



The Forgotten Electorate

Analysing Language Accessibility and Non-Citizen Voting Participation in Rotterdam

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Abstract

Due to its large foreign population, the Netherlands has since 1985 extended the right to participation in local elections to non-citizen residents within the country in order to stimulate the integration process. This has been especially important for the City of Rotterdam which for decades has been home to one of the most diverse populations within the Netherlands and is often referred to as an example of super-diversity. Despite this, however, the municipal authorities in Rotterdam have been reluctant to embrace its diversity and instead employed policies aimed at promoting Dutchness, owing mostly to the political influence of the right-wing party *Leefbaar Rotterdam*. Arguing that this attitude towards diversity has affected the municipality's approach to language diversity as well, this thesis will examine the language practices of the municipality in producing voting information in English in and around the 2018 municipal elections. To substantiate this argument, several forms of voting information together with an interview with one of the leading election officials will be examined by using an adapted form of qualitative content analysis looking at the use of language. The thesis finds that the right-wing political legacy has had a great effect on the availability of voting information in Rotterdam and has continued to do so during the 2018 municipal election.

Key words: Non-citizen residents, local voting rights, *Leefbaar Rotterdam*, municipal language practices

Introduction

Following the passing of a parliamentary bill in 1985, the Dutch Parliament took the unprecedented step of extending the right to participation in municipal elections to non-citizens residents in the Netherlands. Rather than being based on the traditional notion of national origin, local voting rights were now instead to be awarded on the basis of residency and participation within local communities, cities and towns. The only stipulation was proof of residency within the Netherlands for a minimum of 5 years. This requirement would later be removed for EU nationals residing within the Netherlands following the passing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 (Michon et al, 2007), further increasing the accessibility of voting for non-citizens. The extension of local voting rights would have many implications for Dutch communities as foreign nationals both from inside the EU as well as from outside now had an equal right to political participation and influence. Furthermore, the inclusion of voters speaking different languages and pertaining different cultural practices and customs would demand adaptation by both local municipal authorities. A case of particular interest is the city of Rotterdam, often pointed out as one of the foremost examples of what has been termed super-diversity, meaning a city or community being home to a multitude of cultural and linguistic diversity (Vertovec, 2007) More than half of Rotterdams' population is currently either first or second generation migrants and more than 180 different nationalities are to be found within the city (Scholten et al, 2019). Out of these, approximately 10% are EU residents (CBS, 2020), a figure that becomes much higher when counting in foreign non-EU residents of the city. The inclusion of these electorates in the voting is therefore a question of great importance in the city of Rotterdam as non-citizens constitute a sizeable minority.

What remains the question however, is to what extent this need for adaptation of the city authorities to the increasingly growing group of non-citizen voters has taken place and if and how it has translated into more accessible voting participation. When reviewing existing statistics regarding voting participation, it becomes obvious that there has exists a difference between non-citizen voters and Dutch nationals (Seidle, 2015) Although the extent of voting participation is always in flux, evidence points to participation being generally higher among citizens than non-citizens in the Netherlands, which is also the case of Rotterdam. Despite enjoying the same right as nationals, non-citizens tend to not use this right to the same extent (Michon et al, 2007). There are several possible explanations as to why this is the case among non-citizen voters, not only in the Netherlands, but generally in a European contexts. This has lead the European Commission and other EU organs to

initiate several plans at the supranational level to both identify the reasons behind the low participation and how these problems can be addressed. Increasing participation among so called mobile EU citizens is seen as very important in order to foster the sense of a European identity, originally envisioned in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. One important aspect highlighted by the EU reform initiative but often forgotten otherwise, is the basic role played by language in making voting information accessible and voting participation easier (de Groot et al, 2018). Since local voting rights in the Netherlands have been based on residency rather than citizenship since 1985, the once dominant role played by the Dutch language has diminished as an increasing part of the electorate speaks a different language as their mother tongue and use English far more regularly than Dutch for every day communication (Gerritsen et al, 2016). The need for voting information in other languages than Dutch, both from municipal authorities is thus important in order for non-citizen voters to fully be able to access their voting rights (de Groot et al, 2018).

To what extent this increasing linguistic diversity and the every day use of English has translated into more inclusive language practices in the diverse city of Rotterdam is however rather unexplored, highlighting the importance of research into the topic. One of the most important factors in beginning to understand the approach to diverse language practices within the municipality is the political legacy of the right-wing party *Leefbaar Rotterdam*. Having entered the municipal council in the early 2000s, the party championed the cause of Dutch nationalism and tradition and sought to curb what they saw as the increasingly foreign influence on Rotterdam. Along with promoting Dutch traditions and values, the Dutch language was further established as the sole official language of the municipality. This policy was formulated into what became known as the Citizen pledge of Rotterdam. Despite *Leefbaar Rotterdam* gradually losing influence after 2006 and policies aimed at promoting and embracing diversity has been increasingly prevalent, the status of Dutch as the only official language has remained. (Dekker et al, 2019). The aim of this thesis will therefore be to analyse the accessibility of alternative languages used by the municipality in Rotterdam and its policies relating to the accessibility of language are purposefully thought out. This will be done by combining insights from three different areas of existing literature: Non-citizen voting rights, super-diversity in the context of Rotterdam and the use of language as a means of inclusion and exclusion.

As of yet, research combining the three above mentioned stands of literature is currently lacking within academia, opening a gap within which the thesis will situate itself. Furthermore, research

into the language practices of Dutch municipalities is also scarce, if found at all. Thus in order to combine their insights and to form a basis for the thesis research, the following research question will be applied: How did municipal authorities in the city of Rotterdam employ information in English during the Dutch Municipal Elections of 2018? How did the local political context of Rotterdam affect the use or non-use of voting information in English? What are the possible social effects on non-citizen voters reading in Rotterdam? In order to adequately answer the research question of the thesis and contribute to the research area of non-citizen voting rights in the Netherlands and Rotterdam, the research will rely both on the analysis of relevant documents and forms of information as well as on interviews with municipal and party officials and will be conducted by applying a combined approach of qualitative content analysis to examine the extent and accessibility of alternative languages within municipal voting information and poll station information and possible motivations therefore.

