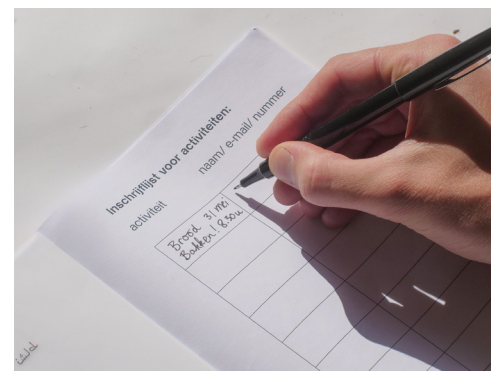
2. pick up the place you want to hear more about by placing it in the circle.

The newcomer is interested to hear a story about a blue coloured place. Now knowing that the maquette is meant to be touched, the newcomer picks up one of the blue objects and places it in the circle.



3. learn about the place by listening to a short audio story.

When the object is placed in the circle, an audio story starts to play. The newcomer hears a short story told by a resident about this specific location. While listening, the newcomer occasionally checks the translation of the story in their first language in the Activities & Translation booklet.



4. enroll to participate.

After listening to a few of the stories, the newcomer has a better understanding of what they can do in the area. Some stories have sparked their interests, so the newcomer looks for these places in the Activities & Translation booklet. The newcomer sees an activity where there might be a chance to meet a few locals that is just around the corner. The newcomer enrolls in the booklet by leaving a few contact details.

Figure 28. Photos of the concept prototype

1 The maquette

The maquette as seen in figure 29 is a 1:1000 scale model of the neighborhood Bospolder-Tussendijken. This specific prototype shows a quarter of the total neighborhood, thus a quarter of what the total maquette would look like - as this would suffice for the evaluation of the concept.

Several cues are designed to help the user orientate. For one, only the main roads are included as to avoid making the maquette too detailed and distract from the important features. The streetnames of the main roads, such as the Schiedamseweg, are added and the metro sign is visualised to create recognition (see detail below). In addition to this, water is showcased by a water texture and grass is made green to enhance its intuitiveness.

The maquette is meant to be touched and therefore simplified to avoid any fragile components.

The places that are showcased in 3D are highlighted in bright colours that each represent a category. The categories are explained in the next subchapter (2: the stories, p. 102).

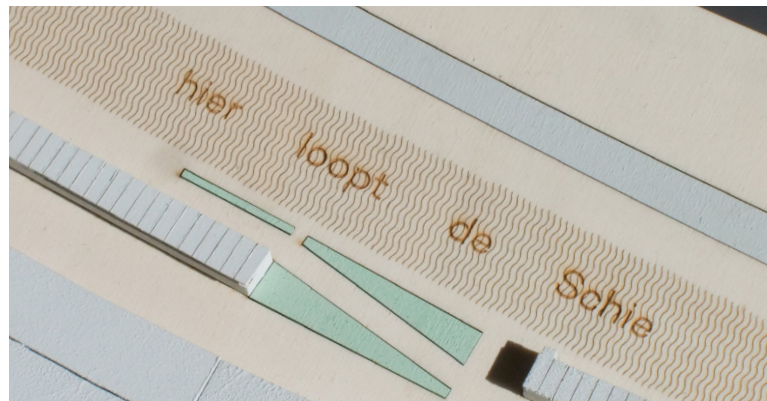
'My experience is that not all status holders are fully digitally skilled. Something tangible can be good in that situation.'

- Youth consultant status holders (2)

interaction qualities

remarkable, recognizable, inviting, engaging, collaborative, empowering

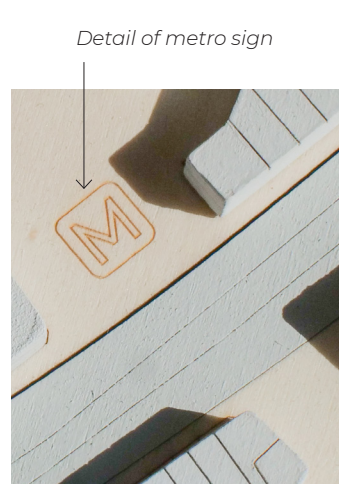
The maquette features eye-catching colors that are chosen to draw the attention of people passing by. (Appendix I) The miniature version of the neighborhood is designed to be inviting and familiar, encouraging visitors to approach and explore. The shapes are simplified and robust, allowing for easy interaction without any worry of accidentally damaging something. The 1:1000 scale has been chosen to strike a balance between retaining an appropriate level of detail and ensuring a manageable size. The maquette should not occupy excessive space while still allowing multiple people to engage and interact with it collaboratively. Finally, the concept should empower people by letting them take matters into their own hands - figuratively and literally.



Detail of de Schie



Detail of Schiedamseweg sign



Detail of metro sign



Figure 29. 1:1000 scale maquette of BoTu

2 The stories categories

Four categories of stories have been defined, based on the offer available in BoTu (figure 30)

The **community- and support centers** are places such as Pier 80 itself, but also include locations handling planned consultations. **Experiences** of residents are personal stories of people that contribute or add something to the neighborhood. An example is the story of two Syrian brothers that started their own bakery. **Activities** can vary from language courses to a bread-baking workshop to a dinnerparty. And lastly, neighborhood **developments** include stories of residents and initiatives working to make BoTu a better place, for example by informing residents on the energy transition.

The places that would be showcased on the map were selected from the collection that is monitored by the Field Academy. Whether the place would be suitable for a story on the maquette, was decided based on additional criteria: the place has a (fixed) location, the place is not (semi-) private, it does not restrict itself to one target audience, and it cannot be a company without an open door policy. This approach aimed to avoid promoting places that would not be available for others. Additional to the selection of initiatives, are a variety of stories of residents, gathered by Wijkcollectie. The full overview can be found in the confidential appendix (Appendix B-C, p. 33). See for the colour exploration Appendix I.



Figure 30. Close-up of prototype legend

Translations of categories:

- ◇ Community- and support centers
- ◇ Experiences of residents
- ◇ Activities in the neighborhood
- ◇ Neighborhood developments

interaction qualities

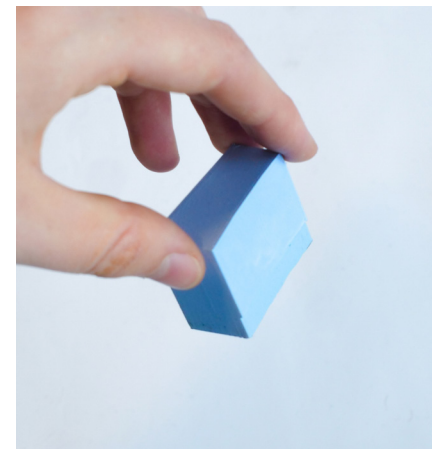
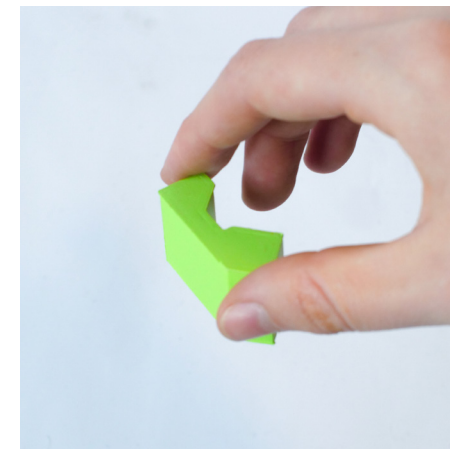
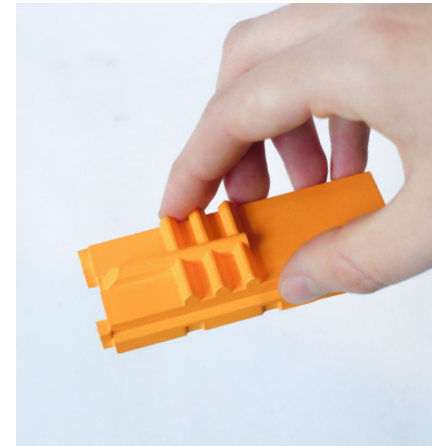
supporting, inspiring, connecting, activating, motivating



The interaction qualities relate back to the selection of stories that are showcased. Community- and support centers are offering support. Stories of residents are intended to inspire listeners and make newcomers acquainted with newcomers; building new connections. The activities in the neighborhood are offered to activate newcomers. Neighborhood developments are shared to motivate newcomers participate in a better neighborhood or feel motivated by the efforts of other residents.

