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**CASE STUDIES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR THE  
PREVENTION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION  
AND XENOPHOBIA AND THE PROMOTION OF  
EQUAL TREATMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

**NETHERLANDS**

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**EUROPEAN FOUNDATION  
for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions**

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AND XENOPHOBIA AND THE PROMOTION OF EQUAL  
TREATMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

**NETHERLANDS**

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## PART A

### BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### *1.0. Background*

This study is part of a project initiated by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC). The project came into being as a result of the Joint Declaration on the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment at the workplace (hereafter “the Joint Declaration”) which was adopted by the Social Dialogue summit in Florence in October 1995. The Joint Declaration makes reference to the danger of racism and xenophobia “... not only to (the stability of) European society, but also to the smooth functioning of the economy. This is a problem which is not limited to the work place but which affects society as a whole and is in everyone’s interest, and the responsibility of all to remedy” (Joint Declaration, 1995, page 2).

The Joint Declaration also states that the social partners had for some time known of a number of cases in which the mutual commitment of the social partners “... have achieved measures leading to the prevention of racism and xenophobia and thereby progress towards successful integration”. The project “Preventing racism at the workplace” in the European Union also suggested that such cases existed. All 15 Member States (plus Norway) took part in this project which was launched by the EFILWC in 1994. Its aim was to review measures directed at combating racism and discrimination at the workplace. A number of obstacles to present and future policy on integration and combating discrimination were identified but it was also found that “... there was evidence in the national reports of positive policies by some private sector employers and local municipalities which did seem to be, for example, breaking down the barriers to the employment of young people of migrant descent. Clearly there is a tremendous variety, both within and between EU countries, in the attitudes and practices of employers and trade unions on this issue” (Wrench, 1996b, page 4).

#### *1.1 Compendium of good practice*

One aspect of the follow-up to the Declaration was a proposal for the “compilation (simultaneously if possible), in conjunction with the Dublin Foundation, of a ‘compendium of good practice’ (in the area of preventing racial discrimination and xenophobia and promoting equal treatment at work) with a view to assessing the impact of the Joint Declaration” (Joint Declaration, 1995, page 2). The objective of that compendium is:

1. to collect examples of such “good practice” in the various Member States;
2. to disseminate the data obtained in order to broaden the exchange of experience amongst EU Member States;
3. to provide guidelines for all those involved (employers, workers, trade unions, employers’ organizations and employment offices) which will assist in efforts to ensure equal treatment and the combating of discrimination in the field of employment;
4. to encourage the idea that the introduction of a policy of equal treatment is in the interests of sound business management;

5. to monitor the impact which implementation of the Joint Declaration produces;
6. to identify starting points for future measures by the social partners.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions is seeking to give shape and substance to the “compendium of good practice” by conducting case studies of companies and organizations which are seen to observe “good practice”.

## ***2.0. “Good practice” at places of work***

The Joint Declaration summarizes measures for combating racial discrimination at work which have yielded good results in companies and organizations. A publicly stated commitment to combating racial discrimination was found to be the prime requirement here. Examples of measures which the Joint Declaration reports include the broadening of recruitment methods, the promotion of training and personal development, ensuring that membership of an ethnic group is not used as a criterion for dismissals and redundancies, and respect for cultural and religious differences. Wrench (1966b, page 5) refers to these measures collectively as “equal opportunities policies” or “anti-discrimination policies”. They may entail the following activities:

- measures to prevent discrimination in recruitment, selection, dismissal and redundancies;
- procedures intended to prevent racial harassment;
- measures which allow for cultural and religious differences;
- monitoring of the number of ethnic minority job applicants and employees;
- positive action measures to encourage job applications from ethnic minorities;
- inflow target figures for ethnic minorities;
- anti-discrimination training.

Not all measures against racism or to promote equal treatment are implemented at individual organization level. In some cases activities are pursued jointly by unions and employers’ organizations at sectoral, regional or national level (Wrench, 1966b, page 6). One example of this is the November 1996 policy document *Met minderheden meer mogelijkheden* (Minorities mean more opportunities), which proposes a joint approach by workers and management under the aegis of the *Stichting van de Arbeid* (Joint Industrial Labour Council) and has led specifically to the initiative “employers are doing more”, a joint initiative by the central employers’ organizations VNO (Federation of Netherlands Industry) and NCW (Netherlands Federation of Christian Employers) and the Anne Frank Foundation).

## ***3.0 Equal opportunities***

There is little consensus among Member States on what an effective equal opportunities policy should include. There is likely to be even less of a consensus about the content of a “policy to prevent racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment in the workplace” (Wrench, 1996b, page 6). For the purposes of this study – and the case studies in the other EU Member States – a “common methodology” is used for guidance. This common



methodology describes a number of examples of the various approaches to the equal opportunities question. These examples enable us to specify our study objective more precisely. The section which follows is a brief summary of the examples detailed in the common methodology (Wrench, 1996b, page 6).

### ***3.1 Starting points for equal opportunities policy***

The various starting points and approaches to the area of equal opportunities may be summarized as follows:

- the “**equal treatment approach**”: equal treatment, irrespective of ethnic origin or colour, leads to equal opportunities;
- the “**level playing field approach**”: removal of obstacles to employment by special measures such as training for "gate-keepers", advertising in minority newspapers, etc.;
- the “**equal opportunities approach**”: by means of measures at organization level, such as the use of target figures and “ethnic monitoring”, it will ultimately be possible to achieve proportional representation of ethnic minorities;
- the “**equal outcome approach**”: by the use of quotas and positive discrimination proportional representation of ethnic minorities can be achieved in the short term; this approach is also the most controversial and is regarded by many as unfair, however.

Every approach to the subject of equal opportunities can follow a number of routes. Wrench and Taylor (1993, pages 16-19) distinguish between the following approaches to equal opportunities and anti-discrimination training:

1. **Training designed to inform:** The premise here is that most people are honest and decent but do not realise the scale on which discrimination takes place and the effects it has. Training is thus needed to inform them about social disadvantage and discrimination so that course participants will be prepared to take measures against it. The underlying idea is that if people are given the right information this will be enough to change their behaviour.
2. **Cultural awareness training:** The most important part of this training is to make people aware of their own, dominant, culture. Critical consideration of one’s own culture will supposedly make people more sympathetic towards other cultures. The premise is that greater awareness and the altering of prejudicial attitudes will lead to less discriminatory behaviour.
3. **Racism awareness training:** The purpose of this is to change attitudes relatively swiftly. The methods used are usually techniques designed to heighten self-awareness within the group. This approach is geared very much towards standard attitudes and has little to do with skills.
4. **Equalities training:** This is designed primarily to change behaviour. The requisite behaviour is defined as precisely as possible in terms of standards, actions and necessary skills.

5. **Anti-racism training:** This type of training seeks above all to bring about changes within the organization and to a lesser extent to heighten individual self-awareness as in racism awareness training. The aim is to make people more assertive and to eradicate racism, which this approach regards as deeply ingrained in our culture and social institutions.
6. **Diversity training:** This approach is part of the remit of “Managing Diversity” (MD) programmes. The aim is to benefit as much as possible from the human talent which exists within an organization. MD is aimed primarily at managers and emphasizes the value of differences. “Fair” treatment thus means not treating people equally but treating them appropriately, on an individual basis. The aim of MD is not that minorities and women should have to adjust to the dominant white, male culture of an organization but that a dominant heterogeneous culture should evolve.

### 3.2 *The national context*

Meaningful comparison of the Member States also requires us to take account of the national context within which a policy of equal opportunities operates. The following aspects are material:

- government response to immigration;
- registration of ethnic origin;
- status as regards right of abode;
- anti-discrimination legislation.

The government response to immigration and ethnic diversity may vary from country to country. Castles (in Wrench, 1996) distinguishes between:

- *Differential exclusion:* immigrants are regarded as guest workers and not given equal rights, as in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Belgium;
- *Assimilation:* immigrants have equal rights; the expectation is that they will be fully assimilated into the population, as is the case in France;
- *Pluralism/Multiculturalism:* immigrants have equal rights, but cultural differences persist, as is the case in Canada, Australia, Sweden and recently the United Kingdom.

The Dutch approach to issues of immigration and ethnic diversity is reviewed in more detail in section 6.5. Registration of ethnic origin is covered in section 6.2. Differences in migrants’ status as regards their right of abode may also be a factor in international comparisons. The working population can be divided into five main categories for legal right of abode (Wrench, 1996a, page 8):

1. Citizens living and working within their own country;
2. Citizens of an EU Member State who work in another country of the Union;
3. Third country nationals who have full rights to residency and work in a Member State;

4. Third country nationals who have leave to stay on the basis of a revocable work permit for a fixed period of time;
5. Undocumented or "illegal" workers.

The problem of discrimination in employment may be allied to the position with regard to a person's right of abode. In the Netherlands, for example, most members of ethnic minorities come into the first category. Discrimination is thus primarily a matter of "informal" discrimination based on ethnic origin – discrimination caused among other things by prejudice and stereotyped attitudes. In other countries, where most members of the various ethnic groups come into the third category, for example, the problem of discrimination in employment is more a question of "formal" discrimination, that is to say discrimination based on right-of-abode status.

Finally, anti-discrimination legislation is also something which can be examined in an international comparison. We do this in more detail in 6.9.

#### ***4.0 Study objective***

The study objective may be summed up as follows:

"To collect examples of 'good practice' in the area of prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment at the workplace, with a view to compiling a compendium of good practice."

The emphasis will be on the equal opportunities policy pursued by organizations and companies, i.e. "practices within organizations which are designed to facilitate equal access of migrant and ethnic minority workers to jobs, training, promotion, etc., and to reduce discrimination, prejudice and xenophobia at the workplace. In this sense the targets of such policies are more likely to be employees from the white or national majority, rather than migrants or ethnic minorities themselves" (Wrench, 1996b, page 6). This study will thus not consider measures explicitly aimed at integration, such as language courses and better services for minorities from social services, for example. With a view to international comparison, we shall concentrate on the national context within which equal opportunities policy operates.

#### ***5.0 Study method***

##### ***5.1 Case selection***

Case studies will be selected from amongst organizations "... with apparently successful policies... already known to the researchers and to members of the Administrative Board; and these might be selected because of their established reputation in equal opportunities provision. Others may need to be found by further investigation" (Wrench, 1996b, page 17).

##### ***5.2 Data collection***

Given the relatively short duration of this study, we were anxious to collect quality data. We shall use documentation on the organization and its policy towards minorities and reports evaluating this policy, and interviews will be conducted with key informants inside and outside

each organization concerned. For each case study we shall consult relevant documents or publications on the policy, which should show when and why the policy was introduced and how it was carried out. Data will also be collected in each case on the organization's size, growth, position in the employment market, etc.

An important part of the study comprises the interviews with key figures inside and outside the organization. Key informants in-house are people within the organization who are closely concerned with developing and implementing policy on minorities, e.g. managers and heads of personnel and operations, but also workers (of both ethnic and Dutch descent) who have personal experience of the policy. Key informants outside might be policy advisors in local government, staff of employment offices and temporary employment agencies and people working for local minority organizations. These people can provide important information about local familiarity with the policy of the organization concerned and about its image, plus other relevant information which creates an accurate picture of the organization's policy.

### ***5.3 Identification and description of relevant ethnic groups***

For each case study information will be collected on the organization's workers of ethnic descent and the corresponding numbers in the region in question. We shall establish the size of the various ethnic groups, the levels of the hierarchy at which they are employed and their legal status.

### ***5.4 Identification and description of policy***

For each case we shall describe the policy being investigated and the precise objectives of that policy.

### ***5.5 Interviews***

The first interviews will be conducted with members of the management team, namely those responsible for carrying out policy on minorities and its day-to-day implementation. The interviews will be structured around a number of parameters named in the Joint Declaration, viz.:

In-house reasons for introducing the policy, e.g.:

- the organization's need for specialist personnel and desire to create a "recruitment pool" from which it can recruit directly;
- the organization's expectation that a proper policy on minorities will enable individual staff capabilities to be exploited to the full and that staff selection will be based on rational criteria;
- the organization – based in a multicultural region - wants to have ethnic staff to serve its ethnic customers;
- the organization wants to improve its image by having ethnic members of staff in senior jobs (“where good industrial relations are seen to be promoted by having senior positions reflect the make-up of the workforce”).

External reasons for introducing the policy, e.g.:

- the government has introduced anti-discrimination legislation and the organization wishes to avoid possible penalties;
- pressure from unions or works councils to introduce a policy on minorities;
- introduction of the policy is prompted by social considerations such as the desire to help reduce crime amongst young people from ethnic minorities.

Policy regarding equal treatment and the combating of discrimination may be based on the following principles:

- no one should suffer discrimination on grounds of race, creed, ethnic origin or colour;
- no one should be disadvantaged by practices involving indirect discrimination;
- staff should be aware of the policy on minorities and no one should lay him- or herself open to charges of (racial) discrimination;
- people who are the victims of discrimination or disadvantage should be encouraged to compete for a career or promotion on the basis of equal merit.

The policy base:

- Are there managerial personnel within the organization who are responsible for monitoring the policy and briefing the rest of the staff on its objectives?
- Were representatives of workers and ethnic groups involved in devising the policy?
- Is there a plan of approach for the policy, including objectives for its evaluation?