The central tenants of the thesis will be presented in three main sections following the introduction chapter outlining the theoretical framework and the methodology. Firstly a background to non-citizen voting in the Netherlands will be introduced the local political context of Rotterdam is discussed. These sections will serve to give an overview of the historical and political landscape in which non-citizen voting rights have emerged and existed within. Secondly, the distribution of voting information and voting material will be examined to analyse the extent and accessibility of the respective content in languages other than Dutch and their underlying motivations. This second section will constitute the main research contribution of the thesis. Thirdly, a discussion of the research findings will be conducted by applying the insights from the theoretical framework. Here, the implications of the limited availability of voting information in English will be examined. Following the main sections outlined above, a conclusion will be provided in which the research findings are summarised. Some reflections on the research process as well as suggestions for future research will also be provided.

Theoretical Framework

In order to utilise already existing academic literature, this thesis research will base itself around three main areas of research to better understand the relationship between language practices and local voting in Rotterdam. As stated in the introduction, these three areas of academic literature are non-citizen voting rights, super-diversity in the context of Rotterdam and language as a means of

inclusion and exclusion. Although being inherently different from one another as they address very different problem areas using varied designs and methods, the different fields and authors all contribute ideas and insights relevant to the study of language usage and voting. The aim of including the different academic spheres is to both understand the concept of non-citizen voting rights, the local, super-diverse context of Rotterdam in which those rights are being exercised and what impact the language practices of the municipality have on those rights. To exemplify their importance, the three academic fields and their main studies will be introduced in more depth in the following sections.

Non-citizen Voting Rights

To start off, the literature on non-citizen voting rights is central to the research as it engages with the very basis of the thesis research itself, namely the non-national voter. The rationale for expanding the vote to encompass non-citizens has developed alongside the increase in migration and the rise of transnationalism, emphasising the rights of non-citizens (Seidle, 2015). Instead of seeing resident foreigners as temporary alien components, there has been a general move towards first accepting the permanent presence of foreign nationals and second to seek to incorporate them into the host society (Seidle, 2015). By involving foreign residents in the decision-making process, it is believed that the positive relations between the host society and the non-citizens can be strengthened for the benefit of society as a whole. This line of reasoning is also present in the analysis of the impact of non-citizen voting rights on social cohesion in the local context. Although difficulties and challenges might arise early on, evidence shows that the long-term societal cohesion is improved by involving residents in the decision-making process (Munro, 2008). Further relevant is the argument put forward for local voting rights as the most suitable form of participation as it is more directly applicable to the everyday life of foreign residents and more easily granted by national authorities as it does not impact the citizen-based national elections.

Placing the debate more closely to the context of Europe and the Netherlands, there has been a purposeful move by both the Netherlands and the EU to increase the participation of non-citizen voters. As analysed in a 2007 article by Michon, Tillie and Van Heelsum (2007), the 1985 extension of local voting rights to non-citizens having resided in the Netherlands for 5 years or more was the first big step towards involving foreign residents in the voting process. Similar to the argumentation presented in the previous section, the extension of local voting rights was carried out in order to facilitate better integration. Following the 1992 Maastricht treaty and its emphasis on promoting

European integration, the already existing local-voting rights were made more accessible for EU-residents as the 5 year residency requirements for voting eligibility was dropped across the Union., although not changing the status of third country nationals and thereby leaving some things to be desired, the 1992 reforms did impact democratic and participatory strength of the EU and its member states by increasing the size of the electorate and safeguarding its rights (Shaw, 2010). Since then several different EU initiatives to increase the participation of especially mobile EU citizens, but also by extension non-native speakers, has been launched. These initiatives has aimed at non only harmonising policymaking across the EU but also to support the right of every individual to equal participation. Examples of these can be found in the IMPEUs' Good Practice Guide on Political Inclusion Policies (2020) and the REC Action program to Improve the inclusion of mobile EU citizens and their political and societal participation (2020)

Super-Diversity and Rotterdam

Turning now to super-diversity, this area of literature is important to the research as it provides insights into how certain cities and societies have transformed from more or less homogenous entities into places of super-diversity where old conceptions of national identity and belonging are outdated. The term was originally put forward by Steven Vertovec in his 2007 article 'Super-diversity and its implications' and what it refers to is the emergence of new and increasingly complex forms of diversity that redefines the old conceptualisations of minorities. By looking at how the metropolitan city of London is now home to more than 179 different nationalities, the old term diversity is no longer deemed sufficient for accurately describing the complexities of the post-migration society present in the UK (Vertovec, 2007). In such a society, basing voting rights simply around the stale notion of citizenship becomes redundant as it excludes an increasing part of the population. The original idea of Vertovec has since been expanded beyond the so called ethnic lens to encompass a broader interpretation of super-diversity. Rather than focusing on nationality as the primary focus of study, the role of the individual has become ever more important as identity has increasingly become tied to other aspects such as language, sexuality, profession and general interest (Schiller et al, 2009). What the term super-diversity proposes therefore, is the reconceptualisation of what constitutes the basic societal fabric. It thus follows that the idea of a fixed majority group that minority groups have to integrate into is no longer applicable to the context of modern super-diverse societies.

The term super-diversity and what it describes is not however, limited to its original context of the UK but has been found to describe the situation in several cities where large scale migration has been present. One of the cities that is often brought forward as an example is that of Rotterdam. Having been a port city long dependent on trade, Rotterdam has always directed its attention outwards, bringing it closer to the world but also the world closer to Rotterdam. This latter statement can clearly be observed when analysing the level of migration to the city. While growing in terms of absolute numbers, the city has also, just like London, experienced an increasing diversity of origin and currently more than 180 nationalities are represented within the city. This has in Rotterdam reached the extent of the total number of minority residents being larger than that of the majority (Scholten et al, 2019). Understanding super-diversity in Rotterdam is therefore vital to any research engaging with diversity related policy practices as it problematises the traditional assumptions of majority groups in society. This super-diverse nature of Rotterdam is the focus of the 2019 book 'Coming to Terms with Superdiversity: The Case of Rotterdam' by Scholten et al (2019), analysing the many realities and issues present within the city. One such issue has been the political arena of Rotterdam where the influence of the right-wing party *Leefbaar Rotterdam* has had a great influence over policies aimed at promoting Dutch and Dutchness over multiculturalism. The extent of this effect will be discussed more elaborately in the Background section.