'I notice that success stories from others can work effectively for status holders, to give a bit of an idea of how things can go. From exemplary figures, or stories from people who have also been status holders themselves.'

- Youth consultant status holders (2)



2 The stories booklet

name and number of the place corresponding with the map

enrollment form for activities & participation



↑
translation in Arabic on translucent paper

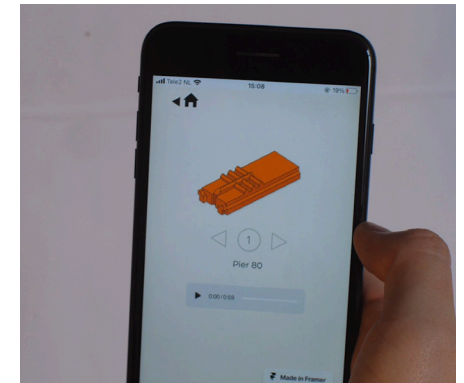
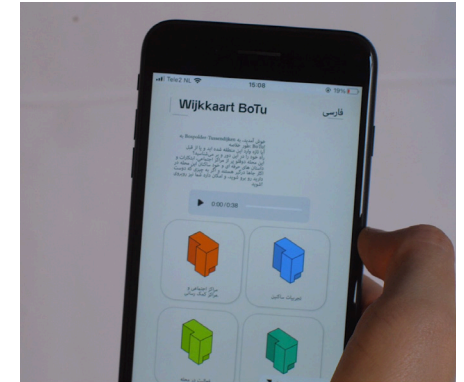
interaction qualities
guiding, supporting, activating

The booklets are available in multiple languages to assist newcomers who are not fluent in Dutch in understanding the stories. The content of the booklets aligns with the audio stories, enabling newcomers to follow along while reading. The translations are printed on translucent paper so the Dutch text remains visible underneath, allowing readers to easily switch between the two. This approach is intended to encourage readers who are in the process of learning the language to try reading it in Dutch. The right page next shows an enrollment form for activities in that specific place.

(The app)

The app was a simple prototype merely used in the evaluation to test whether there would be traction among participant. Therefore it will get a brief mention as the app currently does not have additional features to the tangible components.

The app has a homepage, showing the four categories of places. An advantage is that it allows for quick translations through a drop down menu on the top right. When clicking on a category, it brings you to a place within that category and shows the information as well as the option to play the audio story.



the prototype can be accessed here →



3 The two-sided roadmap

A stack of the maps can be found directly next to maquette. Newcomers can pick one, fold it open and are free to take one home.

This part will explain the features of the two-sided roadmap: first the front of the map showing the map of the neighborhood and then the back of the map showing the roadmap (see Appendix F&G for large images of the map)

Side one: the neighborhood map (wijkkaart) of BoTu

The front shows a map (NL: *wijkkaart*) of the neighborhood Bospolder-Tussendijken that corresponds with the maquette. All places that are showcased are listed and numbered on the map with the address underneath. This is to give newcomers extra information and cues to help them orientate when interacting with the maquette. It shows a legend of the type of places that can be found on the map.

This roadmap guides you through the neighborhood to take you along the community centers, initiatives and stories of professionals and local residents themselves

Side two: the roadmap (routekaart) of BoTu

The roadmap is intended to guide the newcomer through the features of *Een kijk in de wijk* by explaining the usage and guiding the newcomer through the categories of places that are showcased. It does so by asking questions that direct the user towards a certain category, based on their answer. A larger image of the map can be found in Appendix G, p. 135.

interaction qualities
guiding, supporting, inspiring, motivating

The front side of the map is intended to inspire newcomers with the offer that is available in their surroundings. The journey map should be guiding and supporting to help people find what they are looking for even when not knowing what they want yet. The questions on the map are meant to inspire and motivate the user to explore new places in BoTu.

A list of all the places that are showcased on the map and maquette with their name and address.

The map of Bospolder-Tussendijken showing all the highlighted places with an audio story in the colour of a specific category.

The legend that shows what each colour represents.

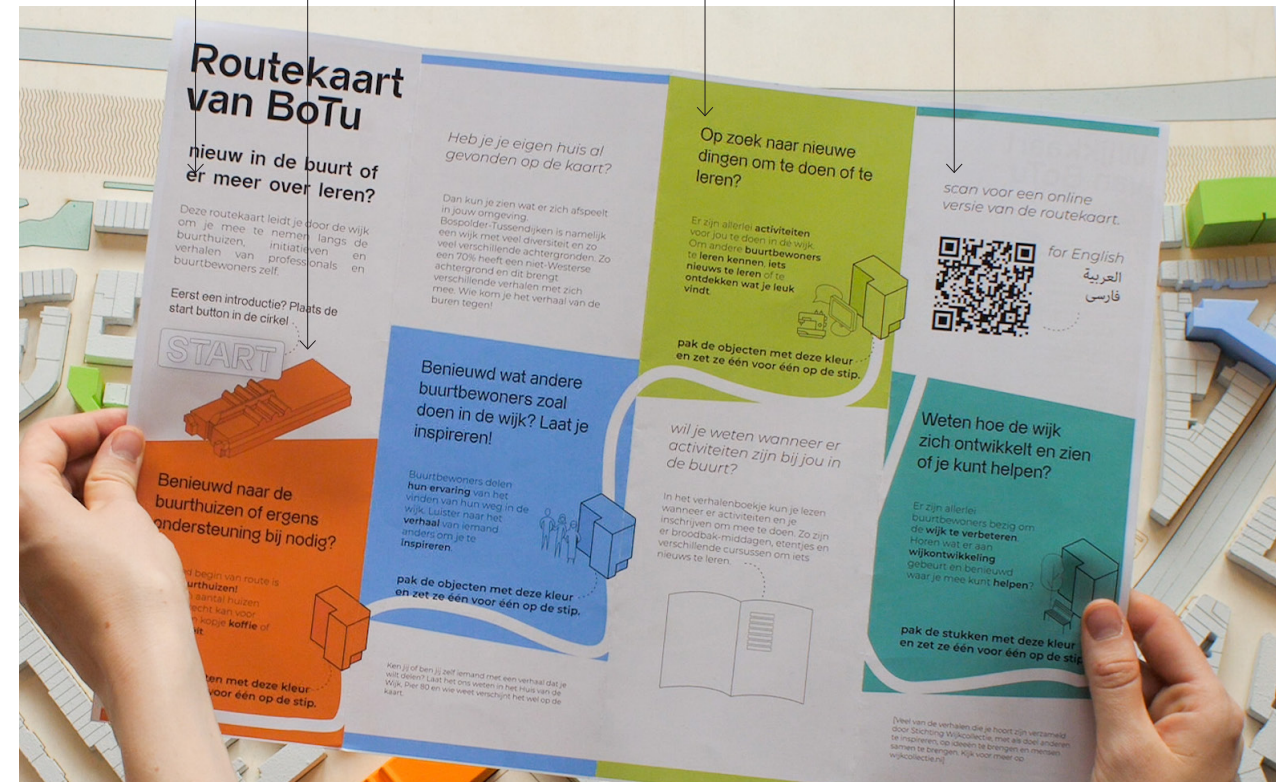


A short explanation of the purpose of the roadmap.