The way in which the policy is given shape:

- Does the organization advertise to recruit and select ethnic personnel? Are ethnic personnel explicitly targeted in the advertisements and are these advertisements placed in the minority press? Are ethnic minority members presented in a positive light in advertisements? Does the organization use temporary employment agencies and employment offices which have a multi-ethnic range of people on their books and does it maintain links with schools with a multi-ethnic pupil population?
- Is sufficient focus placed on qualifications and suitability for the job? Are relevant criteria alone used in job descriptions? Are foreign diplomas not excluded right from the start and is there no insistence on a higher level of language ability than the jobs requires? Are the selection tests used as neutral as possible in terms of culture and values?
- Are there training opportunities for ethnic workers which enable them to improve their chances in the employment market?
- Does the policy also include anti-discrimination procedures geared to selectors and managerial staff?

- Are there formal anti-discrimination procedures which enable someone to make a complaint without fear of reprisal? Is discrimination within the organization regarded as punishable behaviour?
- Does the policy also include “ethnic monitoring” whereby the throughput of ethnic workers is recorded and monitored, so that any discrimination (direct or indirect) can be revealed? Does the organization keep target figures and data on ethnic workers, and if so, how are these calculated?
- Does the organization have special facilities such as prayer rooms and can ethnic staff take time off for religious festivals? Did the organization consult minority organizations when shaping its policy?

Duration of the policy on minorities:

The main sticking points for the policy are:

- management resistance to the policy’s introduction or implementation;
- objections to the policy from personnel already in place;
- unrealistic expectations of the policy from ethnic staff;
- encouragement of an inflow of personnel of ethnic origin during an economic recession;
- trade union opposition to changes in working conditions which hamper the throughput of ethnic minority personnel and encourage them to leave;
- trade union opposition to “ethnic monitoring”.

## **5.6 “Objective” indicators of the policy’s effects**

Finally, an estimate will be made in each case of how the policy has influenced behaviour in the organization. In the organization there are a number of indicators of the policy’s effect:

- a change in the way ethnic minority workers are distributed throughout the various levels of the hierarchy;
- an increase in applications from members of ethnic minorities;
- an increase of the number of ethnic minority applicants who are accepted;
- an increase in the numbers of ethnic minority candidates for training or promotion;
- a decrease in complaints of discrimination brought by ethnic minority workers.

A proper verdict on the policy will not be easy to arrive at in practice. This is because the policy will rarely be introduced on its own but nearly always in combination with a number of other organizational changes. An increase in the numbers of ethnic minority workers in a given organization may also be attributable to changes in the labour market which have nothing to do with the organization’s policy as such. Because this study was so short-term, however, it is not possible to assess changes over a longer period of time.

### ***5.7 The Joint Declaration and other guidelines***

The last subject covered in the interviews is the Joint Declaration on the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment at the workplace itself. We shall investigate how far people are familiar with the Joint Declaration and what they think about it. We shall also check how much awareness there is in e.g. temporary employment agencies and trade unions of guidelines and codes of anti-discriminatory behaviour.

## PART B

### THE DUTCH CONTEXT: ETHNIC MINORITIES, THEIR POSITION IN THE LABOUR MARKET AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

#### 6.1 Migration

Throughout the centuries the Netherlands has taken in many political refugees such as Huguenots from France and Jews from Eastern Europe and Portugal, earning itself the reputation of a country which welcomes foreigners<sup>1</sup>. After World War II there were several waves of immigration. Between 1945 and 1948 (just before and after Indonesian independence) and a few years later too, between 1952 and 1958, when the political climate in Indonesia became seriously anti-Dutch, Dutch nationals from the East Indies arrived in the Netherlands in four waves. They totalled some 300 000 people. Most of them were coloured people of East Indian race. By and large they were well educated, from the middle and upper classes, and assimilated into Dutch society<sup>2</sup> quite quickly. The same was not true, however, of a group of 12 500 people of South Moluccan origin, mainly ex-soldiers of the Royal Dutch East Indian Army. Partly on the basis of promises by the Dutch Government which were never honoured, they regarded their presence in the Netherlands as temporary.

Rapid economic growth in the sixties led to structural deficits in the labour market. The working population rose by 600 000 in the period 1960-1970. To make up for the shortage of labour poorly educated workers – “guest workers” were recruited in the “recruitment countries” (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey and Morocco). In 1973 they numbered 100 000 out of a total population of 13.5 million. During the same period migrants arrived from the former colonies of Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles. Factors in this migration included not just work, but political reasons too and the desire for education (Tesser, 1993).

Recruitment from the Mediterranean countries came to an abrupt halt after the 1973 oil crisis and the economic recession which followed. Even so, the number of people of Mediterranean origin continued to grow as a result of family reunification. Immigration from Surinam also increased up to independence in 1975.

#### 6.2 Identification of ethnic origin

It is not all that easy to give a clear picture of the various ethnic groups in the Netherlands, partly because of the variety of terms and definitions employed over the years. Thus, the Dutch term “allochtonen” (people of ethnic origin) was defined in the report entitled *Allochtonenbeleid* (Policy on people of ethnic origin) (Advisory Council on Government

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<sup>1</sup> Whether the Netherlands can fairly claim this reputation is doubtful. In the twenties a number of raids were mounted, with Chinese in particular being ruthlessly deported to Hong Kong. The unjust treatment meted out to the Moluccans also detracts from the reputation of hospitality and tolerance (Schumacher, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> Penninx et al. Comment that although assimilation was always regarded as successful, "only later did it emerge that people often felt they had not come to terms with their past and had feelings of suppressed frustration" (Penninx et al., 1996, p. 2/1050-5).



Policy, 1989) as “aliens in the legal sense, former aliens who have become Dutch by naturalization, Dutch nationals from the (former) overseas territories, together with their descendants up to the third generation provided they wish to regard themselves as people of ethnic origin”. The CBS (*Statistics Netherlands*) sometimes uses a narrower definition of “people of ethnic origin”, for example in its surveys of the working population, deeming them to be people “who do not have Dutch nationality and people who do have Dutch nationality but were not born in the Netherlands” (CBS, 1997, page 24). Other CBS publications, such as the *Statistisch zakboek* (Statistical Vademecum), do not use the term “people of ethnic origin” in relation to population data, referring only to nationality, country of birth or father’s or mother’s country of birth.

**Table 1: Population by ethnic group in the Netherlands, 1992 and 1996**

Origin	abs x 1000	% of total population	abs x 1000	% of total population	4 biggest cities x 1000
	1992	1992	1996 <sup>1</sup>	1996	1996
Surinam	263	1.74	289	1.86	163
Turkey	241	1.59	264	1.70	99
Morocco	196	1.29	225	1.45	108
Neth.Antilles /Aruba	91	0.60	97	0.63	60
Italy <sup>2</sup>	33	0.22			
Spain <sup>2</sup>	29	0.19			
Former Yugoslavia <sup>2</sup>	27	0.18			
Cape Verde Islands <sup>2</sup>	14	0.09			
Portugal <sup>2</sup>	13	0.08			
Greece <sup>2</sup>	10	0.07			
Tunisia <sup>2</sup>	6	0.04			
Moluccans (estimate) <sup>3</sup>	35	0.23			
Mobile home dwellers (estimate) <sup>3</sup>	30	0.20			
Gypsies (estimate) <sup>3</sup>	4	0.02			
Refugees (estimate) <sup>3</sup>	44	0.29			
<b>Total minorities</b>	<b>1 034</b>	<b>6.83</b>			
<b>Total population</b>	<b>15 129</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>15 491</b>		

1. Estimate

2. 1996: no reliable data

3. Source: Martens, E.P.; Roijen, J.J. M. & Veenman, J. (1994). *Minderheden in Nederland*. Statistisch Vademecum (Minorities in the Netherlands. Statistical Vademecum) 1993/1994. The Hague: CBS, ISO/ERR, 1994.

Source: Smeten, H.M.A.G.; Martens, E.P. & Veenman, J. (1997). *Jaarboek Minderheden 1997* (Minorities Yearbook 1997).

Houten/Zaventem: Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum.

According to the Netherlands Interuniversity Demographic Institute (NIDI), it is above all the parameter “immigrated at some time” (for the first generation) and the parameter “parents once immigrated” (for the second generation) which distinguishes people of ethnic origin from people of non-immigrant origin (Van Imhoff et al., 1994, page 5). In addition to “people of ethnic origin” the authorities frequently use the term “ethnic minorities”. The term “ethnic minorities” is used to designate groups of ethnic origin who are disadvantaged. The category of ethnic minorities is to be understood as a policy category: “... the groups targeted by policy on minorities are a socially disadvantaged group and as such are ethnically and culturally different from Dutch society” (Penninx et al., 1996, page 2/1050-28). Because this was a

category for which specific policies existed, as policy on these target groups changed over the years the criteria by which those target groups were defined also changed. Thus it was still possible in the eighties to identify people on the basis of nationality alone. With the advent of the second and third generation of people of ethnic origin born in the Netherlands – most of them with Dutch nationality – the country of birth of one parent or both parents also came to be used as a criterion.

As changes occurred in target group policy, new target groups were added to the scope of its remit and others were removed. The 1983 Policy Document on Minorities named people from the following countries as target groups: Surinam, the Antilles, Morocco, Turkey, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece, together with South Moluccans, refugees, mobile home dwellers and gypsies (Policy Document on Minorities, 1983). With the entry into force of the Fair Employment of Ethnic Minorities Act (WBEAA, see also 6.5) in July 1994 the number of target groups was reduced. People from the Mediterranean countries, except for those from former Yugoslavia, were no longer covered by the policy on target groups, whilst people of Vietnamese, Somali, Ethiopian, Iranian and Iraqi origin were added. The classification criterion was the country of birth of the person himself or herself or his or her parents; nationality and the person's own perceptions were irrelevant. In July 1996 all people from South and Central America, Africa and Asia (except for people and their children born in Japan and the former Netherlands East Indies) were included in the target groups; South Moluccans were subsequently included too. Because of these changes in the target groups it is not easy to compare ethnic minority numbers in different years.

Table 1 seeks, on the basis of a variety of data sources, to give a breakdown of the population by ethnic origin which is as reliable and complete as possible. The four largest minority groups are people of Surinamese, Turkish, Moroccan and Antillean origin. All together they make up 5.2% of the total population and 76% of all ethnic minorities. A large proportion of the Surinamers, Moroccans and Antilleans in particular live in one or other of the four major cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht).

### ***6.3 Position of ethnic minorities in the labour market***

The disadvantaged social and economic position of minorities in the Netherlands is visible in a variety of areas. One area in which it is most apparent is the labour market.

Table 2 shows that unemployment amongst the target groups of ethnic origin was almost four times higher in 1996 than amongst the working population of non-immigrant origin. Unemployment amongst Surinamers of working age was slightly higher in 1996 than in the previous year, whilst unemployment amongst the Antillean working population was unchanged from 1995. *Long-term* unemployment also seems to have increased markedly amongst the target groups of ethnic origin, from 58% (1990) to 66% (1995), whilst amongst the non-immigrant working population it decreased over the same period from 55% to 50% (*Minderhedenbeleid* ((Policy on Minorities)) 1997, 1996).

**Table 2: Registered unemployment (population of working age unemployed as % of total population of working age), by nationality and country of birth 1988-1995**

	1988	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Non-immigrant origin	7	5	4	4	5	6	6	5
<b>Total ethnic origin</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>of which:</i>								
Surinamers	26	18	15	16	16	18	15	16
Antilleans	38	22	20	19	23	30	28	28
Moroccans	31	35	31	30	36	31	27	25
Turks	36	34	33	26	32	36	41	36
Other Mediterranean countries <sup>3</sup>	36	34	33	26	32	36	41	36
Other ethnic origin	19	17	16	19	22	21	28	25

Source: CBS, 1997

Members of minority groups who are in work are also disadvantaged compared with workers of non-immigrant origin. The distribution of workers from the various ethnic groups over levels of the hierarchy is heavily skewed. On average, minorities hold less senior jobs and their employment is often less secure than that of workers of non-immigrant origin with an equivalent level of education. Thus it is relatively more common for minorities to be employed on short-term contracts (Veen and Riemersma, 1990). Turkish and Moroccan workers in particular do simple – and largely arduous – work which requires no or virtually no education (Tesser, 1993). A study by Ankersmit et al. (1989) shows that 50% of Turkish workers with a level of education between MBO and VWO do simple jobs, against 7% of similarly qualified non-immigrant workers.

Despite this there have been some positive developments. Compared with 1995 unemployment amongst Moroccans and Turks of working age appears to have fallen. Moroccan unemployment has been steadily declining since 1993. It has also fallen amongst workers from the Mediterranean countries and in the category “other ethnic origin”. On the other hand, unemployment in the working population of both Turkish and other Mediterranean origin was the same in 1996 as it had been in 1988.

<sup>3</sup> Portugal, Spain, Italy, former Yugoslavia, Greece, Tunisia and Algeria.