Language as Inclusion and Exclusion

The last area of academic literature surrounds the topic of language and how its use can contribute to either the inclusion or exclusion of certain groups. Owing to the existence of a multitude of spoken languages in Rotterdam, the issue of language use becomes important. Furthermore, since the voting rights of non-citizens are based on residence rather than citizenship, the rights are also not based on the requirement of use of the Dutch language. As will be investigated by this thesis however, the accessibility of language in connection to the 2018 election does not necessarily take this into consideration. In order to understand what effects language policies can have and what purpose it can serve, a number of critical readings should be considered. Firstly is the work by Schrover and Schinkel (2013) on the use of language as a means of exclusion and inclusion with regards to migrant integration. Although the main tenants of the research surrounds discursive practices within one particular language, the authors propose that language can be used as a deliberate manner to exclude certain groups from societal discourse and to highlight their differences and perceived lack of belonging in society. The link between social differentiation and language use is further developed by Brubaker (2013) who designates it as the most important

designators for national and ethnic belonging in western European countries next to religion. In contrast to religion however, which is often seen as an essential freedom that is guaranteed within almost all liberal constitutions, freedom of language holds a much more precarious place within the institutional apparatus. Although being able to speak a certain language in private is respected, access information and service in languages other than those officials endorsed is seldom guaranteed.

A similar argumentation focused on the use of different languages resulting in perceived exclusion was presented by Hitlan et al (2006) and Kulkarni & Summer (2015). Despite the studies focusing on workplaces and organisational settings respectively, they both emphasise how the preference of one language within multilingual settings highlight social inequalities and lead to speakers of other languages feeling ostracised and excluded when not using the majority language. Monolingual practices as studied in the articles were shown to impact both individual motivation and productivity as well as a broader sense of group belonging and commitment to organisational structures. Magnified and applied to the bigger setting of a society, the effects of reinforcing the use of one language in a multilingual setting might have similarly problematic repercussions for social cohesion. Majority groups and social institutions purposefully using a language not spoken by minority groups might therefore affect not only an individual sense of belonging but whole segments of societies.

Data and Methodology

In order to operationalise the academic insights from the theoretical framework and to examine to what extent there has or has not been a move towards actively including non-citizen voters in the city of Rotterdam, the access to voting information in English and the process behind it will be the main tenant of this thesis research. Assuming that access to voting information in a language commonly understood by non-citizens is fundamental for voting participation, the widespread availability of such information becomes a key component in studying the adaptation to non-citizen voter needs. As will be further elaborated below, a qualitative study involving several different forms of data has been adopted.

To analyse the extent of voting information available in English during the 2018 municipal election in Rotterdam, the data collection will include four separate forms of material relevant to the study. As the municipality of Rotterdam and the 2018 municipal election are at the centre of the study, only data specifically relating to these will be included in the study. Firstly, a set of documents and information produced by the municipality for the 2018 municipal election will be analysed in terms of what language they are written in. These documents include several different posters and leaflets and will be analysed to understand the extent of language accessibility present within voting information produced by the municipal authorities leading up to the election. Secondly, polling station information from the 2018 election will be analysed to see to what extent information at the physical place of voting was available in English. This information mainly includes voting instructions. Thirdly two documents regarding the planning and execution of the election are also included to understand if or to what extent diverse language has been focused on in preparation of the election. Fourthly and lastly, a semi-structured interview was conducted with an individual from the Municipality of Rotterdam involved in the 2018 local election to better understand the design of language practices and their possible underlying motivations. A semi-structured interview is chosen as it allows the interviewee to expand more broadly on the questions posed while also allowing for some structure on the part of the interviewer. The questions of the interview focused mainly around how the municipality has approached the question of language diversity and to what extent reaching non-citizen voters through information in English has been prioritised. As mentioned, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for much freedom for the participants in elaborating more freely on certain points. Put together, these four sources of data will create a substantial overview of the available voting information in English and shed light on the language practices of the Rotterdam municipality.

Following the data collection, the different source material will be compiled and analysed to establish both the accessibility of voting information in English as well as to understand the motivations behind the use these language practices. This analysis will be carried out by applying a qualitative content analysis. Gaining insight into the language practices of the municipal authorities in Rotterdam will contribute to the understanding of the complexities existing within the relationship between the the accessibility of voting information and the voting participation of non-citizen voters. Although the expected results of the analysis are insights into the active thought processes behind the use of language, the lack of any such language practises will be a finding in itself as it showcases the perhaps unintentional effects of missing language policies of the

Rotterdam municipality. As mentioned in the introduction, referring to possible political motivations behind such language practises will also be taken into consideration, taking the political context of Rotterdam into consideration. In contrast to a regular qualitative content analysis, this study will employ a highly specific coding pattern as it is the extent of language, the use of language and the underlying language policies that are the centre of the research. Since the existence or non-existence of English voting information is the primary focus of the study, the language of the documents and voting information is what is analysed. The research will further not be engaged with analysing the discourse of the voting information in any particular language but rather the usage of one language over another.

Background

Following on from the theoretical framework and the methodology, this background chapter will be divided into two sections and serve to explain first the origins and evolution of non-citizen voting rights within the Netherlands and then the important role played by the right wing party Leefbaar Rotterdam in shaping the municipal approach to language policy and diversity. The sections will seek to setup the analysis conducted on the availability of voting information in English and the municipal policies underpinning it.

Non-Citizen Voting Rights in the Netherlands and Rotterdam

The state of the Netherlands has ever since its independence from Spain in the 15th century been a country inherently interconnected with the world. Owing to its many roles as an entrepôt for trade, a former colonial empire and its status as a founding member of the European community, a large foreign community has been a near constant presence within the country. Add on the large-scale labour immigration taking place in the 1970s and 80s together with the repatriation of a large numbers of Surinamese citizens to the Netherlands and a very international environment emerges (van Meeteren et al, 2013). However, although a substantial foreign community had been living within the Netherlands for a long time, the question of their participatory status in relation to Dutch citizens and Dutch nationality remained separate. The possibility to participate politically and to be involved in the decision-making process was reserved for Dutch citizens, no matter the length of residency in the Netherlands. However, as new conceptions of citizenship developed together with a strong will to better incorporate the foreigners living in the Netherlands into Dutch society, the question of non-citizen voting rights gained more and more traction in the 1970s (Hof, 2015).