A short explanation on starting the intro with the 'start' piece

Questions guiding the user through the categories.

A QR code that leads you to the online application.



Evaluating the concept.

the concept aims to include...



by...

- sharing personal first-hand experiences of residents
- inviting to participate and connect with locals 'practice Dutch in practice'
- offering activities varying from getting help to helping out
- letting the user make their own choices 'take matters into your own hands'
- teach about the local environment and foster collaborations with other residents
- motivating and activating the user to pursue their needs and ambitions
- offering various participatory activities
- connecting newcomers with newcomers when interacting and participating
- providing a network of places to fall back on and empower the user
- welcoming and inviting newcomers to participate in the neighborhood

interaction qualities

remarkable, recognizable, inviting, engaging, collaborative, empowering, guiding, supporting, inspiring, motivating, activating, connecting

Part three

In part three, the aim is to evaluate the concept on its usability, experience and effect. This will be done through a test in the intended context. Based on the insights, the first chapter is followed by several recommendations on the concept itself and the scenario of use.

'WHERE DO I LIVE? AH HERE IT IS!'

(Participant and resident in BoTu)

Evaluation of Een Kijk in de Wijk

This chapter describes the evaluation of the concept *Een kijk in de wijk* in the intended context: **Bospolder-Tussendijken** itself. Furthermore, recommendations (p. 117) will be done based on the test insights for future adjustments to the concept.

The Aim

The aim of the test was to evaluate the concept on the following aspects:

The usability

The usability testing of the concept will focus on assessing the ease of use, effectiveness, and user satisfaction with the concept's functionality, information accessibility, performance, and user interaction. In other words, the core functionalities of the concept will be tested to see whether they work and are used as explained in the intended user scenario. How intuitive is the concept to people? Are the different features explained well and are the translations enough to close the language gap that some of the users might have?

The experience

Besides a functional product, the overall experience is just as important. The evaluation of the experience will focus on evaluating the engagement of the user, their response to it and their satisfaction. Simply put: do they want to interact with it and do they enjoy it? The insights gained will help refine the concept to deliver a compelling and enjoyable user experience. What caught their interest and what does the concept evoke? It is important to know whether the prototype will catch the attention from people passing by.

The effect

Testing the prototype on long-term impact will be difficult in the timespan of this project, therefore the focus in this evaluation will be on short-term effect. This entails the impact on the user and the community during and after use. Here, the interaction qualities will be revisited to see whether the intended goal is achieved. Will it inspire, motivate, activate or support the user?

Questions

During the evaluation, participants were observed while interacting with the concept. Additionally, a range of the questions was presented on posters, allowing participants to provide their feedback by leaving comments on post-it notes. (figure 31)

usability ↓

1. Do people understand the functionalities of each element? And is language still a barrier? (observing)
2. What would you use the maquette/ 3D map for?

experience ↓

3. What did you think of the stories?
4. What would you like to hear? What not?
5. What has inspired you? What place or story?
6. Would you visit a place?

effect ↓

7. What did you think of the stories?
8. What would you like to hear? What not?
9. What has inspired you? What place or story?
10. Would you visit a place?
11. (When) would you enroll for an activity?

Wat vind je van de 3D kaart?
schrijf een reactie op een post-it!

Wat kan het toevoegen aan de wijk?	Waarvoor zou jij het gebruiken?

Dit zou ik zelf op de kaart zetten:

Wat vond je van de verhalen?
wat zou je nog graag horen? En wat niet?
schrijf een reactie op een post-it!

Anders:

Wat heeft je geïnspireerd?
Zou je een plek bezoeken?
schrijf een reactie op een post-it!

Deze plek:	Dit verhaal:

(Wanneer) zou je je ergens inschrijven?

The questions on the posters were meant to take into account the interaction qualities, and test them.



Is the experience with the maquette...?

interaction qualities
remarkable, recognizable, inviting, engaging, collaborative, empowering

Is the usability of the prototype...?

interaction qualities
guiding, supporting, activating

Is the effect of the stories...?

interaction qualities
supporting, inspiring, connecting, activating, motivating

Figure 31. Three posters used during the test (questions in Dutch)

The method

Below, the method of the evaluation will be explained.

Participants

To reach the target audience of newcomers in BoTu, the appearance of the prototype at the community center was advertised through several means. For one, a client manager was asked to inform the newcomers in his caseload. Next, the WelcomeApp was used to promote the activity by hosting an event on the app and an Instagram post was shared on the account of Huis van de Toekomst (a community center in BoTu) as seen in figure 32.

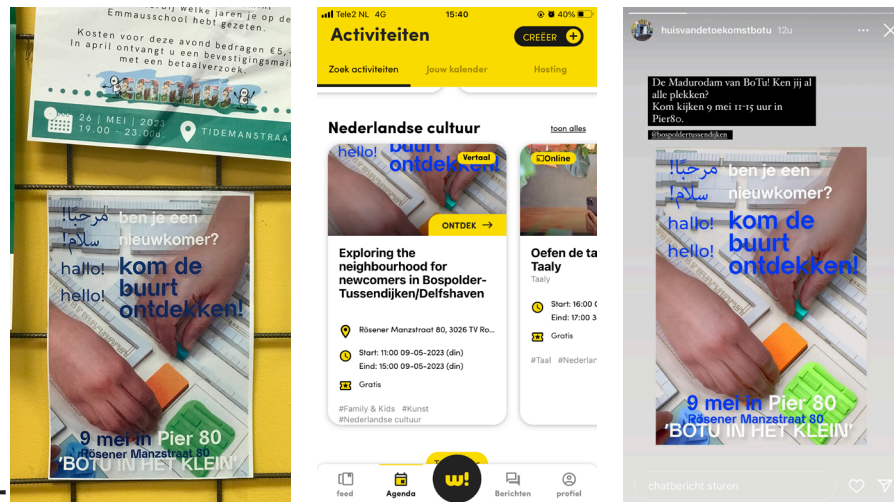
Location: Community center Pier 80

To imitate the intended user scenario, the test was carried out at the local community center Pier 80. The reason for choosing this location is explained in chapter Concept 'intended user scenario' (p. 98-99).

Time: Tuesday, 9th of May, 10am-4pm

the earliest opportunity for testing was determined in consultation with Ivo, the coordinator of Pier 80. In a meeting with Ivo, the concept was briefly discussed, and he willingly agreed to use Pier 80 as the evaluation location. Considering the need to avoid testing on a holiday, the 9th of May was chosen based on its availability.

Figure 32. Promotion of the test through posters, the WelcomeApp and Instagram



Results

The results of the test have been summarised on the next few pages. →

“I think this could inspire and support people to personally grow. Especially the story on the Syrian brothers.”

- Resident and intern at Pier 80

“It helps to give a clear overview, that makes it more accesible.”

- Resident of BoTu

“Now you have to delve into a place completely to know what goes on there. This allows for regular updates.”

- Resident of BoTu

“It could suffice as teaching material.”

- Employee of Municipality Rotterdam

“I think it can create unity in the neighborhood and for us amongst the district team it can inform us about the neighborhood!”

- Employee neighborhood team Municipality of Rotterdam (wijkteam)

“For us it would be really interesting to hear the needs of the residents so we can improve the offer accordingly.”

- Culture director of Delfshaven

“It will suprise you how many people don't know that some of these places are just open for them to walk in.”

- Culture director of Delfshaven

“I asked the people from the ward council about things to do here, but they couldn't tell me, I think that's a shame.”

- New resident in BoTu

“It's a challenge every week to attract people.”

- Employee at Huis van de Toekomst

Insights on the experience & effect



□ **Effect for residents** people seem to think that the concept could have a positive impact on personal growth, accessibility, and providing up-to-date information for a more immersive experience. This touches upon several of the interaction qualities.