**Table 3: Net employment (population of working age as % of total population), by nationality and country of birth 1988-1996**

	1988	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Non-immigrant origin	59	60	61	62	62	63	64	64
<b>Total ethnic origin</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>
<i>of which:</i>								
Surinamers	35	41	42	46	47	48	51	53
Antilleans	38	44	47	46	47	44	46	50
Moroccans	25	25	26	24	19	28	28	29
Turks	33	34	31	31	31	29	30	33
Other Mediterranean countries <sup>4</sup>	52	52	53	52	52	45	46	44
Other ethnic origin	41	44	43	44	40	39	37	41

Source: CBS, 1997

During the period 1990-1995 the growth in employment – i.e. the increase in the number of people in work – was four to six times higher amongst the Surinamese and Antillean working population than it was in the working population of non-immigrant origin (Policy on Minorities 1997, 1996). However, because the pool of labour represented by these groups grew sharply – between 1988 and 1996 the group of people of ethnic origin as a whole increased by 150 000, or 32% (Table 4) – unemployment remained high.

**Table 4: Population of working age (x 1000), by nationality and country of birth 1988- 1996**

	1988	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Non-immigrant origin	5 397	5 563	5 670	5 761	5 826	5 859	5 986	6 061
<b>Total ethnic origin</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>620</b>
<i>of which:</i>								
Surinamers	77	87	98	92	108	117	117	116
Antilleans	15	18	20	22	26	24	26	27
Moroccans	30	33	33	38	37	46	47	45
Turks	48	62	62	69	68	72	62	66
Other Mediterranean countries <sup>5</sup>	44	38	46	42	43	45	52	46

Source: CBS, 1997

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 3.

## 6.4 Reasons for their disadvantaged position in the labour market

Tesser (1993) gives four reasons to explain why ethnic minorities are disadvantaged in the labour market:

- lack of qualifications
- trends in the economy in general
- the workings of the labour market
- disadvantage, or discrimination.

*Lack of qualifications* in the form of too low a level of education and an insufficient knowledge of Dutch are usually the factors which are mentioned first (see, for example, the Policy on Minorities 1997, 1996). When it comes to education, the working population of ethnic origin is on average less well qualified. Table 5 shows that 46% has a lower educational level (primary school, LBO or MAVO); the equivalent percentage for workers of non-immigrant origin is 31%. Particularly striking is the percentage of the Turkish and Moroccan working population with a lower level of education. Moreover, pupils from these minority groups are over-represented among those who have only a few years of secondary education (left school early) while those at school are under-represented in the higher levels of secondary education (see Roelandt et al., 1992; Roelandt et al., 1993).

**Table 5: Percentage educational level of the working-age population by ethnic origin (nationality and country of birth)**

	BO	MAVO	LBO	HAVO/ VWO	MBO	HBO/ WO	
Non-immigrant origin	8	7	16	5	39	24	100
<b>Ethnic origin</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>of which:</i>							
Turks	50	7	22	-	10	-	100
Moroccans	62	-	16	-	-	-	100
Surinamers	19	14	19	5	27	12	100
Antilleans/Arubans	-	-	-	-	35	19	100
Other ethnic origin	12	8	13	9	26	31	100

(-) = sufficiently accurate data not available.

Source: CBS, 1993

There are necessary caveats to suggesting education as a reason for disadvantage in the labour market, however. Firstly, Table 5 shows that there is virtually no difference – 22% as against 24% - in the percentage of the working population of ethnic and non-immigrant origin who

have a higher level of education (HBO/WBO). Secondly, the correlation between lack of qualifications - e.g. too low an educational level - and people's status in the labour market is not as straightforward as one might expect. Kloek (1992) and Niesing and Veenman (1990) state that the low educational level of minorities only partly explains their high level of unemployment. According to Niesing and Veenman, if the educational level of minorities were taken as the basis for predicting unemployment, the expected level ought to be significantly lower than it is in reality. One hopeful development in regard to education is that in the period 1987-1994 four fifths of the people of ethnic origin coming into the labour market for the first time had completed their education to senior secondary or higher level. There are indications, however, that the educational level of the working population of non-immigrant origin is rising still faster, so that the gap between the two groups may widen even further (Social and Cultural Planning Office, 1996). Other skills deficits, such as an insufficient command of Dutch, are reflected in the 1988 survey by ISEO (Institute for Sociological and Economic Research) on the social position and consumption patterns of ethnic minorities. Of the respondents, only 15% of Turks and 12% of Moroccans claimed to have no problems with Dutch (Niesing, 1993). Vriend and Den Uyl (1988) found similar results.

One of the significant *economic trends* is the gradual disappearance of unskilled manual labour in industry for which the original "guest workers" were recruited. This means a high probability of unemployment among job seekers, and thus minorities, who have little or no education. Another economic trend here is towards a surplus of labour which causes poorly educated workers to be squeezed out by the better educated. This phenomenon is becoming serious in the category of "basic occupations". In 1995 there were 40 000 new jobs in this category, but more than 50% of these were filled by people educated to HAVO/VWO level, even though the required level of education was no more than primary education and the requisite training period was only a month (Policy on Minorities 1997, 1996).

As regards the *workings of the labour market*, one problem is that the job-seeking channels used by the ethnic minorities do not always link up with the most popular recruitment channels (Hooghiemstra et al., 1990), while intermediaries such as the Regional Employment Offices (RBAs), the former labour exchanges, do not seem to work well. Abell (1993) concludes from a literature study that "... the labour exchange is not a popular avenue of recruitment and does not work well, whilst for job seekers of ethnic origin this is the most important avenue in their search for work."

Lastly, disadvantage or *discrimination* takes a variety of forms. In their study referred to previously, Niesing and Veenman (1990) sought to explain the differences in unemployment rates between people of non-immigrant origin and those of ethnic origin in terms of differences in education, occupational status, age, sex and regional unemployment. They found that the differences could only partly be explained by these five factors. In the case of the Antillean population group, for example, only 10% of the difference was attributable to these five factors. The conclusion was that "... the unexplained remainder... is so high that this may be seen as indicative of discrimination" (Niesing and Veenman, 1990). A study by Bovenkerk (1978) demonstrates convincingly that discrimination may be a major factor. A recent replication of that study clearly demonstrated that, twenty years on, discrimination has increased (Gras et al. 1996). Studies by Den Uyl et al., 1986) and Meloen (1991) and other authors also point to discrimination.

## 6.5 *Migration, ethnic diversity and government policy*

In 3.2 we mentioned exclusion, assimilation and pluralism/multiculturalism as the three possible starting points for government policy on migration and ethnic diversity. In the Netherlands it is the last two on which government policy has focused.

The first category for which a specific policy was devised was the people repatriated to the Netherlands from the former Netherlands East Indies. The government assumed that they would stay permanently and a policy of assimilation was pursued. Policy towards the South Moluccans (then still known as the Ambonese) was fundamentally different. The policy explicitly assumed that this group would be going back, and it was designed to safeguard the group's separate identity (Abell et al., 1985).

The South Moluccans were housed in 50 residential centres, including a number of work camps for the unemployed (Schumacher, 1981). To some degree, the government was thus pursuing a policy of pluralism.

Up to the end of the seventies Dutch governments emphatically did *not* regard the Netherlands as a country of immigration, despite the fact that immigration – except in 1967 – was always higher than emigration. The Netherlands had only “temporarily resident migrants” like the “guest workers”. The term “immigrant” was avoided as far as possible (Penninx et al., 1996). Immigrants were seen as temporary residents and “... it was thought necessary that these migrants should to some extent be integrated into society and play a part in it for as long as they remained in the Netherlands.” However, integration “whilst retaining their own identity”, as the long-term catch-phrase went, was not seen in terms of them remaining for a long time or possibly for ever, but was based on the assumption that they would be going back” (Penninx et al., 1996, page 2/1050-26). In view of this, instruction in their own language and culture and measures geared to their return (e.g. the repatriation grant) were a logical consequence. Policy was confined to “slotting them into and guiding them through the social welfare system and taking measures where problems occurred” (Penninx et al., 1996, page 2/1050-26).

The report entitled “Ethnic Minorities” (Advisory Council on Government Policy, 1979) marked the first stage in a re-thinking of government policy. For the first time it was assumed that ethnic minorities would be staying for good. The Ministry of the Interior was also appointed to co-ordinate policy on minorities in 1979. By implication, minorities were no longer regarded as an isolated issue in, for example, welfare or housing, but as a central matter for government as a whole. Because the Ministry of the Interior was responsible for local government, it was also possible to influence policy on minorities at a lower level (Abell et al., 1985). Policy on minorities was given form and substance in 1983 in the Policy Document on Minorities. The main objective was “to achieve a society in which members of minorities resident in the Netherlands have an equal place and every opportunity to develop their potential both individually and as a group” (Policy Document on Minorities, 1983, page 10). The principle of fair employment was also introduced. The focus of policy on minorities was to make general policy work better for minorities. In addition, specific policy was devised for minorities in areas where general policy was manifestly inadequate. The policy applied in principle to all ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands - i.e. socially and economically disadvantaged ethnic groups - and was designed to enable them to take part in all areas of



society. To this extent an effort was made towards integration. The main objective comprised three targets:

- To create conditions in which minority groups could become an equal part of and participate fully in society. It was also important to influence society around them in such a way that minorities would at all times be given room to develop their potential;
- To reduce the social and economic disadvantages suffered by minority groups, focusing on work, education and housing, as well as welfare and health care;
- To prevent discrimination and, where discrimination did occur, to fight it and – where necessary – improve the legal position.

These objectives – and especially the first one – show that policy was geared to a situation of pluralism/multiculturalism. Compared to its neighbours the Netherlands had a policy which was progressive for its time. Government policy on minorities may be described as a policy aimed at countering disadvantage, though its policy on immigration as such was restrictive. In 1987 the Advisory Council on Government Policy was asked for a new report on policy on minorities. The Council advised that employment and education should remain the main focuses of policy, but also that priority should be given to adult education and improving the legal position (Advisory Council on Government Policy, 1989). A 1994 policy document (the *Contourennota*) reviewed a decade or so of policy on minorities. Among other things it described improvements to the legal situation, for example:

- foreigners in principle have an inviolable right of abode after 5 years;
- the lack of an adequate income is no reason to revoke a residence permit (in contrast to the practice in Austria, for example);
- it is explicitly permissible to have more than one nationality;
- foreign nationals are allowed to work as civil servants: with a few exceptions Dutch nationality is no longer required for government jobs;
- foreigners who have been legally resident in the Netherlands for longer than five years are eligible to vote in and stand as candidates in local elections.

A central concern of policy was continuity. Immigration policy per se remained restrictive. A more effective policy was sought which would offer equality of opportunity to the citizen, a policy which would look more closely than hitherto at people's qualities, including those of ethnic group members, and a policy which would encourage social integration. The terms "*assimilation*" and "*newcomers*" were introduced: as a result of immigration the government believed that many newcomers needed to be "assimilated". The latest policy document on minorities (Policy on Minorities 1997, 1996) shows that attention remains focused on employment and education. The quantitative reduction of immigration is also a continuing goal. Policy to assimilate newcomers will be continued, as part of the ideal of "citizenship". Integration and participation in society and people's willingness to integrate and participate are the principal preconditions of citizenship (Policy on Minorities 1997, 1996, page 6). Fresh impetus must be given to revitalizing the larger towns and cities. This must seek to make maximum use of the economic, social and cultural potential which exists in the cities: ethnic minorities make up a sizeable proportion of that potential. High priority continues to be given to measures to combat discrimination.

## **6.6 Concrete policy on employment**

This study is concerned primarily to collect examples of good practice in the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment *at the workplace*. This section - taken in part from an earlier study for the ILO (Abell et al., 1997) will thus touch briefly on policy on employment.

### **General policy**

The essence of policy on minorities was and remains general policy and making it work better for minorities (Policy Document on Minorities 1983, Policy Document on Minorities 1997, 1996). A variety of general measures have been taken over the years to tackle unemployment in general. The most important ones are: direct mediation by the Employment Offices, the payment of a one-off subsidy to employers and temporary exemption from social security contributions, work experience placements, a range of training measures, special temporary employment agencies (START) and career change interviews designed to restore contacts with the long-term unemployed. However, these general measures were found to be less effective for the ethnic minorities. Wolff and Penninx conclude here that “in virtually all areas the machinery for providing labour is manifestly inadequate when it comes to providing or making possible a proportionate mediation effort on behalf of minorities” (Wolff and Penninx, 1993, page 84). By way of illustration: in 1989 5.5% of people of non-immigrant origin who were registered with the Employment Offices as looking for work found a job, compared with 1.5% of job seekers of ethnic origin (Roelandt and Veenman, 1990). More recent measures include “Merkert” jobs with which the government is attempting to cut unemployment. The essence of the measure is to create 40 000 jobs for the long-term unemployed; the wage must not be higher than 120% of the minimum wage. Whilst the government expects many people of ethnic origin to find work in this way, Smeets et al. (1995) regard this as somewhat over-optimistic in the light of earlier experience. Other measures include the very recent Salaries Tax and Social Security Contributions (Reduced Remittances) Act – which allows exemptions from the statutory minimum wage – and the amended Youth Employment Guarantee Act.