The first political initiative to enfranchise non-citizen residents in the Netherlands emerged in the early 1970s as a constitutional review of the Dutch constitution opened up for an amendment, allowing for the possibility of introducing voting rights for non-citizen residents. As with many emancipatory initiatives in the Netherlands, the inquiry had been suggested by the political parliamentary left in the form of the social democrats. Despite the possibility of electoral rights being suggested however, the initiative did not hold widespread support in the Dutch parliament and therefore would not be approved (Hof, 2015). This would continually be the case up until the mid 1980s. The lack of a political willingness to reform the electoral system within the national parliament however, did not preclude similar reforms being proposed on the local municipal level. Having long had a large foreign community, the neighbourhood councils of Rotterdam was much more interested in allowing for non-citizen voting rights in an effort to stimulate the civic integration of the many minority communities within the city. Thus the right to local voting rights was extended to foreign residents in 1979, making Rotterdam one of the first cities in Europe to do so. The municipality of Amsterdam, also a city with several large minority communities introduced similar reforms in 1981 (Hof, 2015). This local reformatory momentum increasingly put pressure on the Dutch parliament to consider the issue once more by changing the national constitution so as to open up the legal enfranchisement of foreign voters. This constitutional amendment was achieved in 1983, paving the way for the introduction of a parliamentary bill to finally change the status of non-citizen voters nationally (Broeksteeg, 2010).

The electoral reform bill was presented to and adopted by the Dutch parliament in 1985, completing a political process that had been ongoing for almost a decade . The formulation and passing of the bill had however, by no means been a simple and uncontroversial process as it would alter the very nature of the relationship between national citizenship and voting right in the Netherlands. Although both the political right and left were in agreement that the bill was needed, how far reaching the bill would be was a sensitive question. The result was compromise of sorts wherein non-citizens would be given voting rights in the local municipal elections but would have to have resided within the Netherlands for a minimum of 5 years (Jacobs, 1988). Mandatory checks of non-citizens voters residential permits would also be conducted to minimise the risk of illegal residents voting, a fear that was particularly present within the right-wing parties. Nevertheless, the bill allowed non-citizens throughout the Netherlands to participate in the local elections for the first time in 1986. Another interesting part of the deliberations surrounding the bill was that of language. In connection

to the 5 year residency requirement, some elements of the right further suggested that the elections should legally have to be carried out in Dutch in order to stimulate the need for linguistic integration for non-citizen voters. This proposition did however, not carry widespread support within the parliament as it was seen as excessively restrictive (Jacobs, 1988). The decision on the use of language would instead principally be given over to each and every municipality during the local election. Noticeable is however, that the government opted for a national information campaign in the wake of the bill to inform non-citizen voters nationwide of their new rights. This informational campaign was carried out in more than 6 different languages.

The passing of the electoral bill made then Netherlands the first country in Europe to introduce national legislation enfranchising non-citizens on a local level. Setting an early example, the practise was soon adopted by more and more countries around Europe. This movement of extending voting rights was within a few years picked up at a supranational level by the reform friendly European Union, looking to propel the evolution of the Union beyond the predominantly economic focus that had dominated thus far. Following the introduction of the European Parliament in 1979, the European Commission was increasingly interested in making the EU a more cohesive and participatory political unit with a unifying sense of identity. During the negotiations for the Maastricht treaty of 1992 therefore, the concept of a European citizenship was introduced (Shaw, 2010). Key to this concept was to enable EU nationals to settle and participate on a more equal level no matter which country they settled in. To this effect, non-citizen EU voters would be given the right to vote in local election as long as they were registered residents of the locality in question. For the Netherlands, this meant that the 5 year residency requirement was to be removed for EU residents within the country. However, as the treaty did not address the status of third country national residents, the residency requirement would remain in place for non-EU nationals. This fact entailed the creation of two distinct categories of non-citizen voters whose rights fell under EU law on the one hand and Dutch law on the other.

The Political Legacy of Leefbaar Rotterdam

As seen in the previous chapter, Rotterdam was the first municipality in both the Netherlands and Europe to introduce local voting rights for non-citizen residents in 1979. The vote was only extended to the neighbourhood councils since any change to the electorate of municipal and city council elections had to be proposed by the national parliament. This nevertheless progressive

approach to social inclusion through participation was further evident in the lack of the sort of conditionality included in the 1985 parliamentary electoral reform bill (Hof, 2015). Before the introduction of the bill, there had for instance not existed any-long term residency requirement for non-citizen voters. Rather more like the EU reform of 1992, residency was the condition for participation. Proposals from certain parties to include restrictions to the voting rights were rejected by the majority PvdA as the importance of equality and an equal right to participation was upheld. Cultural pluralism was a noticeable and defining idea inherent within the reform of the electorate, showcasing the prominent role of social inclusion and participation of all residents inherent in the debate about non-citizen voting rights from the very beginning of the movement.

The progressive political environment of the 70s and 80s that had resulted in increasing efforts to include the large foreign community in the city would however, by the turn of the millennium face serious challenge. As the size of the foreign population kept on growing and thereby changing the ethnic makeup of Rotterdam, voices critical of the effects of increased immigration became louder. These dissenting opinions would eventually result in the creation of the local party Leefbaar Rotterdam, just in time for the 2002 municipal elections. Running on a platform of promoting traditional Dutch values, language and culture rather than accommodating the multicultural policies that had come before, the party and their leader Pim Fortuyn exceeded all expectations by becoming the biggest party of the elections (van Ostaaijen, 2018). In their first ever election, Leefbaar Rotterdam secured a majority in the Rotterdam city council, radically altering the policies and objectives pursued by the previous left right coalition. At the heart of the party's policies lay a radically different approach to the question of diversity and multiculturalism as mentioned. This means in practise less support for minority organisations, less political accommodation to cultural pluralism and more stringent integration demands (Uitermark et al, 2008).