‘Nobody tells me and my new neighbors what's here in BoTu. This map of BoTu should go to all the new residents!’

- New resident of BoTu

□ **Effect for organisations** it was interesting to be able to talk to several people that regularly engage with residents from the organisational point of view. Several positive comments show that the concept has the potential to serve multiple purposes; not only amongst residents themselves, but also employees of organisations such as the 'wijkteam' of the Municipality. They stated it could help increase their overall knowledge on the neighborhood they work in and then indirectly assist newcomers and residents. It was suggested it could also be a means for them to receive feedback from residents on the district.

□ **Need to inform** various comments confirmed there is a gap between the initiatives and the residents. Although some residents want to know the offer, it is unclear where to find the information. Simultaneously, the people that work at the organisations have trouble attracting people to their activities.



Figure 33. Photo of myself ready to assist and observe during the evaluation.

“The audio stories in other languages would be nice.”

- Resident in BoTu

“The language could be simpler.”

- Resident in BoTu

“More inviting headers.”

- Resident in BoTu



Figure 34. Photo of a participant testing the prototype

“I would continue this through an app.”

- Resident and employee at Pier 80

“Stories of residents on how they ended up here.”

- Resident of BoTu

“Hear the history of places. How did they come about?”

- Resident of BoTu

“Workshops for kids, because they are the future. When there are piano lessons or language courses for my kids for example.”

- Resident of BoTu, from Marokko 20 years ago

“Map out the primary schools.”

- Resident in BoTu

Insights on the usability



Language & guidance Most participants required additional guidance, except for a few (mostly younger) residents who understood the concept right away. When pointed towards the map, they had trouble knowing where to look. For one, it was expected that the journey map would give a clear instruction on how to start the audio of the introduction but none of the participants used this as starting point.

Some participants, including long-time residents that were once a newcomer themselves, had difficulty speaking Dutch. One person requested Turkish translations, but they were unfortunately not available during the test. Another participant grasped how to use the maquette with the help of a Dutch-to-Arabic translation booklet, though she initially needed assistance. The journey map seemed a bit too text-heavy for them to comprehend. One Eritrean woman showed enthusiasm for the concept, but due to her difficulty in understanding Dutch, it was uncertain if she fully understood it.

Other participants were able to use the maquette relatively quickly with additional tips.

Interest in the app Several participants welcomed the idea of a mobile app, noting widespread smartphone usage among both existing and new residents. They suggested that an app would conveniently provide language options and regular updates.

Showcase of information During the discussion, there were multiple suggestions regarding the content to be displayed on the map. Two notable requests were for more information about the history of BoTu and the background of specific initiatives. Participants also expressed a recurring interest in having information about schools and activities for their children. They mentioned that it took them a while to find such information and believed that having it on the map would provide a clearer overview.

Insights on the experience & effect



“Would be nice to showcase the people that are really active here, contributing to the neighborhood. They could have a little figure on the map or something.”

- Resident and intern at Pier 80

“I want to know the person behind it.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

“It would be good to highlight the key figures, that would make it more personal”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

“Also indicate: you can contact them or them.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

Personal touch People value knowing the individuals behind the stories, as it adds a personal touch to the experience. It would allow them to become acquainted with key figures in the neighborhood and understand who to reach out to in specific situations. Additionally, this approach would enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the stories.



Figure 35. Photo of a participant testing the prototype

“Show me what an activity could contribute.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

“Hear the experience of others.”

- Anonymous resident of BoTu

Benefits of the activities In order to activate people to enroll for an activity, people want to know the what they could benefit from the activities, for example by hearing other people's experience first. When hearing a success-story, participants say it is more likely they will participate.



Figure 36. Photo of the test set-up in Pier 80

Conclusion & Limitations of the test

The test went different than expected. Pier 80 was not the ideal location for it, especially on a quiet Tuesday without a market at the adjacent square. Most attendees were either elderly Turkish men who preferred coffee and chatting over testing the prototype or people with appointments that were busy and could not spare much time. I had to approach people myself to get them to participate. The promotional efforts were not enough to attract the target audience of newcomers.

However, there were also positive insights. Other individuals, like someone from the neighborhood team (wijkteam) and the municipality reacted very positively in getting a better understanding of the neighborhood themselves and using the prototype as a communication tool with residents. A few residents showed their enthusiasm too, naming various fitting scenarios of use. Multiple participants (Dutch and non-Dutch) immediately recognized the maquette as a map and were eager to find their own home. For some, it did take some time to orientate.

Some non-Dutch participants responded positively, but language barriers seemed to hinder their understanding due to text-heavyness. Key insights include:

Key takeaways

- There were limitations in reaching the intended audience
- Placing the concept in Pier 80 (on Tuesdays) is not enough for people to interact with it
- There is an interest in getting to know key figures in the neighborhood
- The maquette is recognized as a map, but the orientation should be improved
- There is an interest from stakeholders from the organisational perspective
- There is a desire for better neighborhood information within the neighborhood team (wijkteam)
- There is disappointment among new residents regarding lack of information on BoTu and a desire for an overview
- Text-heavyness of the journey map still causes a language barrier affecting non-Dutch participants; it needs to be simplified

‘It fits a more vibrant location’

- Resident in BoTu

‘Where do I live? Ah here it is!’

- Resident in BoTu

interaction qualities

remarkable, recognizable, inviting, engaging, collaborative, empowering, guiding, supporting, inspiring, motivating, activating, connecting

This chapter has provided valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the concept *Een kijk in de wijk*. In the next chapter, these findings will be used to formulate recommendations with the intent to improve the usability, experience and effect of the concept.

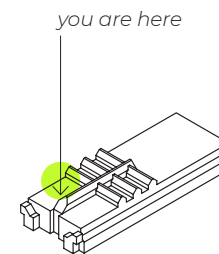
Recommendations

In this next chapter, we delve into the recommendations for enhancing the design concept *Een kijk in de wijk*. Building upon the insights gained from the evaluation process, the aim is to present actionable suggestions to improve the usability, user experience, and overall effectiveness of the concept. These recommendations are intended to address the identified strengths and weaknesses, guiding the future development and refinement of the design. The recommendations are divided into *Design recommendations to improve the usability of the concept*; and *recommendations for the Scenario of use to improve its experience and effect*.

Design Recommendations for the usability

Visual guidance

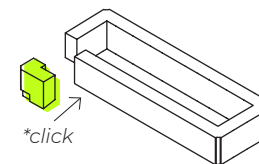
guiding, supporting, inspiring, motivating



The journey map should guide and support the user better by being simplified. Excessive amount of text should be replaced with clear images on how to use the concept in the simplest way (pick up, place, listen, enroll). The availability of translations should be emphasized and enrollment forms need a more prominent role. It should be made even clearer for the user that the maquette may be touched. A suggestion to improve the orientation on the map is to add a 'you are here' mark.

Modularity

inspiring, motivating



BoTu residents need up-to-date information. To address this, the maquette's base should be made modular with 'click-on' pieces, allowing flexible additions. Objects without fixed positions can be used for temporary or new initiatives, such as a highlighted "story of the week." Another option is to utilize the app as an accessible platform for news and activities, ensuring regular updates.

Addressing newcomers

inviting, engaging

→ مرحبًا!
سلام!
hallo!

The concept should better address newcomers by for one, having better language support such as having the audio available in multiple languages. Next, the type of questions should be formulated simpler such as 'help needed?' and avoid complex formulation. Further evaluation should be done with newcomers to test whether all categories (such as 'neighborhood developments') are something they are interested in. Next, the goal of the presented activities should be made clearer, such as 'improve your language/ meet people.'

Scenario of Use Recommendations *for the experience & effect*

The recommendations to improve the experience and effect of the concept will be explained in the form of scenario's that propose alternative use cases. This format is chosen as it includes the location, context and timing rather than just the concept itself.