### **Specific policy**

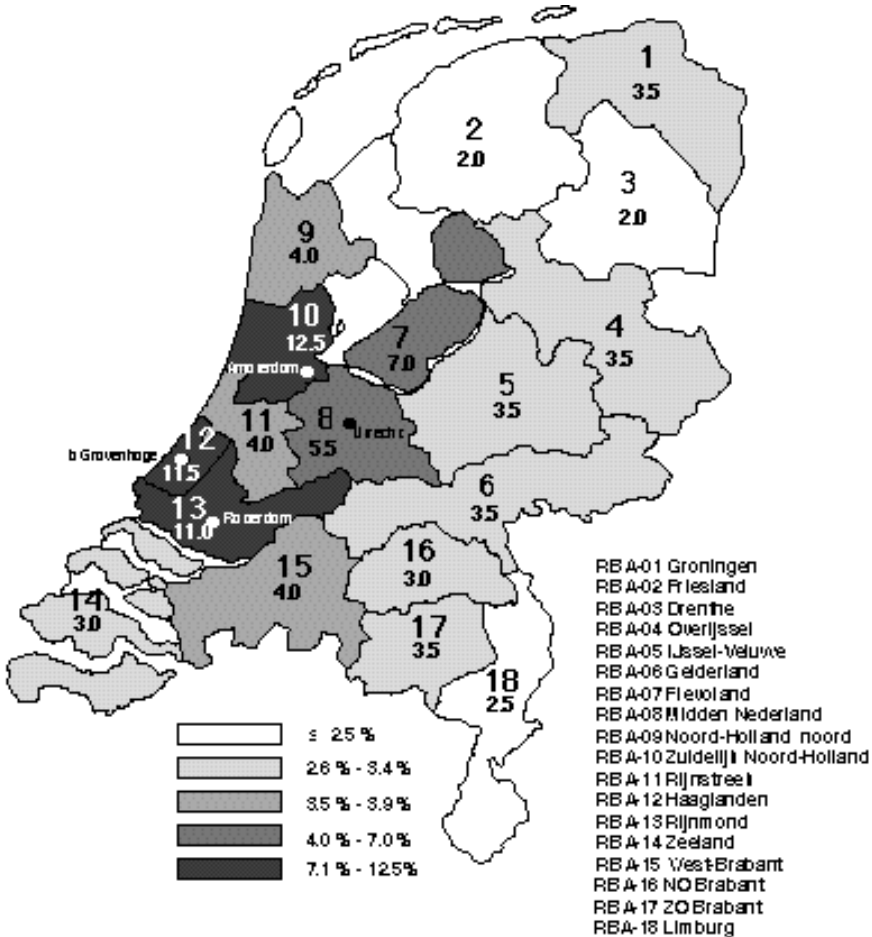
In areas where general policy is manifestly inadequate, a large number of measures specifically aimed at minorities have been developed, such as programmes to aid the assimilation of newcomers. These programmes are intended to equip newcomers with the basic skills they need to make their own way in Dutch society and they include a Dutch language course, social and occupational counselling courses and help in finding work or gaining access to further training. The Regional Employment Offices (RBAs) also offer help under these programmes.

In addition to the government role, the Stichting van de Arbeid (Joint Industrial Labour Council) an umbrella organization of the social partners also played an active part in developing specific measures for minorities. In 1990 the Council concluded an agreement entitled Meer werk voor minderheden 1990 - 1996 (More work for minorities 1990 - 1996), the objective of which was to achieve proportional representation of ethnic minorities in the labour market within a four- to five-year period. The aim was thus to create 60 000 extra jobs for minorities within that period. Another proposal was that firms with more than ten employees should operate a policy of anti-discrimination and promote training for ethnic minorities. Fifty company advisers were also appointed to inform and assist employers in the

recruitment of ethnic minorities. The achievements of the agreement were disappointing. An evaluation of the first period already showed that the proportion of minorities on the payroll of the companies studied had changed very little (Labour Foundation, 1993).

A later evaluation found no improvement in the relative position of ethnic minorities in the labour market (Labour Foundation, 1966). The selfsame evaluation states “that there are no statistical data which might provide reliable indications concerning the precise position of the various minority groups in the labour market. Thus it is not possible to say how many of the 60 000 jobs (mentioned in a footnote to the Foundation Agreement) have in fact been created” (Labour Foundation, 1996). The verdict on the Foundation Agreement is as follows: “...the inescapable conclusion is that the Agreement is failing to have enough of an impact at the most crucial level of policy, the micro level” (Labour Foundation, 1996).

**Figure 1: WBEAA proportionality rates 1996 by Regional Employment Office (RBA) area**



Source: Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment 1996, Proportionality rates 1996

In 1994 the “Fair Employment of Ethnic Minorities Act (WBEAA) came into force. This Act was based on the Canadian Equal Employment Act. Its target groups were people of Surinamese, Antillean, Aruban, Moroccan, Turkish, Yugoslavian, Vietnamese, Somali, Ethiopian, Iranian and Iraqi origin. In July 1996 people from South and Central America, Africa and Asia (except those born in Japan and the former Netherlands East Indies and their children) were added to the target groups and subsequently so were the South Moluccans (again). The objective of the WBEAA was to improve the position of minorities in the labour market. Employers with more than 35 employees - including government departments – were urged to employ a proportion of minorities equal to the proportion of minorities in the working population of their region. For the area of each Regional Employment Office (RBA) a proportionality rate was stipulated, broken down by hierarchical levels, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 7. As Figure 1 shows, the proportionality rate is highest for firms in the conurbations in the west of the Netherlands; Table 6 shows that proportionality rates are highest in the lower-status jobs. In order to achieve this proportionality, employers were required to draw up a work programme setting out the objectives to be achieved. One requirement of the Act was that separate personnel records had to be kept; there was also an obligation to monitor and report annually on the level of the target groups’ representation on the payroll. Infringement of the WBEAA was made an offence under commercial law punishable by a fine not exceeding NLG 25 000.

**Table 6: WBEAA proportionality rates 1996, by Regional Employment Office (RBA) area and level of education**

	No education or primary only	MAVO/ HAVO/ IBO	VWO/ MBO	HBO/ WO	Total
RBA-01 Groningen	19.0	5.5	1.5	1.5	3.5
RBA-02 Friesland	12.5	2.5	0.5	1.0	2.0
RBA-03 Drenthe	9.5	2.0	0.5	0.5	2.0
RBA-04 Overijssel	21.5	4.5	1.0	1.0	3.5
RBA-05 IJssel-Veluwe	22.0	3.5	1.0	1.0	3.5
RBA-06 Gelderland	21.0	4.5	1.5	1.0	3.5
RBA-07 Flevoland	30.0	9.5	3.0	4.0	7.0
RBA-08 Netherlands (central)	38.0	8.0	2.5	1.5	5.5
RBA-09 North Holland (north)	25.5	5.5	1.5	2.0	4.0
RBA-10 North Holland (south)	59.5	18.5	6.0	3.5	12.5
RBA-11 Rijnstreek	26.0	5.0	1.5	1.0	4.0
RBA-12 Haaglanden	63.0	17.5	5.5	4.0	11.5
RBA-13 Rijnmond	44.0	15.0	5.0	4.5	11.0
RBA-14 Zeeland	16.5	3.0	1.0	1.5	3.0
RBA-15 West-Brabant	22.5	5.0	1.5	1.5	4.0
RBA-16 NE Brabant	21.0	3.5	1.0	1.0	3.0
RBA-17 SE Brabant	23.5	5.0	1.5	1.0	3.5
RBA-18 Limburg	13.5	2.5	1.0	1.0	2.5
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment 1996, Proportionality rates 1996

A first evaluation of the WBEAA revealed that only a very small proportion of employers – 14% - had complied with all the directives of the Act. A small majority – 57% - had indeed switched to separate registering of their staff. The conclusion was that the WBEAA amounted to little more than a few administrative procedures and that no real action had been taken (Berkhout et al., 1996). This evaluation study and the recommendations of the social partners within the Labour Council prompted the government late in 1996 to amend certain aspects of the Act and reduce the amount of administrative work it necessitated. The original main points did remain, for example the scope of the Act (firms with more than 35 employees), separate registration and the compilation of work programmes. Infringement of the Act is no longer a criminal offence and compliance with it is overseen by the *Arbeidsinspectie* (Labour Inspectorate). The social partners regarded amendment of the WBEAA – since renamed the Promotion of Employment for Minorities Act (SAMEN) – as an endorsement of the Council's new agreement *Met minderheden meer mogelijkheden* (Minorities mean more opportunities). Although this agreement does not name specific targets, it does explicitly seek to improve the position of ethnic minorities in the labour market. This aim is to be achieved by means of an appropriate sectoral infrastructure. As regards the inflow of ethnic minorities it is recommended that the parties to the collective labour agreement for each sector should agree a commitment on what needs to be done. The agreement also emphasizes the role of works councils in education and training policy and in combating racial discrimination in general and as it affects access to employment. The Joint Declaration is the guiding framework here. One measure prompted by the new agreement is the “Employers are doing more” initiative launched by the VNO (Federation of Netherlands Industry) and NCW (Netherlands Federation of Christian Employers) and the Anne Frank Foundation. This seeks to encourage employers to improve the position of ethnic minorities in the labour market and promote multicultural management. Experience of earlier successful projects will be drawn on here. It is hoped that the pooling of this experience under the project will encourage employers to engage actively in the area of intercultural management. A review of these projects is currently under way. A number of well known projects are the “Working Together” project, an initiative by a number of large firms, the “Pim” Foundation, which is designed to place applicant from disadvantaged groups, including those of ethnic origin, in permanent jobs following trial periods of temporary work, and the TOPAZ project (Temporary Initiative of Assistance to Persons of Immigrant Origin in the Health and Welfare sector), which aims to promote greater employment of persons of immigrant origin in health and welfare. The precept “Employers are doing more” will also act as an “umbrella” for projects which do not specifically target persons of immigrant origin but are nevertheless helpful to them. One such project is a BOVACO initiative designed to combat long-term unemployment. This project has already helped several hundred persons of immigrant origin to find permanent employment (personal communication from J. Van Kooten, Anne Frank Foundation).

## **6.7 Specific government policy**

The civil service is a major employer in the Netherlands; indeed, together with local government it is actually the biggest employer. Prior to 1985 the civil service had no specific staff policy on minorities (Abell et al., 1985). Positive discrimination within government is a measure which was only introduced in 1987 to reduce migrant unemployment. A number of efforts have been made in this direction.

The first of these was the *Etnische Minderheden in de Overheid* (EMO) Plan (Ethnic Minorities in the Civil Service) which started in 1987. This plan sought to raise the percentage of migrants to 3% and this was in fact achieved in 1990. As a follow-up to this, EMO-2 was launched in 1991. The aim of this was to increase the proportion of minorities to 5%. By the time EMO-2 was superseded by the WBEAA in 1994, however, its target had by no means been reached (Abell et al., 1995a, see also 7.2). One project which did prove successful was the “1 000 jobs” plan for Moluccans. This aimed to place 1000 Moluccans in government jobs. When it emerged that the civil service and local government were only partly succeeding in recruiting enough Moluccans, the plan was extended to include the subsidized sector and business and industry. Six years later 1 200 jobs had been filled by Moluccans. Veenman and Martens (1990) noted a sharp fall-off in unemployment amongst Moluccans, which they largely put down to the 1 000 jobs plan.

In addition to the various national government measures, measures were also taken by the police, armed forces and large municipalities such as Amsterdam (See also Case 2) and Rotterdam. None of these measures achieved the objectives of the Plan.

## **6.8 Discrimination in recruitment and selection**

Neither general nor specific policy for minorities appears to have produced the expected effect. According to Penninx “the initial diagnosis of the problem with employment made in the Policy Document on Minorities (is) one-sided and the measures taken are limited. Research has increasingly yielded more indications that the reasons for disproportionately high unemployment amongst minorities lie to a significant extent in – largely indirect – discrimination in recruitment and selection by employers and in the fact that they are over-represented when groups of workers are made redundant” (Penninx, 1996, page 2/1050-43).

A recent ILO publication suggests that racial discrimination is common in recruitment and selection: “overall net discrimination rates of up to 35% are not uncommon, meaning that at least one of three application procedures are discriminated against” (Zegers de Beijl, 1997, page 9). The ILO bases these findings on Dutch and other studies (Dankoor and Havelaar, 1994; Bovenkerk et al., 1995; Gras et al., 1995). In these studies, which employed practical tests, two equivalent candidates, one of ethnic origin and one of non-immigrant origin, pursued a number of job applications. The applicants were matched, in respect of a number of important criteria, for the vacancy in question, e.g. skills, work experience and age. The practical tests revealed that the ethnic candidate often got no further than the first telephone call. The sound of a “foreign” name or a slight Surinam accent was enough reason for an employer to discourage the applicant from proceeding further. The discrimination was always implicit, of course; an employer never said that he or she did not want to employ someone from an ethnic minority, but said in every case that the vacancy had already been filled (see also Essed, 1984, page 30).

According to Veenman and Roelandt (1994) selection routines frequently entail direct or indirect and unconscious discrimination. Direct discrimination is the conscious disadvantaging of people of ethnic origin by personnel selectors, whilst indirect, unconscious discrimination is often the result of ethnocentrism. Examples of this are the use of psychological tests which have a cultural bias (Choenni and van der Zwan, 1987), the choice of recruitment avenues rarely used by ethnic job seekers (Hooghiemstra et al., 1990) and verbal and non-verbal

failures of communication (Veenman, 1990). This discrimination on the part of employers and personnel selectors, whether deliberate or not, is seen by researchers as restricting the access of people of ethnic origin to jobs and placing them or keeping them at the end of the queue. Veenman and Roelandt believe that personnel selectors play safe when they have to choose from applicants about whose individual capabilities they know little. Where there is uncertainty, selectors tend to ascribe characteristics of individual members of a group (e.g. poor education, language problems or limited integration) to all members of that group. According to them, this “statistical discrimination” reduces selectors’ uncertainty because they exclude everyone belonging to a group assumed to have less favourable characteristics. The work of Hooghiemstra et al. (1990) bears out this claim. This study reveals that selectors widely bring negative prejudices about the job capabilities of people of ethnic origin to bear. Prejudice is most apparent in recruitment for unskilled and low-skilled jobs. Moreover, individual capabilities are explored during enquiries and interviews in so unstructured and subjective a fashion that prejudice has every chance of being an important factor in the decision reached.