With this also came a reemphasis on the Dutch language as the main unofficial and official language of the city. This was to be observed for instance in the Rotterdam citizen pledge that was introduced at the end of the 2002-2006 mandate. The pledge clearly states that each and every citizen shall strive to use Dutch in all aspects of life within the city, when working, interacting and even when raising one's own kids. Regarding the language practises of the municipality itself, the accession of Leefbaar Rotterdam meant that no official information would be translated to either English or any other language since residents in Rotterdam were supposed to learn Dutch. Any language accommodation was seen as an incentive not to learn Dutch (van Ostaaijen, 2018).

However, although the right-wing populism present within Rotterdam did have a particularly strong impact on local language policies, there existed at the same time a push from the national government to promote the role of Dutch as a tool for integration. This policy was called “inburgering” in Dutch and constituted a new integration regime aimed at imposing more control over the process of integration and what elements constituted it. An important part of this were increasingly tough language requirements that, from the late 1990s, were set as counter demands for immigrants receiving residence permits, social benefits and eventual naturalisation. Although EU residents were exempted from these language requirements, the increased focus on Dutch as the only central language of communication meant that non-Dutch speakers would be impacted in terms of communication and access to information (Bjornson et al, 2007).

Despite however, once more becoming the biggest party in the 2006 elections, Leefbaar Rotterdam were ousted from power in the city council due to a coalition being formed with the PvdA at its head once more. This shift in power would however, not directly mean a return to the progressive approach to diversity and minority accommodation pursued prior to 2002. Rather, the political influence of Leefbaar Rotterdam continued to be significant, although decreasing, as it became the biggest party in every election, including the election of 2018. A very open and public dedication to respecting all religions, ethnicities, sexualities and nationalities was made only at the start of the 2018 mandate due to the formation of a four party coalition able to hold a strong majority and thereby ousting Leefbaar Rotterdam from power (Ostaijen, 2018). Since then, the municipality has increasingly emphasised its commitment to diversity in its public policies. What has remained absent within those policies and documents related to diversity is any discussion relating to language diversity. This can be seen especially in the Integration & the Community Action Programme, unveiled in 2018. Despite extensively explaining the city’s approach to diversity and respect for minorities, the question of language and the importance of access to information in English and other languages is absent (Gementee Rotterdam, 2019). Furthermore, the citizenship pledge affirming the predominance of Dutch is still in place, unaltered since 2006. Much of this can be explained by the prominence of Leefbaar Rotterdam and its support within the city of Rotterdam. Despite being part of the opposition, the influence and popularity of the party continues to affect the politics of Rotterdam, most especially in the question of language practices. The question as to how this has affected the most recent municipal election held in 2018 and continues to affect the access to voting information in other languages than Dutch will be explored in the following chapter.

Research Results

Having looked at the background to both the introduction of non-citizen voting rights in the Netherlands and the policies and influence of right-wing populism in Rotterdam, the analysis of voting information and municipal language policy will now be examined. As mentioned, analysing the extent of voting information available in English during the 2018 Municipal election involved three different forms of source material related to three different stages of the voting process. Firstly, looking at the language of the voting information distributed in the lead up to the election would allow for a much deeper understanding of the direct access to understandable information available to non-citizen voters. Secondly is the polling station information available to voters at the places of voting. Since this form of information is directly related to the physical voting itself, it is very important for properly being able to carry out the voting procedure as intended. Thirdly, the semi-structured interviews with officials at the municipality were intended to gain an insight into the planning and execution of the informational voting campaign. The results of the data analysis will be presented thematically in order to cluster the relevant information together. Voting information and polling station information will constitute the the first section on the accessibility of information while the second section will involve the interview and documents relating to the planning and execution of the election and focus on the motivations behind the language practices at the municipality.

Access to Municipal Voting Information in English

Several different documents made up the voting and polling station information that was available in 2018. To start with, two items of the voting information were sent to every household in Rotterdam, namely a flyer with general information regarding the election and the party list with all candidates eligible for election in Rotterdam. Both items further contained instructions on where and how to vote. Three elections were included in the information as the election day of March 21 included elections of the municipal council, the neighbourhood councils and the 2018 advisory referendum on the adoption of the intelligence and security services Act. When analysing the language of the two forms of information, it is clear that they both are written and distributed exclusively in Dutch and not pertaining any information in English.

Two kinds of posters placed and distributed around the city were another form of voting information. The first poster gives a brief outline regarding the basic information of the election such as the date of the election and the three elections to be decided in the vote. Furthermore it outlines all the polling stations available around the city of Rotterdam as well as encourages voters to vote on election day. The second flyer is more extensive as it focuses on both election itself but also on how candidates are to make themselves available for election in the different elections and committees. Important information as well as important dates are included in the document. Both the flyers are available in Dutch only.

Next to the voting information is the information available at the polling stations themselves. Two documents present in the polling stations were collected. The first document explains the house rules of the polling stations and what is and is not allowed to bring and do when coming to the polling stations. Possible consequences of misbehaviours are also explained. Although the document contains pictures to illustrate what is not allowed, the text of the document is nevertheless written in Dutch and does not contain English. The second document explains and illustrates which voters are allowed to participate in which of the three elections as a Dutch nationality was required for the referendum but not the other elections. Although being partly directed at EU voters specifically for them to know which election to participate in, the document is only available in Dutch.

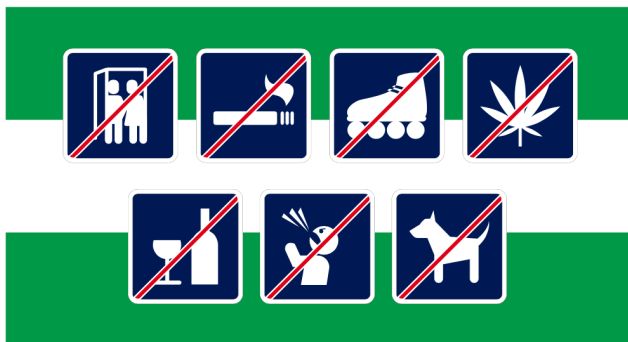
Taking all the voting and polling station informational documents produced by the municipality and collected in this research section together, the conclusion is that there is no information relating to the election available in languages other than Dutch. This despite the non-Dutch electorate, of which many have a much higher likelihood of being able to understand voting information in English than Dutch, legally being a part of the electorate eligible for the 2018 election. This right to participation is both guaranteed in the case of voting and standing as candidates in the elections. Although the polling station information contains visual illustrations aimed to simplify the understanding of the house rules, the text explaining the rules is nevertheless only available in Dutch.