** It should be noted that some scenario's include more radical changes than others. To know whether these recommendations will be succesfull, further research needs to be done.*

Scenario 1: A travelling installation
recognizable, empowering, inviting, engaging, collaborative, connecting, activating

In this scenario, Een kijk in de wijk will travel throughout the neighborhood, setting up temporary stations at different community centers or "warme buurthuis kamers" in BoTu. Each month, the maquette will be relocated to a new venue, accompanied by an event organized by the host location. The event aims to engage both newcomers and long-term residents, featuring key figures from the map who share their own experiences of coming to BoTu and promote the activities scheduled for that month. This approach calls for monthly updates to the map while the event's promotion is used to draw attention to the concept as well as shed light on the host location of the month.

Scenario 2: Going online & key figures

guiding, supporting, empowering, inspiring, motivating

In this scenario, the app will be further developed to function as supporting feature for *Een kijk in de wijk*. The app will allow for more regular updates that the initiatives can post themselves and suffices for an enrollment platform. It can also allow for background information on the key figures of BoTu. The stories will be told by them, from their perspective and they explain when and how to reach out to them. It could also include various additional features, such as profiles where you can follow certain key figures, places, or type of activities that fit your needs such as language development.

Scenario 3: Bridging the gap

guiding, supporting, inspiring, motivating

In this scenario, *Een kijk in de wijk* is used in conversations amongst 'wijkteams' and client managers to inform them on the offer in the neighborhood. This way, the wijkteams as well as client managers can expand on their knowlegde to better assist, guide and advice the residents and their clients (newcomers) to bridge the gap between the supply (what the neighborhood offers regarding help, activities and so on) and the demand (the needs of the residents of BoTu).

The maquette can be used in conversations as a tangible hands-on communication tool between employee and resident to not only provide (new) residents with information, but also let them share their opinions so the offer/supply can be adjusted accordingly.

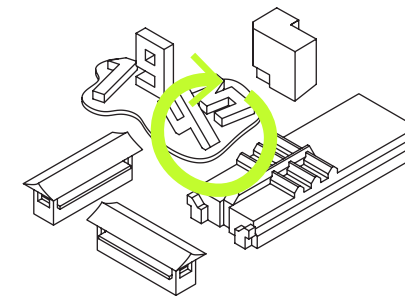
Frequently asked

This part elaborates on several frequently asked questions that surfaced during the evaluation, coach meetings and conversations regarding the concept.

Figure 37. Photos of NFC sticker, placed on bottom of a piece out of the maquette

*But how to keep it up to date?
Who is in charge of this?*

There are several ways to keep the maquette up to date. For some initiatives 'neighborhood ambassadors' play a role. For example one ambassador manages the 'neighborhood agenda' regarding consultation hours at various places located in BoTu in exchange for a financial compensation. Similarly, there could be a *Een kijk in de wijk* ambassador. Another way is that the initiatives that are showcased are required to manage their own information on the map; this is more feasible in the case of a supporting platform, such as an application. Here, each initiative could post new activities they have coming up or changes in their team.



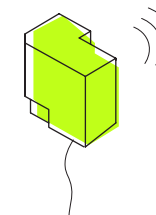
In case any physical parts needs to be added or altered, first the modularity of the maquette needs to be improved. A suggestion for the maintance of the concept, is a collaboration with the Bouwkeet, the local makerspace in BoTu. Here, they have all the tools available that have been used to make the prototype. An idea could even be to have a workshop around the *maintanance of little BoTu*. This is merely a suggestion and should be further explored.

How does the audio start playing?

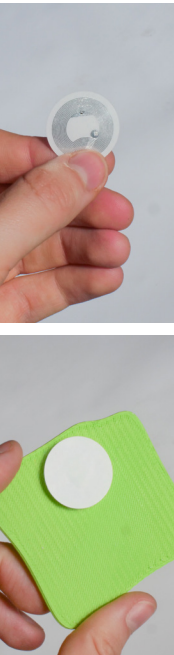
The focus regarding this concept was rather on the interaction and effect than the technological aspect of the concept; but a small test has been done using NFC chip stickers. (figure 27) These are affordable stickers that can store information and can be programmed as wished- for example to play an audio file or direct the user to an application. In the test, the sticker was programmed to redirect the scanner to an audio file on youtube and placed on one of the pieces from the maquette. When holding a scanner or smartphone nearby (as most have an NFC-chip scanner), it succesfully opens the youtube link on the phone. This shows that NFC chips on each piece is a feasible way to start the audio of each specific place.



How to prevent people from taking parts home?



In the case that no one is around to keep an eye on the maquette, it can happen that people take loose parts home. One way to tackle this is to use the NFC stickers to trigger a sound in case it is not placed back after a certain amount of time. Another way is to simply attach the separate parts with strings to the maquette or design them as buttons instead of loose parts.



Conclusion & Discussion

This chapter concludes and discusses the outcomes and process of my master thesis.

The Aim

Reflecting back on the project outcomes there are two goals to discuss. The aim of part two was *'to map out the current newcomer trajectory in their search for a new home and identify areas of opportunity coinciding with newcomers' feeling at home (het thuisgevoel in Dutch) in their new environment'* and the following aim for part two *'to propose an intervention that contributes to newcomers' sense of 'feeling at home' when settling in Bospolder-Tussendijken.'*

I think it can be said that the first aim has been achieved. By engaging with many stakeholders and revising the outcomes with newcomers themselves, the trajectory has been mapped out and areas of opportunity that are proposed show a valuable contribution to newcomers' definition of feeling at home. It can be argued that even more stakeholders could have been included, but that seemed too excessive for the scope of this project.

Looking back at the second aim, it is too early to claim that the goal has been met. This is due to several reasons. *Een kijk in de wijk* definitely needs iterations regarding its usability. Suggestions for this have been done under *Design recommendations* (p. 117). As the evaluation had its limitations, such as reaching the target audience - it cannot be said whether these would be enough to make the concept meet the goal as the concept is in need of further evaluation in a variety of contexts. Suggestions on alternative scenario's of use have been done in *Scenario of use recommendations* (p. 118).

However, besides the critical remarks, various participants that interacted with *Een kijk in de wijk* were overall positive and eager to share their ideas on ways to put the concept into practice - from the residents' point of view as well as the municipalities' side. This again shows potential for other user scenarios.

Looking back

The question can be posed whether all this 'looking back' was necessary to design an intervention for the scope of a neighborhood. From what I have learned during this project, I believe there is a very important value in looking back at the trajectory of newcomers when searching for ways to improve their settlement in the Netherlands. The broad inclusion of stakeholders has given a lot of interesting insights and many areas of conflict that can suffice as opportunity areas for improvement. However, the question can also be turned around by asking whether

the neighborhood is the right *scope* to intervene when trying to improve the settlement of newcomers in the Netherlands. I believe the research has shown that there are opportunity areas earlier in the trajectory with a greater impact to intervene than the neighborhood itself, but these often require policy changes and were therefore out of reach. All in all -with the hope that the enormous current waiting times for newcomers while awaiting verdicts on their residence permit as well as the placement in a neighborhood will shorten- the neighborhood still seems a valuable place to bring about positive impact.

As there is an enormous amount of stakeholders involved in the asylum trajectory, a selection had to be made to create a realistic scope for the timeframe of this thesis. It can be argued that the inclusion of other stakeholders such as policy makers (e.g. Ministry of Justice & Safety) would have an influence on the outcomes.

Limitations and possibilities

As explained before in *Conclusion & Limitations* of the test (p. 116), there was difficulty in reaching out to the target audience, which affected the evaluation of the concept. One aspect of this might be that the client is not a stakeholder in the trajectory and therefore is not directly working with newcomers. Getting information on the whereabouts of newcomers in BoTu was a major challenge.