The study by Van Beek en Van der Prag (1992) sheds further light on the selection criteria employed by firms in their appointment of low-skilled personnel. This study shows that employers base their initial selection on the variables age, health, sex and ethnic origin. Educational level, command of the language, work experience and current employment are less important to the chances of job seekers (with no established career)<sup>6</sup> of finding lower-skilled work. This means, therefore, that employers select not on the basis of truly relevant criteria such as education and work experience, but on criteria which they ought not to consider, such as sex and ethnic origin. On average, the researchers found that employers regard age as the most important selection criterion. Healthy, young, male workers of non-immigrant origin thus stand a far better chance in the labour market than others. Van der Most van Spijk (1991) says that a majority of employers openly admit to preferring workers of non-immigrant origin. Employers justify this in a number of ways. People of ethnic origin allegedly cost more and are more trouble because they need more guidance and help with things like tax returns, child benefit applications and holiday arrangements. Another argument is that people of ethnic origin are more of a gamble because they are less motivated, more often sick and take longer holidays. Some employers claim that people of ethnic origin are resented by customers or that they do not fit into the team.

## ***6.9 Employment and anti-discrimination legislation***

A recent review of anti-discrimination legislation in general and in employment in particular was conducted by Gras and Bovenkerk (1995) on behalf of the EFILWC. The section below is a brief summary of that review: for more detailed information the reader should refer to the publication in question.

Anti-discrimination legislation was introduced as a result of obligations contracted under international law (e.g. ratification of the European Social Charter in 1965 and ratification of the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers in 1983) and not, as in

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<sup>6</sup> The authors deliberately confined themselves in the study to job seekers with no established career (though possibly with relevant work experience). Given that the survey questions focused on the chances and opportunities of problem groups in the labour market, the authors chose to concentrate on non-working subjects for their more detailed analysis.

many other countries, as a result of racial conflict. Non-discrimination and equal treatment are also enshrined in the constitution (Article 1) and in a number of articles of the Criminal Code (Article 137g and 429quater). Introduction of the Equal Treatment Act (AWGB) in 1994 also created specific anti-discrimination legislation for the area of employment. The Act outlaws discrimination on the grounds of religion, personal conviction, political conviction, race, sex, nationality, sexual orientation and marital status. This covers discrimination in respect of employment, for example in recruitment and selection or in the conclusion of a contract of employment. The Equal Treatment Commission (CGB) was set up to ensure compliance with the Act and to enable people to lodge complaints. In the first year of its existence (1994-1995) the Commission received more than 300 complaints, 185 of which were declared admissible (CGB, Annual Report 1994/1995). Of these, 25% were complaints of racial discrimination. 90% of the 94 rulings given were concerned with employment.

In addition, there are bodies such as the National Ombudsman, the National Bureau for the Combating of Racial Discrimination and the various anti-discrimination offices which operate to this end. Various government organizations also have a complaints committee which handles complaints of racial discrimination. Most government organizations, and organizations in the commercial and non-commercial sector too, have an anti-discrimination code which must be observed in recruitment and selection. Temporary employment agencies also have a code of conduct (the ABU code) which prohibits them from acceding to requests from employers specifically for non-immigrant personnel.

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<sup>7</sup> A study of the effects of the ABU code showed, however, that only 8% of temporary employment agencies adhered to the code (Meloan, 1991).



## PART C

### CASE 1

#### 7.1 Introduction

Case 1 concerns the North Holland Department of the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management, part of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. This department was chosen because of the results it achieved in the area of policy on minorities. Although the North Holland Department is a relatively small part of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management - comprising 5% of the Ministry's total staff - it had in the recent past (1991-1993) accounted for 30% of the Ministry's total net hirings of ethnic minorities. Given that the results achieved by the Ministry as a whole in policy on minorities are somewhat meagre, those of the North Holland Department are all the more striking. Policy on minorities at the Ministry had also been subjected to scrutiny earlier, which meant that a relatively large body of data was available (Dagevos, 1993; Abell, 1995a). The section which follows outlines the general background by giving an overview of the situation with regard to policy on minorities in national government and at the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. We then examine the factors which helped to produce the results achieved by the North Holland Department.

#### 7.2 Policy on minorities in the civil service

1987 saw the launch - four years after the first Policy Document on Minorities - of the first policy plan for minorities within the civil service. This EMO plan (Ethnic Minorities in the Civil Service, later EMO-1), designed to increase the proportion of ethnic minorities in the civil service to 3%, was successfully completed at the end of 1990. The net target figure was 1 452 members of minority groups and the actual figure achieved was 1 431 (Ministry of the Interior, 1993). As a follow-up to EMO-1, the policy plan EMO-2 *Werkgelegenheid voor minderheden bij de Rijksoverheid* (Employment for Minorities in the civil service) was started on 1 January 1991. The central aim of EMO-2 was to increase further the percentage of minorities working in the civil service to 5%. EMO-2 also had the following secondary objectives:

- a more balanced inflow of the various ethnic groups, with special encouragement for Turks and Moroccans;
- a more balanced inflow of people of ethnic origin at the various hierarchical levels;
- to encourage people of ethnic origin to move up through the hierarchy;
- to reduce the outflow of people of ethnic origin.

EMO-2 – which was discontinued when the WBEAA was introduced in 1994 – was less successful than EMO-1. Interim reports showed that up to 1992 the main target (of 5% minorities in five years) met with varying degrees of success (Ministry of the Interior, 1993). Between 1991 and 1992 achievements fell away sharply, largely because increasing numbers of minorities were leaving. It was also found that most of the inflow of minorities (86% in 1992) was happening in the lowest pay scale brackets (1-4). The main conclusion therefore was that there was every reason to be concerned, even though a number of ministries and councils of

state had in fact met the 1992 target. After three years only half the inflow of minorities planned for the civil service as a whole had been achieved, when it should by that time have been 60%. The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management performed slightly worse than average compared to other ministries in meeting the targets over the period 1991-1993. The figures for 1991, 1992 and 1993 are reproduced in Table 7.

**Table 7: Net inflow of minorities in 1991, 1992 and 1993, by civil service department in 1991-1993; ranked in order of achievement of the targets set in EMO-2**

Department	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lower House of Parliament	10	0	11	5	16	160%
Finance	370	121	137	125	383	104%
National Ombudsman	1	0	0	1	1	100%
Council of State	14	-1	8	2	9	64%
Justice	876	113	114	216	443	51%
Interior	72	13	7	13	33	46%
Transport, Public Works and Water Management	222	8	37	52	97	44%
Foreign Affairs	69	8	7	12	27	39%
Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries	169	19	11	34	64	38%
Housing, Planning and Environment	130	20	16	13	49	38%
Court of Audit	9	2	2	-1	3	33%
Defence (civilian staff)	187	46	-12	19	53	28%
Economic Affairs	99	31	-4	-1	26	26%
Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs	165	13	1	16	30	18%
Social Affairs and Employment	47	8	-1	0	7	15%
Education and Science	46	-5	1	9	5	11%
Upper House of Parliament	1	0	0	0	0	0%
General Affairs	8	-4	1	1	-2	-25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 495</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>1 244</b>	<b>50%</b>

1. target 1991-1995

2. net inflow 1991

3. net inflow 1992

4. net inflow 1993

5. total 1991-1993

6. % of target achieved by end 1993

Source: adapted from Abell, 1995a

Further figures are not available for EMO-2, because in 1994 the WBEAA came into force and it also applied to the civil service. Recent assessments indicate that the 5% proportion of ethnic minorities has in all probability not been achieved, as was predicted: Table 8 shows that WBEAA reports put the proportion of ethnic minorities at 3.5%.<sup>8</sup> Once again the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management is one of the government departments farthest away from meeting the proportionality rate targets.

### ***7.3 Policy on minorities at the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management***

The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management is the third largest ministry in size (after Finance and Justice), with some 13 000 employees in 1996. The Ministry's activities are primarily of a technical nature: it is responsible for flood defences and water management, traffic, transport and communications. In concrete terms this means that the Ministry manages the country's coastal defences and dikes and water resources, and is responsible for national infrastructure – roads, highways, air routes and railways – traffic rules and traffic safety. The Ministry also encompasses a number of institutes (“specialist services”) which carry out applied scientific research in these fields. Because the work is largely technical, the percentage of women is low (21.3%) compared with the working population as a whole (41%) or even the civil service as a whole (31.3%).

Policy on minorities within the Ministry is derived from that of the civil service as a whole. The Personnel Affairs Department drew up a Positive Action Plan for the Ministry in 1994 (Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, 1994). The Plan outlines the targets, the way in which they are to be met and the relevant policy instruments.

Up to May 1997 the Ministry comprised the following services: Directorate-General for Shipping and Maritime Affairs (DGSM), Telecommunications and Post Department (HDTP), Central Support Services (CSD), Royal Meteorological Institute (KNMI), Directorate-General for Civil Aviation (RLD), Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management (RWS), Directorate-General For Transport (DGV), Road Transport Service (DW).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> NB: the counts made in the WBEAA reports cannot easily be compared with those made under EMO-2, because different target groups were used.

<sup>9</sup> After May 1997 a number of services became autonomous agencies and a reorganization took place. The departmental breakdown shown in Table 9 reflects the situation prior to this.

**Table 8: Proportionality rates under the WBEAA (1), percentages achieved by 1st January 1995 (2) and difference between (1) and (2), by ministry and a number of councils of state**

	<i>% of ethnic personnel<sup>1</sup></i>	<b>proportionality would be<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>difference</b>	<b>fte<sup>2</sup> 31-12-95</b>
Education, Cultural Affairs and Science	3.6	7.1	3.5	2 711
Economic Affairs	2.2	5.0	2.8	4 874
Upper House of Parliament	5.0	7.3	2.3	41
General Affairs	4.5	6.2	1.7	307
Lower House of Parliament	7.2	8.8	1.6	451
Transport, Public Works and Water Management	2.5	4.0	1.5	13 099
Council of State	4.0	5.3	1.3	551
Court of Audit	3.4	4.0	0.6	317
Agriculture, Natural Resource Management and Fisheries	1.9	2.0	0.1	10 039
Finance	2.6	2.7	0.1	30 429
Welfare, Health and Sport	3.2	3.3	0.1	4 297
Foreign Affairs	3.0	2.7	-0.3	3 737
Justice	5.4	4.9	-0.5	24 171
Interior	6.1	5.3	-0.8	1 641
Social Affairs and Employment	5.3	4.1	-1.2	2 235
National Ombudsman	5.7	4.5	-1.2	81
Housing, Planning and Environment	5.2	3.9	-1.3	3 183
<b>Total</b>				<b>102 164</b>

1. Source: Policy on Minorities 1997, (1996)

2. Source: Staatsalmanak 1996-1997 (Official Directory of the Kingdom of the Netherlands) (1996)

The body of policy instruments described in the various policy plans is generally well thought-out. Not only are targets set, we are also told how these targets may be achieved. Thus, the policy plan of the DG for Public Works and Water Management (RWS) describes not only how to encourage inflow and discourage outflow, but also how departments can reward individual employees with an extra staff budget or pay. The policy plan also gives consideration to training and guidance for employees already in place and newcomers of ethnic origin (Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, 1991).

To give some impression of the results of policy on minorities at the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, we reproduce in Table 9 the inflow data for the various departments of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management in the period 1991-1993. In 1993 Shipping and Maritime Affairs (DGSM) and Telecommunications and Post (HDTP) had all but met the target, whilst the Road Traffic Service (DW) had made very little progress and the Directorate-General for Transport (DGV) even less. The DG for Public Works and Water Management (RWS) under which the North Holland Department falls, was one of the departments whose results were disappointing (43% of the target).

**Table 9: Net inflow of minorities, by department of Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management in 1991, 1992 & 1993, total for the period 1991-1993 and % of target achieved by 31 December 1993**

Department (1993)	Personnel x 1000	Target	1991	1992	1993	1991-1993	% of target
DGSM	662	13	5	-1	7	11	85
HDTP	384	4	1	1	1	3	75
CSD	590	8	1	1	3	5	63
KNMI	583	7	1	3	0	4	57
RLD	279	16	2	5	0	7	44
RWS	10 194	146	26	26	11	63	43
DGV	761	12	1	2	1	4	33
DW	1 163	16	-1	0	3	2	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 616</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>45</b>

Source: Personnel Affairs Department/Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management

Table 10 shows data for inflow into a lower hierarchical level of the DG for Public Works and Water Management (D3). The DG accounts for 70% of all Ministry staff. It reveals a striking difference between the regional departments and the specialist services. The regional departments accounted for the entire net inflow (60 people). The specialist services as a whole had a negative inflow, largely because the net inflow into the Central Department was negative. More strikingly still, as was pointed out in the introduction, the North Holland Department accounted for over half the inflow into the DG. In the period 1991-1993 the inflow into the North Holland Department was 32 people, out of 59 people for the whole of the DG for Public Works and Water Management.