Municipal Policy Regarding Diverse Language Practices

Part of the official planning documents drawn up in advance of the 2018 municipal election in Rotterdam was the Election plan, detailing how the election was to be carried out by the municipal

authorities in Rotterdam. The document touches on many different aspects of the election as it presents the complete plan from start to finish. Of most interest to this research is the section outlining the planning regarding the distribution and access to voting information. A detailed outline is presented on how the municipality should distribute the relevant voting information in order to reach a broad group of voters. Following the analysis of the document, it is clear that information in languages other than Dutch however, are not considered. Voters are not thought of as having different language needs and therefore, the question of diverse language information and information in English are not touched upon in the document at all.

Huisregels stemlokalen



Welkom op het stembureau!

Om het stemmen voor iedereen zo plezierig mogelijk te laten verlopen is het niet toegestaan om:













- huisdieren mee te nemen, met uitzondering van geleidehonden
- op rolschaatsen, rollerskates, skateboard of step te rijden
- te roken, alcohol of drugs te gebruiken
- na het stemmen in een andere ruimte dan de publieke ruimte van het stembureau te zijn
- te eten
- luidruchtig mobiele telefoongesprekken te voeren
- lawaai te maken
- de orde te verstoren
- u agressief te gedragen

Heeft u vragen? Stel ze aan de medewerkers van het stembureau.

Polling station house rules

Source: Gemeente Rotterdam

Welke stempas krijg ik als Rotterdamse kiezer?

	Gemeenteraad	Gebieds-commissie of wijkraad	Referendum
 Ik heb de Nederlandse nationaliteit en ben 18 jaar of ouder.			
 Ik heb de nationaliteit van een ander EU-land en ben 18 jaar of ouder.			
 Ik heb geen EU-nationaliteit, woon minimaal 5 jaar in Nederland en ben 18 jaar of ouder.			
 Ik heb de Nederlandse nationaliteit of een nationaliteit van een ander EU-land of woon al minimaal 5 jaar in Nederland. Ik ben 16 of 17 jaar oud.			
Waar kan ik stemmen?	In heel Rotterdam	In uw eigen gebied of in uw eigen wijk	In heel Rotterdam

Maak het uzelf makkelijk: stem in uw eigen wijk!



Voting eligibility instructions

Source: Gemeente Rotterdam

Another document is the general information and instructions for polling station officials within the municipality of Rotterdam. This document outlines and describes all aspects of the responsibilities and the work to be carried out by all the municipal officials working at polling stations during the 2018 local elections in Rotterdam. Practical aspects such as the organisation of the polling station, placement of information, voting booths and voting cards as well as general principles for official

conduct are all explained in detail. The instructions lack any directions or instructions when it comes to language policy however. The importance of clear communication and instruction towards voters are explained however, language is not discussed as a potential obstacle to clear communication and instructions.

In the interview conducted with one of the leading election officials within the Rotterdam municipality, a set of questions regarding the use of diverse languages within the municipality of Rotterdam and the political policies determining those languages practices were posed and discussed. First off, the topic of voting information in English was brought up. As far as known to the official there had been no voting information available or distributed to voters in English. Only Dutch had been considered as a language worth including for reaching voters through voting information. There was however, some brief information available on the translated municipal election webpage even though this was an automatic translation and not a translation carried out by the municipality itself. As described by the official, this was a sort of “compromise” made by the municipality to still allow non-Dutch speaking voters to access some extent of information. It could thus be seen as a compromise between the language ideology or practices of the municipality and the practicality of reaching out efficiently. This would indicate that there is an awareness that non-dutch speaking voters are part of the electorate.

Secondly, the broader question of what the underlying reasons for this lack of information in English were was discussed. The official answered that it in their opinion, this state of being is a legacy of the time when the right-wing party *Leefbaar Rotterdam* held a majority within the city council. The official is quoted as saying “I think this policy making by the right-wing party for the last years have been a very big influence on the language policies. English was only to be used in matters of tourism and culture and sever health hazards”. This would indicate that the approach to language diversity was very much active and thought out in order to promote and enshrine the usage of Dutch as the only official language of the municipality. As more concrete evidence for this, the official further pointed to the Rotterdam citizen pledge, introduced by *Leefbaar Rotterdam* in 2006. The Citizen pledge clearly states that Dutch should be the common language for all citizens of Rotterdam, both public and private and that all new residents of the city should learn and use Dutch upon arrival. Even though the official had assumed their position after 2006 and after the expiration of *Leefbaar Rotterdam*’s 2002-2006 majority, they stated that Dutch was without any underlying

discussion used as the only working and informational language during the subsequent elections, including the 2018 municipal election and the planning for the upcoming 2022 municipal election.

Thirdly, the topic of what legal responsibilities are put on the municipality regarding language diversity by Dutch law was discussed. The official stated that there were no specific requirements related to language practices during the elections other than a commitment to clear and open communication with the local voting electorate. Several blueprints and information document designs are distributed from the national election committee to the municipality in advance of the municipal elections however, information in other languages was and is not a part of this material. It is therefore up to every municipality to decide on and implement their chosen approach to the use of languages.

When reviewing the planning documents for the election and the insights given by the interview with the official at the municipality, two things become obvious. First, the instructions given to employees working with the election and the plan of operation put in place for the election do not feature any discussion or mentioning of language diversity or the need to provide information and communication in other languages than Dutch. Although there is a clear emphasis on the value and importance of providing clear communication to all voters to ensure proper and informed participation, having information in different languages is not considered a tool in ensuring this. Second, based on the answers provided in the interview, it would seem that the reasons for the language policies of the municipality being solely focused on Dutch as a means of communication are related to the political legacy of Leefbaar Rotterdam. Having introduced measures to promote Dutch as the only official language within the municipality of Rotterdam in the early 2000s, these approach to language has remained. Despite not being a policy implemented by the current city council majority therefore, the focus on providing voting information in Dutch only has remained as common practise within the municipality. This can be further evidenced by the Integration & Community Action Programme introduced in 2019 with the purpose of outlining the official stance on diversity and language of the Rotterdam municipality. In the document, Dutch is specifically pointed out as the most important common denominator for all residents of Rotterdam and the population should actively strive to learn it (Gementee Rotterdam, 2019).