Although the Field Academy was not a client that could necessarily close the gap between myself and the target audience, there were other advantages to the collaboration. The Field Academy is an organisation that could share an enormous amount of knowledge on the context of BoTu. It proposed the Bospolder-Tussendijken as context, and I think the project benefited from narrowing down the scope to the neighborhood as the clarity on the context helped to create a concrete concept idea.

To conclude, although the evaluation cannot assure that the intended impact of *Een kijk in de wijk* will be achieved, the outcomes of this project lead me to think that the concept and research surrounding it can at least help develop this or other projects that will.

Personal reflection

on the project & Field Academy

Since the end of my bachelor's degree, I have developed a growing interest in social design. Working on meaningful projects with clear value is important to me. The refugee crisis is such a topic, and I am grateful to the Field Academy for allowing me to focus my project on this subject. It has been a pleasure to have the Field Academy as a client for this project. I think we share a mutual understanding of the importance of a human centered approach and engaging with the target audience during the process. In addition, it has provided me with the perfect opportunity to combine my personal interests in social- and urban design.

on connecting & decision making

One of my personal ambitions was to familiarize myself with the context and connect with stakeholders. Although I faced challenges in reaching out to newcomers directly, I was able to engage with a lot of new people through interviews, site visits, and other research within and beyond the neighborhood. Being a resident of the context myself might have been an advantage, but I have gained a newfound admiration for another side of BoTu while exploring the neighborhood.

Given the broad scope of the project, it did become overwhelming at times. Making decisions, especially during the idea generation phase, was challenging when there were so many paths to choose from. However, I have learned from previous projects that it is better to start exploring a "wrong" direction and adjust in retrospect than to not move forward at all. Despite moments of struggle and feeling as if I was not going forward, I take pride in my determination to keep going and maintain the pace.

on the future

One thing I know is that I thrive in team settings rather than working on individual projects. The breakthrough moments were always when exchanging thoughts on the project with others. I look forward to working in teams again soon!



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Appendix

A. Interview overview

Role	Organisation	Topic
Professional at AZC Oisterwijk	COA	Newcomer trajectory, duration at AZC and contact with municipalities.
Professional of AMV department	COA	Newcomer trajectory, duration at AZC and contact with municipalities.
Youth Client Manager	Municipality of Rotterdam	Around four meetings: on guiding newcomers, the New Act, building blocks of feeling at home, integrating in Rotterdam and setting up a meeting with newcomers.
Professional at Inburgering010	Municipality of Rotterdam	Newcomer trajectory, building blocks of feeling at home, integrating in Rotterdam for different groups.
Client Manager	Municipality of Rotterdam	Guidance of newcomers in Rotterdam, civic integration, guidance to jobs.
Professional social worker	VluchtelingenWerk Nederland	Collaboration with the municipalities, the guidance of VluchtelingenWerk, integration.
Employee, Frans Somers	OpenEmbassy	The work and vision of OpenEmbassy.
Employee & Intern, Soraya & Yaman	OpenEmbassy	Integration and work.
Professional, Loes	WelcomeApp	The work and vision of WelcomeApp.

B. Interview overview anonymous

#	Participant code	Type of Organisation	Scale of Organisation
1	P1A	Formal Organisation	Active nationwide
2	P1B	Formal Organisation	Active nationwide
3	P1C	Formal Organisation	Active nationwide
4	P2	Independent Organisation	Active nationwide
5	P3	Independent Organisation	Active locally
6	P4A	Formal Organisation	Active nationwide
7	P4B	Formal Organisation	Active nationwide
8	P4C	Formal Organisation	Active nationwide
9	P5	Independent Organisation	Active locally
10	P6	Independent Organisation	Active locally
11	P7	Independent Organisation	Active nationwide

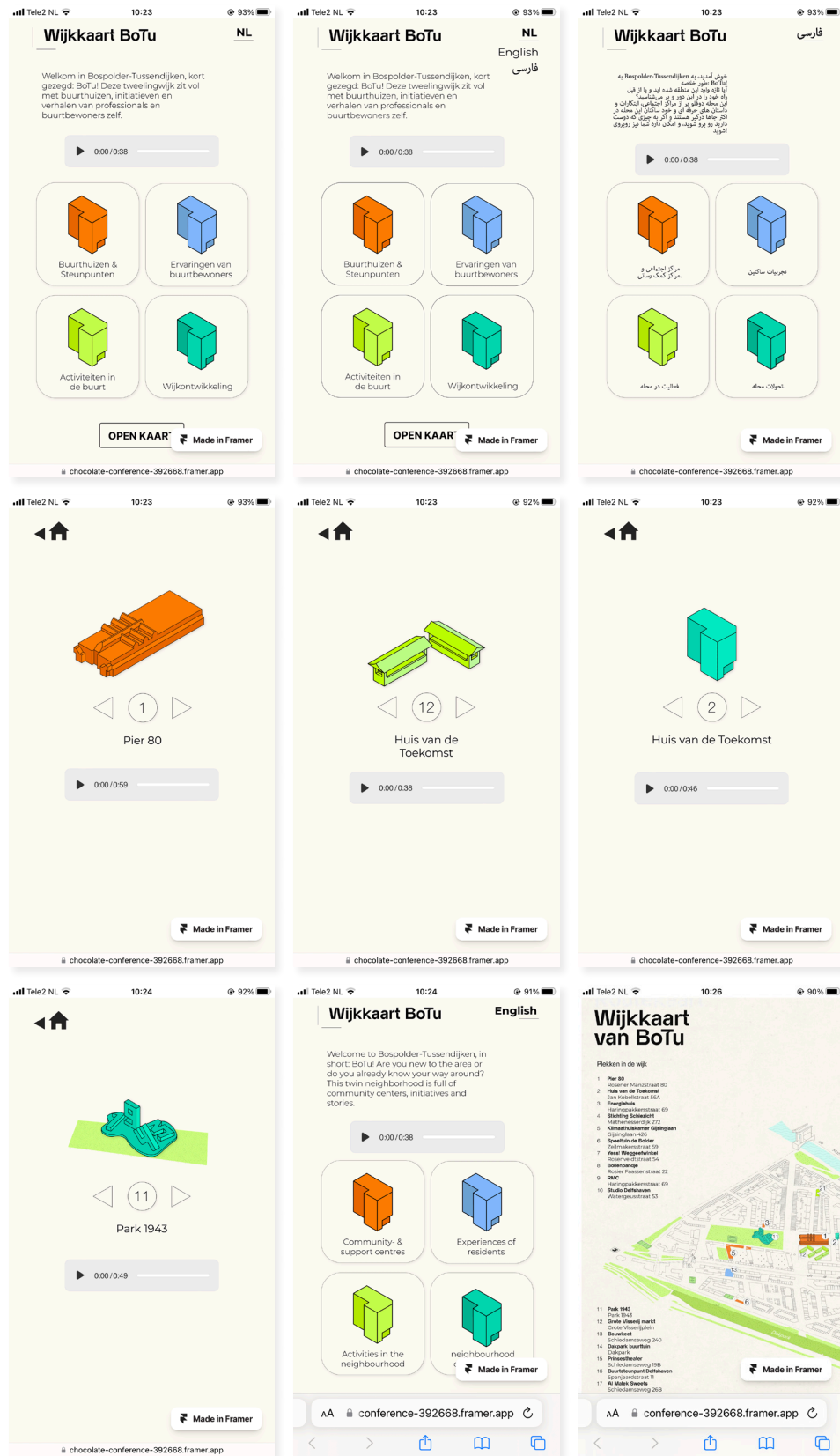
C. Number of newcomer BoTu

Let wel op:

- het gaat om door **IOS** gehuisveste personen (ik weet niet of dat alle "nieuwkomers" zijn waar ze naar op zoek is)
- het gaat om de leeftijd op moment van tellen voor de taakstelling (dus iedereen is nu (een stuk) ouder)
- er is geen enkele garantie dat deze personen daar nog steeds wonen.