**Table 10: Targets for EMO-2, net inflow of minorities, by department of the DG for Public Works and Water Management (RWS) in 1991, 1992 & 1993, total for the period 1991-1993 and % of target achieved by 31 December 1993**

Department	Personnel	Target	1991	1992	1993	1991-1993	% of target
<b>North Holland</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>160</b>
Overijssel	296	5	7	0	?	7	140
South Holland	1 089	28	4	9	4	17	62
Netherlands north	676	8	4	1	-1	4	50
Flevoland	662	5	1	0	1	2	40
Gelderland	670	8	-1	1	0	0	0
Utrecht	455	5	-1	1	?	0	0
Zeeland	782	5	1	-1	0	0	0
Limburg	600	5	0	0	0	0	0
North Brabant	626	5	-1	0	0	-1	-20
North Sea	217	5	1	0	-2	-1	-20
<b>Total regional departments</b>	<b>6 931</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>61</b>
RIZA	417	3	0	3	0	3	120
DWW	258	8	1	0	1	2	27
RIKZ	403	5	1	0	0	1	20
Building department	862	10	0	0	1	1	10
MD	472	8	0	0	0	0	0
other	403	8	2	-2	0	0	0
Central Department	570	13	-3	-1	-4	-8	-64
<b>Total specialist services</b>	<b>3 385</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-2</b>
<b>Total RWS</b>	<b>10 316</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>38</b>

DWW = Road and Hydraulic Engineering Division

MD = Survey Department

RIKZ = National Institute for Coastal & Marine Management

RIZA = National Institute for Inland Water Management & Waste Water Treatment

Source: RWS

### ***7.3 The North Holland Department***

The North Holland Department is part of the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management (RWS) and is the largest department bar one. Its activities have been briefly outlined in 7.2. Quantitative and qualitative data were taken from earlier research (Dagevos, 1993; Abell, 1995a); a variety of policy documents were also consulted. We interviewed amongst others the co-ordinator for policy on minorities of the Ministry's Central Personnel Affairs Department and a member of the Central Department of Public Works and Water Management. Within the North Holland Department we talked to the (now former) chief engineer, the head of personnel, the officer for policy on minorities and her successor and a number of members of staff.

### ***7.4 Policy on minorities at the North Holland Department***

An official policy on minorities has been in place since 1987 (see also 6.7 and 7.2). Up to the end of 1991 this policy remained dormant at the North Holland Department, as in the other departments of government. This was partly due to the large measure of decentralization, independent structure and geographical spread of the various services of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, so that different services often had separate "departmental cultures", or "their own internal climate", as one interviewee put it. The separate services nevertheless have a number of features in common: they are predominantly technocratic organizations with few social connections and are thus guided more by commercial considerations than social ones. The organizational culture is to some extent a closed one or "turned in on itself", as one interviewee put it. The North Holland Department is no exception to this. This closed, technocratic organizational culture was one of the reasons why policy on minorities at the Department remained dormant. Apart from the fact that central government had a policy - which was hardly compelling - there were few reasons to pursue an active policy on minorities at organization level: for example, services were (and are) not tailored directly to a multicultural clientele and, given the closed nature of the organizational culture, there was no need for the Department to improve its image by pursuing a good policy on minorities.

### ***7.5 Introduction of the policy and starting points for the policy***

The head of personnel thought, however, that an organization like the Northern Holland Department could not "stand apart from society". From the point of view of the Department, society is most definitely multicultural: its area includes the Regional Employment Office (RBA) area of North Holland-South, with the highest proportionality rate at 12.5% (see also Figure 1 in 6.6). The head of personnel was supported in this view by the management team and the then chief engineer. Introduction of the policy was thus effectively inspired by individual considerations of a social nature and not by arguments such as the need for specialist personnel, the avoidance of penalties or pressure from unions or the works council (at that time known as the staff committee). At the end of 1991, the Ministry of the Interior called upon all parties to add extra wording to advertisements recruiting personnel from outside (in the *Volkskrant*, *Haarlems Dagblad* or other regional newspapers) to the effect that all other things being equal, priority would be given to women and handicapped people – but also to applicants from the ethnic minorities. This had no effect, however. As a result, an official - who later became the officer for policy on minorities – was appointed to find out why ethnic minorities

made hardly any use of the external recruitment methods open to them. After completing her investigation her job was to make the system of recruitment more effective.

## ***7.6 Substance of the policy***

The officer in question was funded out of an ad hoc staff budget made available by the DG for Public Works and Water Management. This extra budget was only provided where workers of ethnic origin were already employed. Little use had been made of this measure up till then – in this or other departments of the Ministry. Subsidies were later obtained from the Labour Market and Training Fund (A&O fonds). According to the head of personnel, it was crucial at this stage that the appointment of this officer should not affect the budget, given the minimal support for her work within the organization. She also had no other duties within the organization and was able to devote all her time to policy on minorities.

The survey revealed that disillusionment was one of the main reasons for the low response to advertisements. It was common for applicants of ethnic origin to hear nothing further after submitting their application (see also 6.8). The study also showed that recruitment of ethnic minorities required a less conventional approach, for example the use of informal networks (see also 6.4). Contacts were then initiated with migrant organizations such as the migrant workshops, which have since been abolished. Contact was sought too with the Interior Ministry's Recruitment Service for Priority Groups in the Civil Service (WVO), also since abolished, the company advisers on minorities at the Regional Employment Office in Haarlem (see also 6.6), the Regional Centre for Foreigners in Haarlem, the Amsterdam Centre for Foreigners and a temporary employment agency which specialized in temporary staff from the ethnic groups. Agreements were concluded with other temporary employment agencies that requests for temporary staff would be met in the first instance by candidates from one of the ethnic minorities. In addition, applicants of ethnic origin who had applied on spec or for a specific vacancy but had not been selected first time round were kept on the books.

Lastly, personnel of ethnic origin were themselves involved in planning recruitment. Thanks to these contacts the North Holland Department was able to recruit directly and organizations were kept informed of vacancies in the Department (Auburger and Kenzler, 1992).

Most of the vacancies to be filled were administrative or finance jobs which required training to MEAO/HEAO level; there were also a few vacancies requiring training to MTS level. The system of contacts with migrant workshops in particular, agreements with temporary employment agencies to provide applicants from one of the ethnic minority groups wherever possible, the keeping of previous applicants on file and the use of informal networks enabled enough suitable candidates to be found. This soon invalidated one of the argument which purported to explain why few people from ethnic minorities were being recruited.

In addition to the appropriate recruitment procedures, the Department held preliminary interviews with applicants of ethnic origin to ensure that they met the requirements of the job. Great attention was paid to language ability where that was relevant to the job. During the preliminary interview comprehensive information was given about the vacancy: it was found that temporary agencies and the Regional Employment Offices often did not give applicants enough information and that the wording of advertisements was too complicated and incomprehensible to applicants of ethnic origin. Information was given on the organization and



the procedure, and applicants were advised on how to improve their letters of application and CVs: it emerged that some candidates mistakenly thought that their previous employment was not relevant to the job for which they had applied. Preliminary interviews created a relationship of trust, so that contact was maintained after the initial application and feedback was obtained on the progress of the procedure. Preliminary interviews also prevented applicants from being rejected for the wrong reasons. Thus, one applicant of ethnic origin was rejected to begin with because his Dutch was not good enough. Because it emerged at the preliminary interview that his knowledge of the language was perfectly adequate, management informed the relevant line manager of this fact and the decision was reversed.

Selection policy too was changed. In-house procedure was changed; if internal candidates were not available, preference was given to temporary employees of ethnic origin. During selection personnel officers were careful to see that the correct procedures were followed in the case of applicants of ethnic origin and that no improper arguments were used to reject them. Management also intervened in the selection process where problems arose, for example if the selection committee failed to work well or if, in violation of policy, applicants of ethnic origin were not invited to interview. Failure to comply with the policy thus had repercussions. At a later stage line managers underwent training in selection skills, after it emerged that cultural differences during selection interviews with applicants of ethnic origin led to misunderstandings. Care was also taken to ensure that the regular selection procedure for applicants of ethnic origin was also applied to short-term placements. This prevented an inflow of applicants with an unsuitable training background.

Inflow into short-term placements – such as work experience places and apprenticeships – was encouraged after it emerged that some applicants of ethnic origin possessed the necessary educational background, but not enough work experience. Efforts were also made to encourage the inflow of people of ethnic origin into more senior-level jobs by means of subsidies from the Labour Market and Training Fund (A&O funds). The Department also adopted the objective that employees of ethnic origin employed on a temporary basis should be allowed to move on to permanent posts.

A number of measures were also taken to prevent workers from leaving prematurely. In addition to education and training activities (e.g. language courses and a course of personal effectiveness training for newcomers) a mentor project was set up. The mentors' job was to ensure that the workers allocated to them received the proper initial on-the-job training, with a view to their integration and acceptance within the department. Courses for mentors were held twice.

## ***7.7 Organizational support for the policy***

In implementing the policy on target groups the North Holland Department makes use of virtually all the resources and instruments named in both the Ministry's Positive Action Plan and the Policy Plan for People of Ethnic Origin of the DG for Public Works and Water Management. These instruments are designed to promote inflows and prevent premature outflows. Use is also made of a variety of financial subsidies. Training and guidance for personnel of both ethnic and non-immigrant origin are also part of the policy, together with information about the policy. This policy is high on the management team's agenda.

## ***7.8 Sticking points in implementing the policy***

One of the major sticking points was the minimal support for the policy within the organization. Comments such as “well, there’s no open opposition to it” or “it’s official policy, after all” speak volumes. According to the chief engineer it was not so much a question of “prejudice, but more a negative image which caused a measure of opposition to the policy”.

Within the management team there was much debate initially on whether a target group policy for people of ethnic origin was needed. People were quick to find arguments against it. For example, reorganization would lead to fewer vacancies; job requirements would also be more exacting so that it would be virtually impossible to find suitable candidates from the ethnic community. The alleged shortage of ethnic applicants with the requisite specific training was an argument which backfired, when it was invalidated early on by appropriate recruitment procedures and preliminary interviews which produced plenty of perfectly well qualified applicants.<sup>10</sup> Pressure from the head of personnel, the officer for policy on minorities and the chief engineer ultimately caused the policy to be accepted. In the end, suitable recruitment methods ceased to be an issue.

Mention was made above of the closed nature of the organizational culture, which explains why policy on minorities remained dormant up to the end of 1991. A closed organizational culture can have a negative effect on intake. The point was made in 6.8 that preference is often based, in selection procedures, on factors such as sex, origin and age: factors which are not relevant to the job requirements. In a closed organizational culture there is a danger that selection will be largely based on the criteria of “fitting into the team”. This can significantly reduce the chances of outsiders – people of ethnic origin and women – of being accepted. Even if newcomers of ethnic origin are appointed, the closed organizational culture can make it difficult for them to function. Whilst the staff members of ethnic origin who were interviewed agreed that there was no question of explicit rejection, they had been struck by the lack of interest in them shown by their non-immigrant colleagues. Especially at the beginning, some workers of ethnic origin had found this hard to deal with, and they needed a great deal of support and guidance. The longer-term effect was a measure of suspicion amongst the workers of ethnic origin. A lot of effort was thus devoted to changing the attitudes of existing staff of non-immigrant origin, inter alia by involving experts in these matters, holding briefings and having the policy on target groups feature regularly on the agenda. Especially in the initial phase, the officer in charge said that a lot of work was needed to persuade people and get the message across. A first course of training for middle management, which included communication “on the shop floor”, was by no means an unqualified success.

## ***7.9 The current situation***

Unlike the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management as a whole, the North Holland Department has succeeded in meeting the policy objectives of EMO-2. At 1 January 1996 the percentage of employees of ethnic origin was 7%, 2% higher than the EMO-2 target. The Department also achieves the proportionality rates required by the WBEAA, albeit with the reservation that the top two levels of the hierarchy include no employees of ethnic origin.

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<sup>10</sup> In 1995, in response to a study of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, a number of arguments against the policy were set out, to which the findings of the study gave the lie; they were published as a “catalogue of excuses” (Abell, 1995b).

**Table 10a: Proportionality rates at the North Holland Department required under the WBEAA (1), percentages achieved by 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 (2) and difference between (1) and (2)**

	<i>% of ethnic personnel</i>	<b>proportionality should be<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>31-12-95</b>	<b>fte</b>
North Holland Department	7	3.75	3.3	643

1. Average of the percentages from the MBO column for North Holland North and North Holland South (see also Table 6).

Source: North Holland Department

### ***7.10 The Joint Declaration and other guidelines***

None of the people interviewed were familiar with the Joint Declaration on the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment at the workplace. People were, however, familiar with codes of conduct for job application procedures.

### ***7.11 Conclusion***

Despite a fair number of obstacles, for example a closed organizational culture, a central government policy which is hardly compelling and a lack of internal and external reasons to introduce a policy on minorities (for example a multicultural clientele) the North Holland Department has successfully achieved good results with the policy on minorities. Imaginative use has been made of a body of policy instruments which in fact already existed. The fact that the Department has used these facilities whilst other services have used them hardly at all has a lot to do with the individual commitment and involvement of those employed in the Personnel Affairs Department and the support given by management.

Summing up, the following factors are responsible for the fact that policy on minorities has become well established at the North Holland Department. The officer in charge was given a more or less free hand, had no other regular duties within the organization and could thus maintain the necessary independence and detachment. Recruitment was pursued actively, using alternative and more informal channels, and a list of potential candidates was compiled so that suitable candidates could be put forward quickly and efficiently. Opposition was anticipated and dealt with by screening applicants to ensure that they met the job requirements. Management intervened where there were problems with selection. Care was given to assist newcomers of ethnic origin by allocating mentors to them. Efforts were made to eliminate prejudice by providing information. Implementation of the policy was paid for from outside, so that the department did not have to fund the officer itself.

## CASE 2

### 8.1 Introduction

The second case concerns an Amsterdam nursing home, the Dr Sarphatihuis. This organization was adopted as Case 2 because of its well thought-out and phased policy of positive action which has borne visible fruit over the years. It has a very high percentage of ethnic minorities compared with other organizations in the region. Furthermore, the Dr Sarphatihuis took part in a study which was completed recently (Abell et al., 1997), which meant that some data were already available. Information for this study was obtained from interviews with the head of personnel, a personnel consultant, two heads of division and a number of staff, including a member of the works council. The usual policy documents were also consulted.

The sections which follow look at the factors which enabled the Dr Sarphatihuis to achieve good results in the field of positive action. Since it predominantly serves the population of Amsterdam we shall begin with a brief profile of the Amsterdam population, broken down by ethnic origin. We shall also consider the municipal policy on minorities: although the Dr Sarphatihuis is not formally a part of the municipal structure, its policy is modelled directly on that of the Municipality.

### 8.2 The Municipality of Amsterdam: population data

As Table 11 shows, at 1 January 1996, two out of five Amsterdamers, (42.4% of the population) were of ethnic origin. Like the other three major Dutch cities (Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) Amsterdam can thus properly call itself a multicultural city. The largest ethnic group is the Surinamers, followed by the Turks and Moroccans. It is expected that within the foreseeable future half the population will be of ethnic origin. All together the Surinamese, Antillean, Turkish, Moroccan and Southern European population groups make up 18.3% of the working population.

**Table 11: Amsterdam population and population of working age 1996<sup>11</sup>**

	population	%	population of working age	%
Surinamers	69 578	9.7	29 600	8.9
Antilleans	10 468	1.5	4 600	1.4
Turks	31 028	4.3	8 100	2.4
Moroccans	47 950	6.7	10 800	3.2
Southern Europeans	16 305	2.3	7 900	2.4
Other foreigners	129 136	18.0	*	*
Dutch	413 626	57.5	272 500	81.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>718 091</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>333 500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

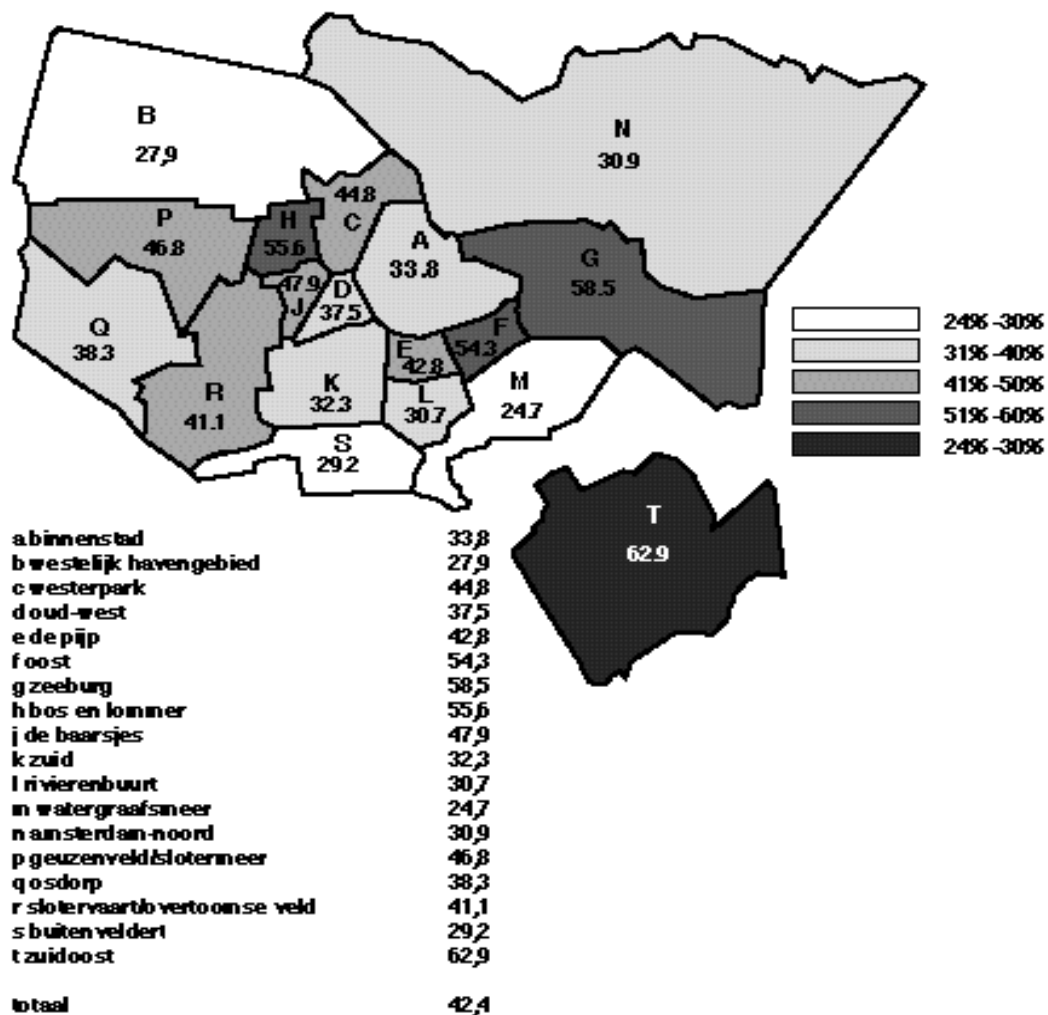
\* population of working age = Dutch and "other foreigners"

Source: Amsterdam in Figures, 1996

<sup>11</sup> Registration of ethnic origin is based on the country of birth of the person himself or herself or on his or her mother's or father's country of birth.

The ethnic population of the Municipality of Amsterdam is not spread equally over the various areas of the city. Figure 2 shows that the percentage of ethnic minorities is particularly high in the nineteenth-century areas close to the centre, such as Oost and Zeeburg. The same is true of some of the newer city areas like Bos and Lommer, a peak reached in Zuidoost where 62.9% of the residents are of ethnic origin. In some city areas the percentage of ethnic minorities is relatively low: Watergraafsmeer, Buitenveldert, Rivierenbuurt and Noord (not counting the Western port area which has only 300 or so residents). The Dr Sarphatihuis lies in the city centre area of Amsterdam.

**Figure 2 Percentages of ethnic minorities in the various city areas**



Source: Amsterdam in Figures, 1996

### **8.3 The Municipality of Amsterdam: policy on minorities**

In 1985 the percentage of ethnic minorities in the Amsterdam population (Surinamers, Antilleans, Moroccans, Turks and Southern Europeans) was still only 13.4%. It was 17.4% if one included the group “other foreigners”. Of the 26 500 people working for the Municipality in 1985, 6.1% were of ethnic origin and 6.9% if one included “other foreigners” (Abell, 1985).

This under-representation prompted the Municipal Council to draw up its first policy document on minorities *Samen leven, samen werken* (Living together, working together). In line with the 1983 Policy Document on Minorities (see also 6.5) this document also introduced the principle of proportionality, requiring the staff of the Municipality to reflect that of the population of Amsterdam. An attempt was made to achieve this by giving preference to people of ethnic origin.

In 1988, following an evaluation of the policy on minorities, a more structured method was introduced. Among other things this required the various departments and agencies of the Municipality to draw up implementation plans. Subsequently the term “positive action” was used, with a policy of preferential treatment for people of ethnic origin and women. In 1990 the policy was reviewed again. The number of people of ethnic origin working for the Municipality had by now risen slightly to 7.2%. It was clear that the increase in the percentage of such people working for the Municipality was barely keeping pace with the increase in the percentage in the Amsterdam population as a whole. It was also apparent that in relation to the municipal payroll as a whole, people of ethnic origin were more often employed in the lowest levels of the hierarchy (Municipality of Amsterdam, 1990). A number of measures were then taken, for example courses in Dutch on the shop floor, a seminar on intercultural personnel management and the Plan of Approach to Positive Action, designed to speed up the implementation of the policy of positive action.

A third evaluation was conducted in 1995. The conclusion was that the need for positive discrimination was no less topical and urgent than ten years previously and that it should be continued with undiminished vigour. The reasons for this were firstly that the Municipality had to be recognizably an organization for the people. Table 12 shows that it has still not yet achieved that: according to the latest WBEAA counts the percentage of ethnic minority people working for the Municipality is only 8.8%. It is clear that the increase in the percentage of people of ethnic origin working for the Municipality is altogether failing to keep pace with the increase in the percentage of the population of Amsterdam they account for. The difference between these percentages has only widened over the years. As things are at the moment, the Municipality of Amsterdam will in all probability fail to achieve even the 12.5% proportionality rate required by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, which is considerably lower than the percentage the Municipality itself considers is required (see Table 11). Only a limited number of its activities are staffed by personnel which can claim to be proportionally representative of ethnic minorities as required by the WBEAA. One favourable development is that the inflow of ethnic minorities in 1996 was markedly higher than the outflow. If this trend continues there is room for a measure of optimism. A second reason for continuing the policy as it stands is that the working population is getting older, with the falling birth-rate meaning that fewer young people are entering the labour market. In the longer term this will create a shortage of labour, so that employers will have to compete on the labour market. As the area becomes increasingly multicultural, the Municipality will have to make itself attractive as an employer to people of ethnic origin too. A final consideration was that the Municipality of

Amsterdam has an important role to play as a model for equal opportunities in access to paid work. In doing so it must comply with a number of legal requirements such as those of the WBEAA (Municipality of Amsterdam, 1995).

In addition to resolving to continue its policy of positive action, the Municipality of Amsterdam has set a number of priorities for its staff policy. Since people of ethnic origin are particularly under-represented at the top of the municipal hierarchy, efforts will be made to increase ethnic inflow into the higher levels; at the same time the promotion of people of ethnic origin up through the municipal hierarchy will be improved. Attention will also be given to preventing a disproportionately high outflow of ethnic workers.

**Table 12: Number of staff, % of people of ethnic origin; inflow and people of ethnic origin as a % of inflow; outflow and people of ethnic origin as a % of outflow, in various departments of the Municipality of Amsterdam at 1 January 1996**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
City wardens	465.0	48.0	443.0	51.0	19.0	12.4
Social services	1 827.0	18.8	263.0	16.7	142.0	3.5
Research & statistics	67.0	16.0	4.0	0.0	5.0	0.0
Stedelijk Museum	195.0	15.0	18.0	11.0	15.0	13.0
Property development	194.0	14.9	32.0	?	73.0	?
Parking	434.0	14.2	64.0	29.3	30.0	?
Secretariat	793.0	11.9	86.0	7.0	216.0	9.0
Insurance	61.0	11.3	0.0	0.0	2.0	?
City loans office	63.0	10.0	5.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
Accountancy & Consultancy	105.0	9.8	2.0	50.0	9.0	0.0
City administration	1 147.0	9.2	104.0	7.0	862.0	10.0
Environmental service	172.0	9.0	19.0	15.0	8.0	?
Municipal taxes	295.0	8.8	37.0	5.4	28.0	3.6
Research dept. environment & soil mechanics	202.0	8.4	39.0	2.7	26.0	0.0
Amsterdam History Museum	100.0	8.0	2.0	0.0	5.0	0.0
Municipal Health Service	947.0	7.1	129.0	16.3	151.0	10.0

*(table continued on next page)*

1. Number of staff (absolute)
2. % people of ethnic origin
3. Inflow

4. People of ethnic origin as % of inflow
5. Outflow
6. People of ethnic origin as % of outflow

(Table 12 continued)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sewage & water management dept.	515.0	7.0	22.0	18.2	38.0	5.2
Municipal waste disposal	196.0	6.0	23.0	0.0	15.0	0.0
Municipal printers	99.0	6.0	16.0	6.0	21.0	10.0
Water supply	636.0	5.8	29.0	6.9	29.0	0.0
Fire department	770.0	5.5	36.0	10.3	25.0	0.0
Port authority	269.0	2.2	9.0	0.0	13.0	0.0
Project Management Bureau	90.0	2.2	7.0	0.0	7.0	0.0
Inland waterways	128.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	6.0	0.0
Paedological Institute	35.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Planning	248.0	?	25.0	?	13.0	?
Population register	215.0	?	6.0	?	56.0	?
Amsterdam Planning Office	218.0	?	15.0	?	4.0	?
Marketing	32.0	?	?	?	?	?
City housing department	558.0	?	48.0	?	57.0	?
Municipal cleansing dept., swim. pools & bathing establishments	113.0	?	?	?	?	?
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 954.0</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>1 731.0</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>1 943.0</b>	<b>7.1</b>

1. Number of staff (absolute)

2. % people of ethnic origin

3. Inflow

4. People of ethnic origin as % of inflow

5. Outflow

6. People of ethnic origin as % of outflow

Source: Municipality of Amsterdam, 1996

#### 8.4 *The Dr Sarphatihuis*

The Dr Sarphatihuis is a combined retirement and nursing home with some 300 beds and a staff of almost 400 located on the edge of the Amsterdam city centre. The home has a number of more or less independent care departments headed by team leaders. The care departments are arranged in clusters for each floor, headed by a care manager. The organization also has four support services: housing and care, treatment and consultation, an amenities service and a number of staff services. An active policy of human resource management is operated in matters of personnel and organization. In 1994 the Dr Sarphatihuis merged with a smaller residential home to become the Municipal Organization for Residential and Nursing Care. It is to be privatized in the course of 1997. Although some 40% of the Amsterdam population are originally of non-Dutch descent, only 10% of the residents are of non-Dutch descent. This figure is expected to rise steeply within the foreseeable future.



### 8.5 Composition of the staff: the current situation

A few years ago the Dr Sarphatihuis was still part of the Municipal Service for Care of the Elderly. The Municipal Organization for Residential and Nursing Care is now no longer officially part of the Municipality – its employees are not municipal employees - and is thus not obliged to report its figures under the WBEAA to the Municipality. This is why no figures for the Dr Sarphatihuis are shown in Table 12. Its figures in respect of the WBEAA's targets are shown in Table 13.

**Table 13: Total staff and % of people of ethnic origin as required under the WBEAA at the Dr Sarphatihuis, 1992-1995**

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Staff services	13.0	9.7	10.0	6.9
Financial Department	44.7	38.3	33.8	31.6
Treatment & Consultation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Housing & care	12.8	20.5	22.3	24.6
Apprentices	28.0	19.0	18.6	20.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>22.6</b>
<b>Total staff (absolute)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>389</b>

Source: Policy plan for intercultural management 1996-1996; Koudijs et al. (1996)

Compared with the departments and agencies of the Municipality of Amsterdam, its percentage of employees of ethnic origin is high: 22.6% in 1995. This percentage was calculated a number of years ago and is only bettered by the city wardens service (see Table 12). The organization more than meets the proportionality rate for Amsterdam as required under the WBEAA (12.5%). The high percentage has brought a lot of publicity, in the local and regional press and in minority papers and specialist journals. As a result the Dr Sarphatihuis is regularly held up as an example to other organizations. Although the proportion of people of ethnic origin on the staff is high, Table 14 shows that the majority of them are employed in the lower levels of the hierarchy (pay scale brackets 2-5). There are virtually no employees of ethnic origin at the higher levels; of the heads of department, only one is of ethnic origin. A next step in the organization's policy is thus to improve promotion through the hierarchy.

**Table 14: Staff by pay scale bracket and ethnic origin at the Dr Sarphatihuis, 1994-1995**

pay scale bracket*	1994		1995	
	ethnic origin	non-immigrant origin	ethnic origin	non-immigrant origin
2-5	91.8	62.3	94.8	63.9
6-9	6.8	31.8	3.9	29.5
10 +	1.4	5.9	1.3	6.6
	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* The higher the pay scale the higher the salary

Source: Policy plan for intercultural management 1996-1996; Koudijs et al. (1996)

### ***8.6 Introduction of the policy and starting points for the policy***

The policy is designed to attract more staff of ethnic origin and the organization prefers to call it a policy of intercultural management (ICM). It is largely identical to the Municipality's policy of positive action. Unlike many municipal institutions, the Dr Sarphatihuis has pursued an active policy, with the head of personnel playing a key role. One of the reasons for this was a shortage of staff in the period 1992-1993, necessitating intensive recruitment by the personnel department.

Compared with Case 1, the focus in introducing ICM was placed more on pragmatic arguments. Despite a clear endorsement of the main objective of the municipal policy of positive action – a staff which mirrored the make-up of the population – less importance is attached in this case to the argument that the organization should be recognizable to a (multicultural) public. The finding, on the contrary, was that the percentage of people of ethnic origin amongst the residents of the Dr Sarphatihuis is relatively small and is (as yet) not rising fast.

The head of personnel believes that ICM is not a matter of philanthropy, but above all of good personnel planning. The pool of young people in the labour market is shrinking so that employers will have to compete for manpower. By projecting a good image the organization hopes to be attractive to job seekers. The argument that ICM enables staff capacities to be used to maximum effect is seen as a convincing argument and it is also a starting point for policy. A final reason for continuing a policy on minorities is that the organization – and notably the personnel department – is proud that this policy regularly keeps the organization in the limelight. In 1995 no fewer than 15 articles were published on the ICM policy of the Dr Sarphatihuis.

## ***8.7 Substance of the policy***

The ICM policy of the Dr Sarphatihuis has so far been through three stages.

From 1991 to 1993 a deliberate policy of “volume” was pursued, to cope with a temporary staff shortage. The emphasis was on increasing inflow by means of targeted recruitment and selection: during this period the percentage of minorities was close to 30%. As in Case 1, alternative recruitment avenues were successfully used here too, tailored to the target group and local situation, e.g. house-to-house delivery of folders in the city area of Zuidoost, posters and local television.

The second stage ended in 1995. This period saw participation in the “intercultural management” pilot research project which was designed to explore the experience of managers and employees involved with a multicultural staff. Sticking points and policy suggestions for the future were also considered during this stage.

In the third stage, from 1995 to 1996, new policy measures were put in place. Formulation of these was preceded by a broad debate involving the management team, middle management, the co-determination committee and the staff. Ten policy measures emerged from this.

A first policy measure was the creation of the working group on intercultural management. This working group monitored the progress of ICM and came up with new ideas and initiatives. A second measure was an in-house survey of career experience, aspirations and perspectives (Koudijs et al., 1996). The survey produced indications that employees of ethnic origin possibly had fewer ambitions to be managers than those of non-immigrant origin. It was suggested that a management development programme should be organized for participants of both ethnic and non-immigrant origin and that a job rotation programme should be developed. A third measure was a mandatory intercultural management course for both senior and middle management, after it emerged that there was still considerable ignorance of the implications of a multicultural staff. Opinions of the course were divided. Some people thought that the course had indeed created a broader base of support for ICM, whilst there was resistance on the part of other course participants. As a result of the course a number of seminars were held. At these seminars areas for action were defined which were used as the starting point for the Policy Plan for Intercultural Management. The fourth and fifth policy measures were concerned with efforts to achieve a balanced mix of staff of non-immigrant and ethnic origin in the various departments and a better throughput to management level. The organizing of trips to restaurant, the sixth policy measure, offered an informal way of getting to know different cultures. The point of the seventh policy measure was to try to achieve a more balanced workforce of people of ethnic origin, which primarily consisted of people of Surinamese and Antillean origin. Rigorous application of the selection criteria was the eighth policy measure. The aim was to prevent the impression that people were offered jobs simply because they were of ethnic origin. When it came to drawing up clear selection criteria, the municipal system of job evaluation was abandoned in favour of a job evaluation system tailored more specifically to the organization. The ninth policy measure was the devising of indicators to provide information on trends in the multicultural workforce. Unlike many other companies and organizations, the Dr Sarphatihuis regarded registration within the meaning of the WBEAA as a useful aid (see also 6.6). The last policy measure was an in-house plan for communicating information on ICM.

Other policy measures included the preparation of an anti-discrimination code by SIEGA (an umbrella organization for all care institutions in Amsterdam).

### ***8.8 Organizational support for the policy***

One of the tasks of the working group on intercultural management was to provide a base of support for the policy. The first policy measure was to set up this working group. Management had also decided in 1991 to make cultural diversity a consideration in its policy and administrative planning

### ***8.9 Sticking points in implementing the policy***

Before the management team decided to make cultural diversity a consideration in its policy and administrative planning it first had to be persuaded of the value of ICM. To begin with there was a total lack of interest. The same arguments against an active policy as were mentioned in the first case – for example “there are no suitably qualified people from ethnic minorities to be recruited” – were also used by the management team. The door only opened slightly after a fulsome article appeared in the municipal staff newspaper about the Dr Sarphatihuis’s ICM policy, which portrayed the organization as an example of good policy on positive action. After long pressure by the personnel department and after the co-determination committee became involved, management finally changed tack. The plan of the personnel department to collect clear indicators for further analysis caused a lot of fuss in one particular case. This was over a study comparing absences for sickness amongst the staff of ethnic origin with those amongst the staff of non-immigrant origin. In some cases the staff of non-immigrant origin objected to this concentration on their ethnic colleagues. An attempt to organize management development training exclusively for employees of ethnic origin was felt to be extremely unfair and met with a great deal of opposition. As a consequence the policy now is to make as few distinctions as possible; training and courses are now open to everyone so that people do not feel they are missing out.

Some staff of ethnic origin look askance at any publicity about ICM. They believe that management still is not committed to the policy and does not try hard enough to recruit people of ethnic origin to more senior jobs: “management is still dominated by non-immigrants: they acknowledge the policy with their heads but not with their hearts”. Another problem is discriminatory comments made by older residents who have had little contact with ethnic minorities.

### ***8.10 Effects of the policy***

The ICM policy has unquestionably borne fruit. The publicity over ICM has undoubtedly contributed to its success. In 1996 the Dr Sarphatihuis was even awarded the '99 ARBO (occupational health and safety) prize by the Federation of Health Care Organizations in the Netherlands, for its ICM policy. The prize was awarded for the effective use of policy forms, instruments and measures, carefully targeted research, and the breadth of its in-house debate. The point must be made, however, that ethnic inflow continues to fill largely jobs in the lower levels of the hierarchy and in specific departments: the treatment and consultation department still does not include a single employee of ethnic origin.

### ***8.11 The Joint Declaration and other guidelines***

It emerged from interviews that the Joint Declaration on the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment at the workplace was familiar only to the head of personnel, who had no view on it. Those interviewed were, however, familiar with certain codes and mechanisms, for example the Amsterdam code of conduct to prevent and combat racial discrimination, the SIEGA anti-discrimination code, the machinery for handling complaints of sexual harassment and discrimination and the job applications code.

### ***8.12 Conclusion***

In this case too, the personnel department was able to introduce an effective policy of positive action/ICM on the basis of a policy already in place. It was prompted by a shortage of staff. It was made more effective by a phased approach which consisted of an evaluation and study stage, the deployment of various resources and a skilful analysis of the experience, aspirations and difficulties of the parties involved.

## PART D

### CONCLUSION

Our study describes two organizations, both of which stand out by virtue of their successful policy on minorities when comparable organizations, in comparable environments, have had little success with the policy. The regional North Holland Department of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management is one of the few departments in the Ministry in which there is proportional representation of ethnic minorities; the same goes for the Dr Sarphatihuis, which was formerly part of the Municipality of Amsterdam. The question now is what are the factors which explain the relative success of these two organizations? Relative, because in both organizations the inflow of ethnic minorities is still largely into the lower levels of the hierarchy. At first sight the two organizations, the North Holland Department and the Dr Sarphatihuis (a nursing home) are very different. The North Holland Department has many technical jobs, and the majority of its personnel are male. The Dr Sarphatihuis predominantly employs care personnel and most of them are female. The two organizations have many points in common, however, as regards the arguments in favour of an active policy on minorities, the underlying principles of the policy and the way in which it has been put into effect.

One of the most striking findings is that introduction of the policy does not have to have a base of support throughout the whole organization. In both organizations the policy was launched at the instigation of the personnel department, through the individual efforts of a limited number of people, including in both organizations the head of personnel. Their initiatives were underpinned by a policy already in place, and in both cases this included concrete measures such as the rule that preference had to be given to applicants of ethnic origin over other applicants of equal suitability. It was essential to have management backing for this. Also striking is the *absence* of any direct operational benefit to either organization. For example, a supermarket chain may find it useful in a city to have a multicultural staff. The North Holland Department cannot, however, be said to have a multicultural clientele, and the same is true – to a rather lesser extent – of the Dr Sarphatihuis: its residents currently include no more than 10% of people of ethnic origin. Manifestly it is not essential to the success of a policy that the organization should first be persuaded of the value of a policy of positive action. The approach known as managing diversity is known for arguing vigorously in favour of the value added which a mixed workforce can provide. Another influential factor was an analysis of specific sticking points in recruitment and selection (North Holland Department), problems of promotion through the hierarchy, experience of the policy and resistance to it (Dr Sarphatihuis). Analysis of this kind enabled both organizations to take appropriate action.

Both organizations paid attention to appropriate methods of recruitment, using a variety of alternative avenues and drawing up lists of potential candidates. This enabled vacancies to be filled quickly, invalidating early on an argument frequently advanced to explain the low levels of recruitment from ethnic minorities. It also made it impossible to complain that applicants lacked the necessary skills.

Both organizations received a lot of publicity from the results they achieved. The Dr Sarphatihuis has routinely been held up as an example by the Municipality, whilst the North

Holland Department is quoted as the standard showpiece of the civil service. In the case of the Dr Sarphatihuis this publicity certainly helped to make both management and the staff committee more committed to the policy. A “good practice award” would seem to be appropriate once the compendium is published.

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## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS IN TEXT AND TABLES

### DUTCH EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

BO	primary education
HAVO	senior general secondary education
HBO	higher vocational education
HEAO	higher commercial education
LBO	junior secondary vocational education
MAVO	junior general secondary education
MBO	senior secondary vocational education
MEAO	senior secondary commercial education
MTS	senior secondary technical school
VBO	pre-vocational education
VWO	pre-university education
WO	university education