Discussion: The Effects of Limited Voting Information on Voting Participation

Following the results of the analysis of the different data sources presented in the previous chapter, this chapter will discuss the findings further and apply the theoretical insights presented in the introduction. The effects of the lack of access to voting information in English will be looked at first by analysing it through the academic work on the rationale of non-citizen voting rights. Following this, the specific implication of these language practices for the local context of Rotterdam will be discussed. Thirdly, the results will be looked at through the lens of language as a means of exclusion, and how it can potentially alienate parts of a diverse population.

As outlined previously, the question of extending voting rights to non-resident citizens has since the beginning centred around the question of integration. Incorporation into Dutch society was one of the key reasons as to why the Dutch parliament eventually adopted the 1985 electoral reform bill (Jacobs, 1988). Although being a limited enfranchisement, the basic motivation remained the same. This argument of integration through voting participation had further been pushed within the municipality of Rotterdam, which became the first city in the Netherlands to introduce local voting rights in the neighbourhood councils in 1979 (Hof, 2015). Including minorities and foreign communities was just as in 1985 at the heart of the reform. What has been observed in the years after 1985 however, is that the intended effects of the bill in terms of voting participation have not been reached. Despite many non-citizens participating in the local elections across the Netherlands, the participation has consistently been lower than that of national voters, despite the right to vote having been in place for several decades (Michon et al., 2007). There are thus obstacles to the voting participation of non-citizens and by extension, obstacles to the integration of non-citizens. One of the major reasons as identified by several EU reports on local voting rights, is the lack of voting information in an understandable language, something this thesis has evidenced is the case in the municipal elections of Rotterdam. At a basic level, this lack of voting information in English affects the ability of non-Dutch voters to understand and process information related to the voting and participation process.

What becomes apparent then is the inherent contradiction in having the right to vote for non-citizens while at the same time not providing information that can be fully accessed by those same voters. This means that the fundamental intention to facilitate integration through voting

participation, present both in the Rotterdam reform bill of 1979, the parliamentary electoral bill of 1985 and the Maastricht treaty of 1992 is curtailed. The equal access to information and participation as a basic right is enshrined within all of these pieces of legislation and although never specifically stating that this should involve diverse language practices, this thesis would argue that such a specification should not be needed. By not providing information in other languages or at least in English, those principles are inherently obstructed and can be argued to have failed, at least partially, in their stated aim. If the intention is indeed to ensure the equal opportunity of participation, which is evident when reviewing the content of the legislation, diverse language practices is a basic starting point if the large non-citizen minority is to be reached and included in the participatory process as intended.

Shifting the discussion towards the local context of Rotterdam more specifically, the cities relationship with diversity has been complex as the political climate within the city has changed overtime, having a great effect also on the municipalities approach to language practices as well. As has already been discussed, The progressive movement led by the PvdA in the 70s and 80s that initially extended the right to vote to non-citizens eventually gave way to an increasingly strong right wing Populist movement in the early 2000s in the form of *Leefbaar Rotterdam*. This would mean that the multicultural policies of the previous incumbent parties were exchanged for a more Dutch centric/nationalist approach to politics and questions of diversity. Integration into Dutch society and the adoption of Dutch culture and values was seen as essential for social cohesion (van Ostaaijen, 2018). In terms of what this meant for language, the shift towards an explicit embrace of Dutch as the sole official and unofficial language can be seen in the Citizenship Pledge, introduced in 2006. Following *Leefbaar Rotterdam*'s ousting from the coalition government in the 2018 election, the general approach of the municipality changed with diversity becoming increasingly embraced by the official authorities rather than problematised. Several official documents promoting the acceptance of different religions, sexualities and ethnicities has since been produced.

What remains absent in any of these documents however, is any discussion of language diversity and an acceptance of different languages coexisting within the official conceptualisation of diversity within the city of Rotterdam. As pointed to in the interview with the official from the Rotterdam Municipality, this approach towards official language policy would appear to be a remnant of the political influence wielded by *Leefbaar Rotterdam* which, although comprising the political opposition, still influences the direction of local politics in Rotterdam. The fact that the citizenship

pledge has been retained by the municipality is ample evidence of this. These Dutch-centric language practices can directly be argued to contradict the increasingly super-diverse nature of Rotterdam. Rather than being a city divided into one major overarching majority and small minorities of insignificant comparison, Rotterdam exhibits a population where cultural and language practices other than those considered Dutch are the rule rather than the exception. As mentioned on the website of the municipality itself, the city is home to more than 180 different nationalities and a multitude of other sub identities relating to any number of varying senses of attachment (Scholten et al, 2019). The status of Dutch therefore, is considerably weaker within Rotterdam than that of many other Dutch cities. By promoting Dutch as the only official language to be used in communication from the municipality and as the language all citizens of Rotterdam should use at home, the large language diversity existing within the city is indirectly suppressed.

As argued by the last group of theories concerned with language as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion, the implications of a one language policy in a multilingual setting and the exclusion of certain groups through the use or non-use of language can be very damaging for social inclusion and cohesion. As identified in the studies conducted by Hitlan et al (2006) and Kulkarni & Summer (2015), promoting the use of one particular language signifies to all the participants, or citizens in this case, that there is a language norm that everyone should conform to. However, rather than increasing a sense of belonging through the use of the same language, monolingual practices tends rather to reaffirm the sense of exclusion as the institutional setting backing up the use of one language is simultaneously suppressing the use of other languages. This suppression may also affect identities tied to those languages. Applied to the setting of the municipality of Rotterdam, the implications of such a monolingual policies would be very serious. Rather than simply alienating individuals or small groups within institutions or workplaces, the same language practices within the municipality has the potential of affecting a large part of the population not speaking Dutch as their native language. Besides affecting a broader sense of group belonging and commitment to organisational structures, the studies also showed a noticeable effect on participation and motivation. This would suggest that not providing voting information in English would impact the level of commitment and participation of non-citizen voters. All in all, social cohesion and a shared commitment to the importance of the municipality and its democratic functions could be affected very negatively, impacting not only the voting participation but the cohesion of the population itself.