	Total	2013/2014	2015/2016	2017-2020	2021/2022
totaal	171	27	66	34	44
18-27	79	17	32	14	16
28 en ouder	92	10	34	20	28

D. App prototype screens



E. Brainstorm questions session



Wijkkaart van BoTu

F. Map front

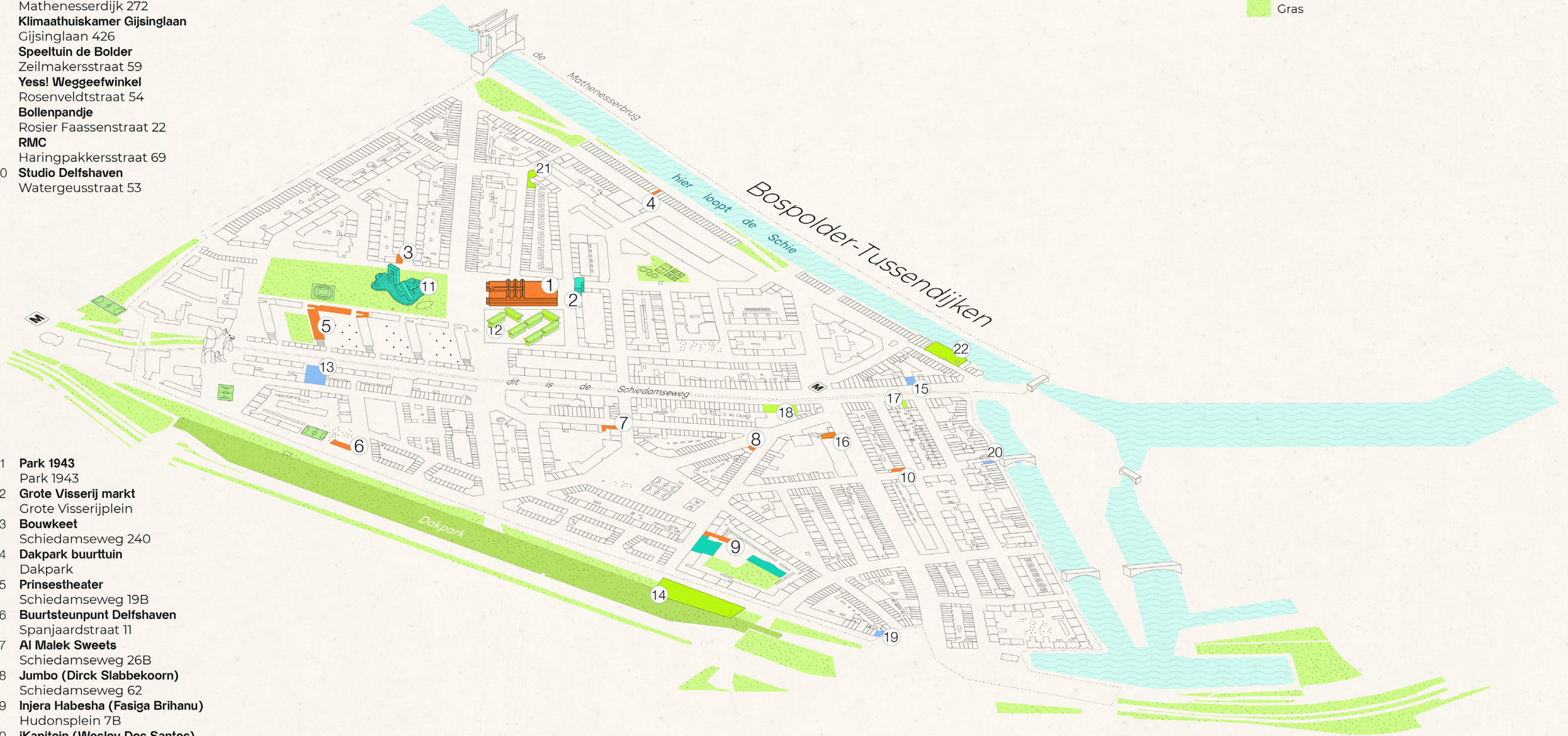
Legenda

- Buurthuizen & steunpunten
- Ervaringen van buurtbewoners
- Activiteiten in de buurt
- Wijkontwikkeling
- Water
- Gras

Plekken in de wijk

- 1 **Pier 80**
Rosener Manzstraat 80
- 2 **Huis van de Toekomst**
Jan Kobellstraat 56A
- 3 **Energiehuis**
Haringpakkersstraat 69
- 4 **Stichting Schiezicht**
Mathenesserdijk 272
- 5 **Klimaatruiskamer Gijsinglaan**
Gijsinglaan 426
- 6 **Speeltuin de Bolder**
Zeilmakersstraat 59
- 7 **Yess! Weggeefwinkel**
Rosenveldtstraat 54
- 8 **Bollenpandje**
Rosier Faassenstraat 22
- 9 **RMC**
Haringpakkersstraat 69
- 10 **Studio Delfshaven**
Watergeusstraat 53

- 11 **Park 1943**
Park 1943
- 12 **Grote Visserij markt**
Grote Visserijplein
- 13 **Bouwkeet**
Schiedamseweg 240
- 14 **Dakpark buurtuin**
Dakpark
- 15 **Prinsesheater**
Schiedamseweg 19B
- 16 **Buurtsteunpunt Delfshaven**
Spanjaardstraat 11
- 17 **Al Malek Sweets**
Schiedamseweg 26B
- 18 **Jumbo (Dirck Slabbekoorn)**
Schiedamseweg 62
- 19 **Injera Habesha (Fasiga Brihanu)**
Hudonsplein 7B
- 20 **iKapitein (Wesley Dos Santos)**
Aelbrechtskolk 53
- 21 **Kinderatelier de kleine vis**
Bruijnstraat 1A
- 22 **Stichting Punt 5 kinderatelier**
Mathenesserdijk 418B



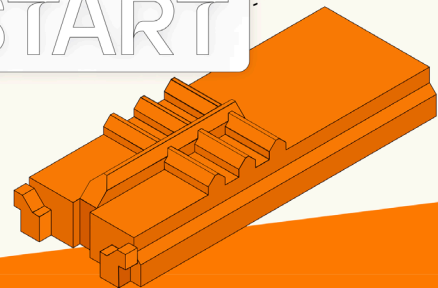
Routekaart van BoTu

nieuw in de buurt of er meer over leren?

Deze routekaart leidt je door de wijk om je mee te nemen langs de buurthuizen, initiatieven en verhalen van professionals en buurtbewoners zelf.

Eerst een introductie? Plaats de start button in de cirkel

START



Benieuwd naar de buurthuizen of ergens ondersteuning bij nodig?

Een goed begin van route is bij de **buurthuizen!** Er zijn een aantal huizen waar je terecht kan voor **vragen**, een kopje **koffie** of een **activiteit**.



pak de objecten met deze kleur en zet ze één voor één op de stip.

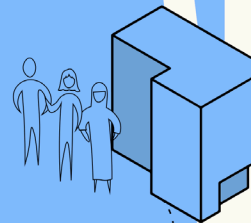
G. Map back

Heb je je eigen huis al gevonden op de kaart?

Dan kun je zien wat er zich afspeelt in jouw omgeving. Bospolder-Tussendijken is namelijk een wijk met veel diversiteit en zo veel verschillende achtergronden. Zo een 70% heeft een niet-Westerse achtergrond en dit brengt verschillende verhalen met zich mee. Wie kom je het verhaal van de burens tegen!

Benieuwd wat andere buurtbewoners zoal doen in de wijk? Laat je inspireren!