This leads into the final point of what the intent of these language practices are and how they are to be interpreted. As argued by Schinkel and Schrover (2013), rather than exclusion simply being the byproduct of specific language policies or practices, language can actively be used and constructed to exclude certain segments of society. Contrary to the arguments put forward in favour of a monolingual policy of Dutch within the municipality of Rotterdam being used to encourage integration into Dutch society, that same policy can be said to instead exclude non-Dutch speakers from equal participation. Taking into account the policies of Leefbaar Rotterdam regarding Dutch centrism and diversity, it would come as no surprise that the use of Dutch over any other language in voting information has indeed been a purposeful way of ensuring that only the “right kind” of non-citizen resident voters that speak Dutch are able to easily access the information.

Concluding Remarks

The political inclusion of non-citizen residents should no doubt be a topic of great importance in the city of Rotterdam. Yet, despite the long standing right to participation and the large minority of both EU and non-EU foreign residents, discussions about and attempts to better reach this group of voters is and remains absent from the work of the Rotterdam municipality. Despite the city having increasingly promoted itself as a place of diversity and acceptance where the differences rather than the similarities are the uniting factor of the Rotterdammers', the very basic question of language diversity is either left out or outwardly confirmed in its inferior position to Dutch. This can be seen in the ever present citizenship pledge but more poignantly for this thesis research, in the almost complete absence of any voting information translated to English or any other language. By not providing information that can be understood by non Dutch-speaking foreign residents, this thesis would argue that their very right to political participation introduced in 1985 is not fulfilled by the municipality of Rotterdam. The principles of clear communication and equal and fair elections are at the heart of the election process as seen by the planning for the municipal elections, making it all the more problematic that deliberations regarding the inclusion and accommodation of the needs of foreign resident voter are non-existent.

As has been explored in the thesis, the political influence of Pim Fortuyn and Leefbaar Rotterdam has most assuredly had a great impact on the municipalities approach to language. It is no surprise that a party whose political program is entered around dutchness and Dutch culture and values would actively seek to promote Dutch over foreign languages. However, despite Leefbaar

Rotterdam still being the biggest party and retaining a great deal of influence within the city council, its popularity has been in decline ever since its accession to power in 2002, eventually leading to its ousting from power. With the city having increasingly moved towards an embrace of diversity rather than a rejection, the inclusion of more diverse language practices should be regarded as a natural step in fulfilling this process. The connection between identity and language is essential to everyone and should not be denied by official language policies promoting Dutch. The negative consequences of such a choice can be dire not only for the individuals sense of themselves but for the social cohesion and integration the voting rights were supposed to stimulate in the first place. Taking the relatively simple step of translating and distributing election and voting information in English equally to Dutch is the easiest and most achievable way in which this possible exclusion is avoided. If the first step is taken by the municipal authorities in making information more accessible to non-Dutch speaking voters, the possible spillovers to other areas of society has the possibility of making Rotterdam a more welcoming place for its diverse population, something which is clearly a goal of the current coalition if their policy plans and documents are to be believed.

Turning to the research itself and what it entails for future studying of the topic area, the author of this thesis finds it evident that there is a basic lack not only of studies involving non-citizen resident voters but also of a recognition of their unique status within Dutch and Rotterdam society. Both statistics and polling information about non-Dutch citizens possessing the right to vote are hard to come by and it would appear that neither the municipal records or the national population records have afforded any special attention to this segment of the population but instead treats it simply as part of the electorate. What this entails in practise is that the special circumstances and needs of non-Dutch voters are not recognised but rather neglected. This means that the many problems facing voters beyond simply language accessibility are yet to be fully explored. Better statistical records along with more research aimed at the stories and experiences of non-citizen resident voters would expand the knowledge and understanding and lead to better policy making in the future. Regarding the data collection, despite genuine assistance from the municipality in finding voting information and policy plans used for the 2018 election, the collection process was made piecemeal and without assurances with regards to its completeness. Better documentation and organisation of key information and documents involved in past elections would make studying them much easier while also allowing the municipality to evaluate its passed elections and improve the future execution.

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Appendix 1



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: The Hidden Electorate: Analysing Non-Citizen Voter Engagement in the City of Rotterdam

Name, email of student: 584287gn@eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Gijs Custers

Start date and duration: 06/01/2021-02/07/2021

Is the research study conducted within DPAS: YES

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?

(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. YES

If 'NO': skip to part V.

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? NO

Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? NO
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written ‘informed consent,’ whereby they agree to participate in the study? NO
3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? NO
4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? NO
Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? NO
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person’s sex life or sexual orientation)?
 Yes
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent?
 NO
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? NO
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants’ identity not be ensured? NO
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

6. The research involves interviews with municipal and political officials within the municipality of Rotterdam and might therefore involve some questions or discussions regarding local politics in Rotterdam. This is however not a concern as the consent of the participants is guaranteed, thereby giving them full autonomies not to participate. Participants are further informed that they are interviewed in their official capacities and not as private individuals.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

The Participants are fully informed about the purpose of the interview in analysing the motivation of municipal and political authorities within Rotterdam. Furthermore, the interviews exclusively relate to the professional roles of the participants and does not involve or require any personal opinions.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

No _____

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

From officials working within the municipal authorities and political parties in Rotterdam

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

The sample will most likely include a set of interviews that are relatively few in numbers as they are qualitative semi-structured interviews.

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

The size of the data set is relatively small as it involves interviews with a selected number of municipal and political officials within Rotterdam

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

The data collected will be stored on my personal laptop, only accessible to myself. The data will be stored in the laptop upon collection.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

Myself as it involves a set of interviews collected by myself

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Whenever work is done in relation to the data set it will be backed up as a security measure.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Gustaf Norén Vosveld

Name (EUR) supervisor: Gijs Custers

Date: 21-03-2021

Date:

21-03-2021