Buurtbewoners delen hun **ervaring** van het vinden van hun weg in de wijk. Luister naar het **verhaal** van iemand anders om je te **inspireren**.



pak de objecten met deze kleur en zet ze één voor één op de stip.

Ken jij of ben jij zelf iemand met een verhaal dat je wilt delen? Laat het ons weten in het Huis van de Wijk, Pier 80 en wie weet verschijnt het wel op de kaart.

Op zoek naar nieuwe dingen om te doen of te leren?

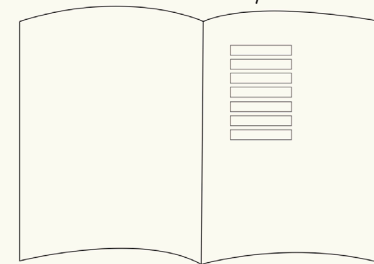
Er zijn allerlei **activiteiten** voor jou te doen in de wijk. Om andere **buurtbewoners** te **leren kennen**, iets **nieuws te leren** of te **ontdekken wat je leuk vindt**.



pak de objecten met deze kleur en zet ze één voor één op de stip.

wil je weten wanneer er activiteiten zijn bij jou in de buurt?

In het verhalenboekje kun je lezen wanneer er activiteiten en je inschrijven om mee te doen. Zo zijn er broodbak-middagen, etentjes en verschillende cursussen om iets nieuws te leren.



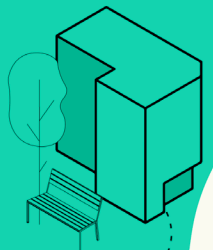
scan voor een online versie van de routekaart.



for English
العربية
فارسی

Weten hoe de wijk zich ontwikkelt en zien of je kunt helpen?

Er zijn allerlei buurtbewoners bezig om de **wijk te verbeteren**. Horen wat er aan **wijkontwikkeling** gebeurt en benieuwd waar je mee kunt **helpen**?



pak de stukken met deze kleur en zet ze één voor één op de stip.

[Veel van de verhalen die je hoort zijn verzameld door Stichting Wijkcollectie, met als doel anderen te inspireren, op ideeën te brengen en mensen samen te brengen. Kijk voor meer op wijkcollectie.nl]

H. Existing initiatives

An analysis of existing initiatives has been done in the search for knowledge, opportunities, limitations within the scope of guiding newcomers to the job market. Several initiatives are looked at to serve as inspiration for possible concept directions.

NewBees

NewBees is an organization that strives for an inclusive country by arranging inclusive integration for municipalities, guiding newcomers towards the job market and advising and guiding companies in the area of Diversity & Inclusivity. Newcomers can be matched to traineeships to gain work experience, practice the Dutch language and build a social network. <https://new-bees.org/>

A partner of NewBees is OpenEmbassy. OpenEmbassy is a successful upcoming organisations

> Partner van >

OpenEmbassy Platform Nieuwkomers & Werk

(Platform Nieuwkomers & Werk is a program of OpenEmbassy and is made possible by the Goldschmeding Foundation. Our research partner is Regioplan)

We make the way for newcomers to the labor market easier

We do this by supporting initiatives that guide newcomers to work with funding, research, community, knowledge and coaching. We use the knowledge we gain in this process to make the labor market more inclusive.

<https://nieuwkomersnwerk.nl/>

<https://nieuwkomersnwerk.nl/initiatieven-instrumenten-skills/>

OpenEmbassy

Is a proactive organisation founded by René Frissen that strives to create a welcoming environment for newcomers in the Netherlands. It aims to facilitate the integration of newcomers into Dutch society in a sensible, fair, and seamless way. They do this firstly by providing information through a help-desk, through practical assistance and through 'action research' (actieonderzoek). Through these means, they work towards changing the system by advocating policies that promote inclusion and equal opportunities for all newcomers. (Open Embassy - Zinnig, Waardig En Vlot Je Weg Vinden in Nederland, 2022)

House of Skills

House of Skills designs skills-oriented programs to solve personnel shortages in tight sectors. If more attention is paid to skills, the chance that you will find and keep a job is much higher. Recruiting based on skills helps employers to find and retain more suitable personnel. <https://www.houseofskillsregioamsterdam.nl/>

Refugee Start Force

A network and recruitment platform for newcomers, locals, organisations and companies in the Netherlands. <https://refugeestartforce.eu/>

De Beroepentuin the Profession Garden

"The shortest route to paid work!"

Place where newcomers can follow a quick-course oriented towards one specific job, to help get them paid work.

<https://deberoepentuin.nl/>

I visited the Beroepentuin and they showed me a tool called 'Woordkaarten' they used to learn the jargon used in mechanical jobs. For example the Dutch words used for a certain tool: 'de vijl'.

MDT op Zuid

'MDT is the abbreviation for social service time. If you participate in MDT, you will discover your talents and at the same time do something for someone else. You also meet new people and you make our society stronger. You can do an MDT alongside your side job, vacation, school or during your gap year, for example. Most MDT programs are for young people between the ages of 12 and 30 and last between 80 hours and 6 months in total. With some MDTs, for example, you are working on it once a week, and with others, for example, four times a week. There are also routes that are shorter.'

<https://www.doemeemetmdt.nl/>

Pangea Coöperaties

"Offering all-in programs for newcomers to establish their company in the Netherlands."

<https://pangeacooperaties.nl/nl/>

Hiretime

'Increase your students' chances of an internship and/or (side) job with video applications. Give students space to show more of their skills, qualities and personality.'

<https://hiretime.nl/>

PROJECTS

De Sociale Steen

OpenEmbassy x ABZ 'The Social Stone: An exploration of the social perspective in housing for newcomers.'

<https://www.openembassy.nl/de-sociale-steen-een-verkenning-naar-het-sociale-perspectief-in-huisvesting-van-nieuwkomers/>

WelcomeApp

Is a platform supported by an application where newcomers can find valuable connections to broaden their network, opportunities and information in the search for a new home. For example, the app shows events that are nearby and it serves as a medium to ask locals questions. At the moment, they are redefining their position to see whether they can take a more fixed role in the trajectory (Professional, WelcomeApp) (Welcome App, 2023)

Buddy2buddy

A platform that connects newcomers to locals.

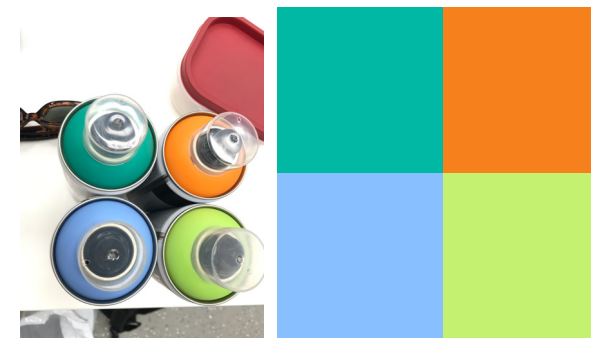
Open Badges

in BOTU A pilot project held in BoTu to test whether 'badges' could be implemented that suffice as a low-threshold 'CV'. Badges would be given for contributions to the neighborhood, for example through voluntary work.

Lobby - Afdeling Buitengewone Zaken

The place that was designed is called the LOBBY – a welcome hall for (ex-)prisoners. It is an intermediate space from inside detention to outside, in which you can meet people. There is also a reception that can refer you to aid agencies and other organizations if necessary. <https://afdelingbuitengewonezaken.nl/cases/lobby-werkverkleinen-het-gat-tussen-detentie-en-de-wijde-wereld/>

I. Colour study



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	84bcfd
	c0ff19

The colours chosen for the categories of objects on the maquette, were based on the image above (Gerard de Boer, 2009) of day a the Grote Visserij market square in BoTu.

Several other explorations that did not make it to the selection, were:

