



REPORT

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**NEIGHBOURHOOD INITIATIVES AND BELONGING
IN SUPER-DIVERSE NEIGHBOURHOODS IN AMSTERDAM AND VIENNA.**

COMPARATIVE CROSS-CITY REPORT.

*ICEC – INTERETHNIC COEXISTENCE IN EUROPEAN CITIES:
A COMPARATIVE AND APPLIED-ORIENTED ANALYSIS
OF NEIGHBOURHOOD-RELATED POLICIES*

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Executive Summary

The JPI Urban Europe project “**Interethnic Coexistence in European Cities**” (ICEC) is based on a systematic comparison of the aims, structural features and outcomes of **integrative initiatives at the neighbourhood level** in Amsterdam, Stockholm and Vienna. This cross-city comparison focuses on similarities and differences in Amsterdam and Vienna.

The **selected initiatives** in this analysis are designed to function as a ‘**space of encounter**’ for neighbourhood residents and provide activities that offer the opportunity for interethnic and - more generally - intergroup contacts. Initiatives in this report include integration measures that explicitly focus on the neighbourhood (place-based) and those where the location in the case study neighbourhood is rather incidental (people-based). The **contextual framework conditions** are important within this analysis. The neighbourhoods in which our studied initiatives are located are embedded within specific urban and national contexts. Amsterdam and Vienna face different challenges in terms of neighbourhood policy, which also influences the initiatives and their dynamics and outcomes. In Amsterdam, decentralisation and cuts in public services have resulted in an appeal to active residents to deploy their own initiatives. At the same time, concerns about the lack of (socio-cultural) integration of ethnic minorities demand that these initiatives are inclusive of all neighbourhood residents. In Vienna, integrating hard-to-reach communities and maintaining access to public space and green areas are important themes. This is linked to the increasing privatisation of these places due to high population density and population growth (see Chapter 2).

The effects of (non-)participation in local measures on residents’ individual **neighbourhood belonging** is at the core of this cross-city comparison. Our concept of neighbourhood belonging consists of three dimensions: **social embeddedness, place attachment, and co-responsibility**¹. Our analysis suggests a rather **weak influence of top-down initiatives** on neighbourhood belonging for both cities. In contrast, participation in **bottom-up or hybrid initiatives tends to show a stronger correlation** to neighbourhood belonging. Our comparative analysis on the effects of participation on neighbourhood belonging shows the general relevance of social embeddedness, place attachment and co-responsibility at the neighbourhood level. However, residents’ interpretation and perception of these concepts are highly diverse (see Chapter 3).

¹ For more details on the conceptual understanding, see Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2016); ICEC website (www.icecproject.com/project/theory).

Interethnic co-existence is a long-term process built on the abilities and willingness of involved actors and - established and new - networks. Among the benefits of this qualitative approach is certainly in-depth knowledge of the case study initiatives and their effects as well as developing established networks which might be an important basis for future cooperation in research.

Based on the empirical findings and theoretical discussion in our living labs, we suggest that interethnic **co-existence** can be regarded as the **'middle' of a continuum**. If peaceful co-existence - living side-by-side - is not maintained, conflicts and disconnection from the neighbourhood is a potential outcome. If, in contrast, co-existence is promoted and strengthened, this may result in strengthened neighbourhood belonging. Our analysis clearly indicates the importance of **investing in neighbourhood belonging from the side of policymakers and public stakeholders**. Peaceful co-existence is not simply a happy accident that occurs without effort in the form of local integration initiatives. Rather, this stability - and a potential shift to the 'right side of the see-saw' requires long-term commitment from policymakers, in particular:

- Continuous support of local initiatives and provision of neighbourhood spaces
- Regular monitoring of inclusionary and exclusionary (side-)effects of existing initiatives
- Outreach activities to community gatekeepers of hard-to-reach groups
- Acknowledging that neighbourhood belonging is a process that needs time, but offer opportunities to become engaged in the neighbourhood

If policymakers understand interethnic coexistence as a peaceful condition in the neighbourhood that enables neighbourhood belonging, they will also be successful in communicating that **belonging requires two prerequisites**: a political and societal environment that **allows neighbourhood belonging to develop for all residents**, and a **society that actively connects to its neighbourhood** and gives something back to and as co-responsible residents.

Our research argues that measuring **effects on the individual and neighbourhood scale** requires a **qualitative, ethnographic approach**, which includes trust-building over a longer time period. Participating as researchers in the diverse initiatives was crucial for the success of the study. **Co-creation** between citizens, stakeholders, urban actors, and researchers, as it was partially realised in this project through the implementation of **urban living labs**, is not yet mainstream as it is difficult to achieve.

Introduction: The ICEC project

International research has shown that urban neighbourhoods are still important arenas of social interaction and places of interethnic coexistence. Diversity in the neighbourhood can be understood as a microcosm, mirroring problem constellations at the city scale. Yet problems within diversity-shaped neighbourhoods require locally determined solutions. Thus, municipal policies have increasingly taken a territorial focus when addressing social and integration problems through neighbourhood-based initiatives.

The ICEC project is based on a systematic comparison of the aims, structural features and outcomes of integrative initiatives at the neighbourhood level in Amsterdam, Stockholm and Vienna. The study focused on three core questions:

1. Which political initiatives best support and strengthen the integrative power of an urban neighbourhood as a place of living and identification for an ethnically diverse urban population?
2. How does participation in such local initiatives and the initiatives themselves impact neighbourhood belonging of local residents?
3. What kinds of differences can be found between (non-)participation in top-down and bottom-up organised initiatives?

This comparative report includes an assessment and exchange of good practice between two distinct European cities: Amsterdam and Vienna. We followed an innovative research design at two levels: First, through the combination of basic and applied research conducted by researchers, policymakers and urban stakeholders; second, by involving the civil society within 'urban living labs' (see Franz 2015; Franz et al. 2015) in the assessment of new integrative policies. Our results are intended for implementation through municipal policies that seek to create integrative neighbourhoods. In addition, we contribute to a better understanding of how to implement co-creation with regard to local policymaking.

1. Research design and overall sample

1.1 The case study areas in Amsterdam: Three ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in North, West, and Southeast Amsterdam

Three Amsterdam neighbourhoods were selected as case studies: Van der Pekbuurt (part of Volewijck in the North district), Slotermeer-Noordoost (New-West district), and H-buurt (part of Bijlmer Centrum in the Southeast district). These neighbourhoods have a share of residents with migration background (first or second generation migrants) above the city average. All three neighbourhoods were included in the area-based urban policy *Hervorming Stedelijke Vernieuwing* (2013-2014), and two were also included in the preceding policy *Wijkaanpak* (2008-2012). This guarantees the presence of neighbourhood-based policy initiatives over a longer period of time. The neighbourhoods differ in terms of their dominant ethnic resident groups, age and type of the housing stock, distance from the city centre, and their stage of (completed, ongoing, or planned) urban renewal.

Figure 1. The three neighbourhood case studies in Amsterdam



In each neighbourhood, between two and four initiatives were selected for in-depth analysis (see Table 1 for an overview). Selected initiatives were designed to function as a 'space of encounter' for neighbourhood residents and provide activities that offer the possibility for interethnic, and more generally intergroup contacts. Initiatives were further divided into those that focus explicitly on the neighbourhood (place-based) and those where the location in the case study neighbourhood is rather incidental (people-based).

While the initiatives varied in their degree of professional support versus resident autonomy, all selected initiatives were (financially) supported by the district administration and/or housing associations. However, top-down initiatives are initiated and (mostly) run by professionals, while bottom-up initiatives are initiated and (mostly) run by residents themselves. Most initiatives were hybrid: initiated and run by professionals and residents together. Table 1 provides a brief characterisation of the selected initiatives. More information about the initiatives is provided in section 2.1.1.

Table 1. Selected initiatives in Amsterdam

Organisation Type	Top-down	Hybrid	Bottom-up
Place-based		<i>Dobbekamer</i> (Neighbourhood centre, Sloterveer-Noordoost)	<i>Pek-o-Bello</i> (Neighbourhood trust, Van der Pekbuurt)
		<i>Tante Ali</i> (Neighbourhood centre, Sloterveer-Noordoost)	
		<i>Eigen Haard buurthuiskamer</i> (Neighbourhood centre, Sloterveer-Noordoost)	
		<i>Buurtambassadeurs</i> (Neighbourhood ambassadors, H-buurt)	
		<i>De Handreiking</i> (Neighbourhood centre, H-buurt)	
Group-based	<i>VoorUit</i> (Students' social work organisation, Sloterveer-Noordoost)	<i>De Handreiking</i> (Neighbourhood centre, H-buurt)	<i>Vrouwenbazaar</i> (Multicultural women's organisation, Van der Pekbuurt)

Fieldwork was conducted in phases between October 2014 and January 2016 and consisted of semi-structured interviews with (participant and nonparticipant) residents and 'stakeholders' (residents and professionals involved in neighbourhood initiatives, city-district employees, employees of housing, social welfare, and cultural associations), and participant observation (at the selected initiatives and in the wider neighbourhood). In addition, policy documents and media coverage of the neighbourhood and selected initiatives were analysed.

Residents were recruited through a variety of means, including at activities run by the selected initiatives, through snowball sampling, convenience sampling, distributing leaflets

door-to-door, and through neighbourhood media, although interviews proceeded based on a pre-set topic list, interviewees were given a lot of space to dwell on certain topics or to

bring up new topics. Before each interview, interview subjects were informed of the nature of the interview and assured that they would remain anonymous. If they gave permission to do so, the interviews were recorded. Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. A few informants objected to recording in which case notes were taken. The total number of interviewed residents is 93, of which 39 participated in the selected initiatives. 56 interviewees were women and 37 were men. Interviewees identify with 27 different ethnic groups, the largest being Dutch (33 informants), Surinamese (9), Moroccan (9), Turkish (8), Ghanaian (4), and Afghan (4). In addition, interviewees identified as Algerian, Antillean (2), Austrian (2), American, Brazilian, Bulgarian, Chinese, Dominican (2), English, Indian, Iranian, Italian, Jordanian, Pakistani, Peruvian, Polish, Portuguese, Senegalese, Somalian (2), Sudanese, Thai, and Tibetan. Detailed information on the resident sample can be found in Table 2.

Twenty-eight stakeholders were interviewed, including five organisers from the selected initiatives, nine district employees, six social workers, three housing association employees, and five employees of cultural and community-building organisations. Stakeholders were contacted based on publicly available information and through snowball sampling. Interviews were not recorded, but notes were taken during the interviews.

Participant observation took place at the selected initiatives and in the broader neighbourhood and included numerous informal conversations, follow-up questions to interviewees, and a few group discussions. No recordings were made; field notes were written up after the activity was concluded.

Table 2. Resident interview sample in the Amsterdam neighbourhood case studies

	Van der Pekbuurt (27)	Slotermeer-Noordooost (32)	H-buurt (34)
Residents			
Participants	12	14	13
Non-participants	15	18	21
Gender			
Female	16	17	23
Male	11	15	11
Age			
≤30	1	8	5
31-60	20	18	24
≥60	6	6	5
Ethnic Background			
Dutch	12	13	7
Non-Dutch	12	18	27
Mixed Dutch-other	2	1	-
Duration of residency			
≤ 10 years	6	15	9
≥ 10 years	19	15	18
Since birth	1	-	1
Not living in nh	1	2	6
Educational background²			
Low	10	5	12
Middle	4	5	8
High	13	12	8
Unknown	-	10	6
Occupational background			
(Self)employed ³	12	8	10
Unemployed ⁴	10	13	18
Pensioner	4	4	4
Student	1	5	1
Unknown	-	2	1
Household composition			
Single	8	9	7
/with children	1	2	10
/with others	-	7	4
Couple	6	4	6
/with children	12	10	7

² Low: From no education up to secondary education, middle: lower tertiary education (MBO or equivalent), high: higher tertiary education (HBO, University or equivalent). Educational background refers to education received in the Netherlands and/or abroad

³ Including part-time employed

⁴ Including homemakers and recipients of disability benefits

1.1.1 Amsterdam, The Netherlands: The local context at a glance⁵

Amsterdam is the capital (but not the seat of government) and also the largest city and municipality of the Netherlands with 834,713 inhabitants on January 1st, 2016. It is a 'majority-minority' city: the majority (51.7 per cent) of residents has a migrant background, of which just over half (56.7 per cent) is a first-generation migrant - the remainder are second-generation immigrants. Amsterdam is also a super-diverse city that houses residents of 169 different nationalities. 34.8 per cent of Amsterdam residents have a non-Western⁶ ethnic background and 16.8 per cent have a Western ethnic background. The four largest non-Western immigrant groups in the Netherlands and Amsterdam are Moroccans (9 per cent in Amsterdam), Surinamese (7.9), Turks (5.1) and Antilleans (1.5). Non-Western immigrants are on average younger and less well educated than 'native' Dutch; they have a lower income and are more likely to be unemployed and dependent on social welfare. Western immigrants are more similar to 'native' Dutch in these respects.

The Amsterdam economy is relatively healthy due to a highly educated workforce, a strong service sector (especially ICT and the creative industries), a large number of relatively small companies, and Amsterdam's international orientation. The most important economic sectors are the tertiary and quaternary sector which together represent almost 95 per cent of the working population. Overall unemployment was 8.5 per cent in 2014. Amsterdam is a relatively polarised city in terms of educational and income level: The share of highly educated residents is high (56 per cent) while there is a relative lack of residents with an intermediary educational attainment. In 2013, the average yearly disposable income was 31,800 euros per household. One-fifth (19.8 per cent) of households in 2012 had an income below the social minimum level.

Levels of socio-economic segregation in Amsterdam are moderate in European and global perspective, due to generally limited socio-economic inequality and the ubiquity of social housing (48 per cent). Social housing is not just for those at the bottom of the housing market, but also middle-class households. Current housing market policies aim to achieve a social mix and gradual liberalisation of the housing market and a decrease in social housing. Social housing and poor households are present in all parts of the city, although there are differences in concentration (lower in the inner-city and South district, higher in more peripheral districts). Ethnic segregation is also moderate. Non-Western immigrants are mainly located outside the city centre while Western immigrants live more centrally. *Amsterdammers* of Turkish and Moroccan descent are overrepresented in the West and New-West city districts while those of Surinamese, Antillean, and others of non-Western descent are overrepresented in the Southeast city district.

⁵ Based on Hoekstra (2014)

⁶ Residents of Latin-American, Caribbean, African, or Asian background (including Turkey, excluding Indonesia and Japan)



1.1.2 Urban policy context at city and neighbourhood level⁷

In 1999, Amsterdam introduced a diversity policy which aims to reject dichotomies and stereotypes and embrace its residents' multifaceted identities. The use of the terms 'autochthonous' and 'allochthonous' (terminology used at the national level to denote 'native' Dutch and migrant background) is rejected. City identity is seen as a way of connecting residents from different backgrounds. This is developed in the notion of urban citizenship. Important objectives of the Amsterdam diversity policy are citizen participation, building partnerships with civil society and private groups, emancipation and integration, and the development of 'urban citizenship competences'. Within the municipality, the Department of Social Development (DMO) has a Citizenship & Diversity Unit. This unit is responsible for policies targeting specific groups (notably ethnic minorities, women, and LGBT residents) while in other departments generic policies are the norm.

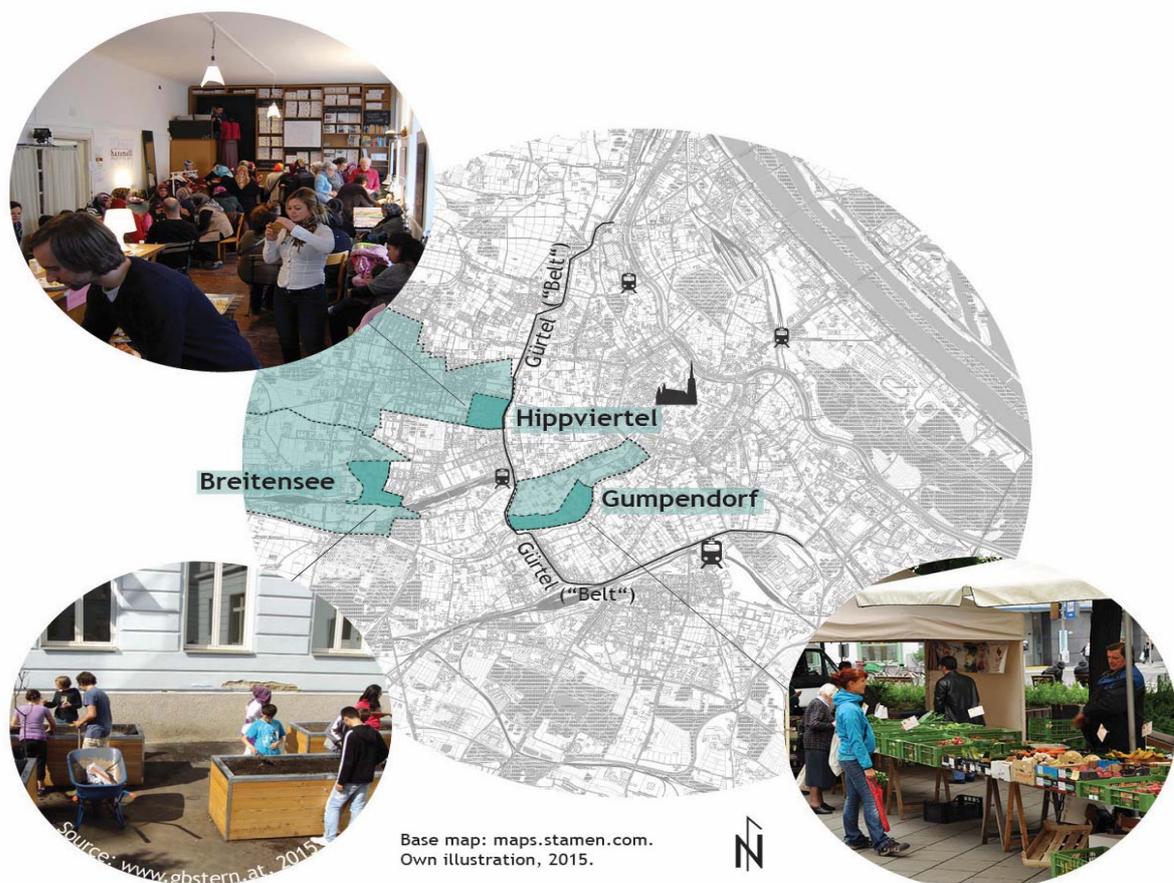
Many policy programmes have strong area-based components, often focusing on neighbourhoods and districts that have a below-average perform according to a range of physical and socio-economic indicators. For ICEC, relevant policies at the neighbourhood level were the *Wijkaanpak*, which started as a national initiative in 2007 and was continued by the Amsterdam municipality until 2012, and the *Hervorming Stedelijke Vernieuwing*, which ran in 2013 and 2014. Selected neighbourhoods received additional money to implement policy projects, and residents were also invited to implement initiatives in their neighbourhood. City districts were to a large extent responsible for the design and implementation of these neighbourhood projects, and housing associations were important co-financers. Characteristic for these policies is the combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches, partnerships and co-financing (especially with housing associations), and stimulating resident-driven development and the development of neighbourhood enterprises (trusts).

⁷ Based on Hoekstra (2014; 2015)

1.2 The case study areas in Vienna: Three ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in the western part of the city

For the Viennese study, three different neighbourhoods were selected as case study areas: Gumpendorf in Mariahilf (6th district), Breitensee in Penzing (14th district) and the Hippviertel in Ottakring (16th district). The neighbourhoods can be defined through their physical structure - building periods and density - and administrative boundaries; they are all located in the west of the city.

Figure 2. The three neighbourhood case studies in Vienna



The three neighbourhoods share a number of important communalities. All three study areas have a comparable population size (5,000-10,000 inhabitants) and the proportion of residents with a migrant background is above the city average. Furthermore, all three neighbourhoods can be characterised as homogeneous and compact spatial units, which show clear structures in the urban landscape without internal barriers and breaks. All of them have been considered as target areas for renewal subsidies (during the soft urban renewal programme) and areas of renovation. Each area offers affordable housing with regard to council housing and subsidised housing options. Another important similarity is

that all three selected case studies are subject to policy initiatives regarding interethnic coexistence, ethnic diversity and/or local integration.

Despite their similarities, the neighbourhoods differ in their distance from the city centre, area size, density of building structure and amount of green and public spaces. The three study areas also differ in their degree of socio-economic make-up (education, unemployment) and ethnic diversity within the local population, as well as the duration of policy initiatives on interethnic coexistence. These differences are useful for comparative reasons as they provide additional information on the effects of the analysed initiatives. The initiatives selected for the analysis include place-based (PB) and group-based (GB) as well as top-down (TD), bottom-up (BU) and hybrid (HY) initiatives (see Table 3). Similar to the Amsterdam initiatives, most were (financially) supported by the city and/or district administration⁸.

Table 3. Selected initiatives in Vienna

Organisation	Top-down	Hybrid	Bottom-up
Place-based	<i>Volkshochschule</i> (Adult Education Centre, Breitensee, Hippviertel)	<i>Garteln ums Eck</i> (Gardening around the Corner, Gumpendorf, Breitensee)	<i>Frag Nebenan</i> (Ask Next Door, online neighbourhood platform, Gumpendorf, Breitensee)
	<i>Nachbarschaftszentrum</i> (Neighbourhood Centre, Gumpendorf)	<i>Nachbarschaftsraum Herbststraße15</i> (Neighbourhood room, Hippviertel)	<i>Matznergarten</i> (Matzner Community Garden, Breitensee)
		<i>Grätzeleltern</i> (Neighbourhood parents, Gumpendorf, Hippviertel)	<i>Plattform Lebenswertes Matznerviertel</i> (Platform Liveable Matzner Quarter, Breitensee)
Group-based	<i>Gemeinde-Kindergarten</i> (Free pre-school by City of Vienna, Gumpendorf, Breitensee, Hippviertel)	<i>Miteinander Lernen</i> (Learning together, Hippviertel)	
	<i>Wohnpartner</i> (Neighbourhood service for community housing, Gumpendorf, Breitensee, Hippviertel)		

⁸ The only exception applies to “Ask Next Door” which is a purely privately organised and financed online initiative.



In total, 109 residents (participants and non-participants of the selected initiatives) were interviewed: 29 in Hippviertel (16th district), 44 in Gumpendorf (6th district), and 36 in Breitensee (14th district). Table 4 provides more details on the interview sample. In addition to interviews with (non-)participants, expert interviews were conducted with local stakeholders. Moreover, participant observation was conducted in some of the initiatives as well as in our *Urban Living Labs*⁹: Herbststraße 15 (16th), Matzner Garden (14th), and the neighbourhood centre as well as a weekly market at Kurt-Pint-Platz (6th).

⁹ For more information on the ICEC urban living lab approach, see Franz (2014; 2015), Franz, Tausz, and Thiel (2015).

Table 4. Resident interview sample in the Viennese neighbourhood case studies

	Gumpendorf (44)	Breitensee (36)	Hippviertel (29)
Residents			
Participants	18	21	16
Non-participants	26	15	13
Gender			
Female	25	25	23
Male	19	11	6
Age			
<30	5	4	7
31-60	31	24	19
>60	8	4	3
Unknown		4	
Ethnic background			
Austrian	28	15	11
Non-Austrian	16	21	18
Duration of residency			
1-10 years	14	16	11
>10 years	19	14	11
Since birth	1	3	3
Unknown	10	1	4
Educational background¹⁰			
Low	3	4	4
Middle	19	12	11
High	16	15	8
Unknown	6	5	6
Occupational background			
(Self-)employed	28	15	18
Unemployed	4	14	9
Retired	4	4	1
Student	1	1	0
Unknown	7	2	1
Household composition			
Single	9	8	3
/with children	3	3	2
/with others	1	2	3
Couple	8	6	6
/with children	15	16	15
Unknown	8	1	0

¹⁰ 'Low' includes primary or secondary education; 'middle' includes low tertiary education (e.g. 'trade school'); 'high' includes higher tertiary education.

1.2.1 Vienna, Austria: The local context at a glance¹¹

Vienna currently has a total population of 1,797,337 residents, 25% of whom do not hold Austrian citizenship. The current share of people with a migration background in Vienna is 36.8%, of which roughly one quarter belongs to the second generation¹². In 2013, the largest economic sector in Vienna was the tertiary sector (85.4%), while the secondary sector only covers around 14%¹³. Overall unemployment in 2015 was 13.5% (2012: 9.5%) (registered rate), with significantly higher rates among men (15.4%) than women (11.3%)¹⁴. The highest unemployment rates were found in the working class districts of Favoriten (10th district) and Floridsdorf (21st), while the lowest proportion of unemployed persons can be found in the two inner city districts Innere Stadt (1st) and Josefstadt (8th)¹⁵. The average net annual income for residents in Vienna was €21,143 (2014). This average net annual income, however, varies significantly between the city districts, with Vienna's Innere Stadt (1st) and Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus (15th) representing the top and bottom end of the income distribution, respectively¹⁶.

Since the second half of the 20th century, a sustained increase in the proportion of foreigners in Vienna can be observed, reaching its peak in the most recent figures from 2015. 460,163 foreign citizens were legal residents in the Austrian capital, amounting to 25.6% of the total population. More than 80% of all foreign nationals living in Vienna come from European countries (if Turkey is included). Immigrants from Turkey and former Yugoslavia are still the most numerous immigrants groups in Vienna¹⁷. Between 2001 and 2011, the size of the immigrant population from Romania and Bulgaria in Vienna almost tripled. There were also considerable increases in the number of Slovakian, Polish and German citizens. In terms of urban residential patterns, our case study neighbourhoods are located at the geographical and statistical fringe between the inner-city districts and the former working-class areas. They all have a foreign-born population that made up more than 36% of the local population in 2014¹⁸.

¹¹ Based on Kohlbacher et al. (2014)

¹² Source: <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungsstand/index.html#bezirk> as of 2016/6/16

¹³ Source: <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/wirtschaft/volkswirtschaft/> as of 2016/6/16

¹⁴ Source: <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/arbeitsmarkt/tabellen/arbeitslosenquoten-zr.html> as of 2016/6/16

¹⁵ Source: <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/arbeitsmarkt/tabellen/arbeitslos-bezirk.html> as of 2016/6/16

¹⁶ Source: <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/arbeitsmarkt/tabellen/einkommen-gesamt-bez.html> as of 2016/6/16

¹⁷ <https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/bevoelkerung/tabellen/bevoelkerung-migh-geschl-zr.html>

¹⁸ Source <https://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/integration/grundlagen/daten.html>.

1.2.2 Urban policy context at city and neighbourhood level¹⁹

Since the founding of the Office for Integration Affairs in 1996, diversity policy has been essential in Vienna. The City of Vienna's integration policies aim to achieve equal rights and opportunities in all areas of life: Social and economic, cultural and political. The substantial change within the city and its administrative bodies was that integration was no longer perceived to be an achievement to be accomplished by immigrants, but is rather viewed as a process that includes immigrants as well as the members and institutions of the Viennese 'host society'. The City of Vienna explicitly formulated the growing ethnic diversity and pluralism as an opportunity, rather than a challenge. The previous city concept of 'integration' was changed from a deficit-oriented approach into a discourse on integration and diversity that should emphasise the potentials of ethnic diversity and pluralism. The Municipal Department for Integration and Diversity Affairs (MA 17), founded in 2004, develops integration and diversity initiatives and assists the municipality in mainstreaming and adjusting its services to the needs of Vienna's increasingly diverse population.

Regarding housing, active policy from the City Council is traditionally an important element against social marginalisation. One of the city's top priorities is to provide affordable quality housing for all income brackets. The Viennese housing market consists of the following main components: Private rental and privately owned housing, council housing and co-operative housing. Vienna is characterised in particular by the council housing sector. The City of Vienna is the largest owner of property not only in Austria but also in Europe. A considerable proportion of municipal residences was built during the 1920s and 1930s and is nowadays mostly renovated. Although socioeconomic and ethnic segregation remains low from a European perspective, there is some concentration of certain immigrant groups (e.g. so-called former 'guest-workers' from Turkey and former Yugoslavia) in certain residential areas. These are predominately working-class areas located around the city centre.

¹⁹ Based on Kohlbacher et al. (2014)

2. What do people get out of initiatives - or not?

2.1 Initiatives' aims and intentions versus real effects

2.1.1 Amsterdam

The selected initiatives often have ambitious aims and objectives. At the level of individual participants, this includes such things as increased social contacts (to combat loneliness and for networking) and enhanced personal skills and self-development (including Dutch language skills, reading and writing skills, financial know-how, ICT skills, self-confidence). Apart from personal benefits, residents' participation is considered (by policymakers) to have an effect on the wider neighbourhood through, for example, reducing unemployment, improving residents' behaviour in public space, increasing residents' sense of security and their attachment to the neighbourhood and to fellow residents.

Participants did not always find it easy to express in what ways the selected initiatives - or their participation in these initiatives, specifically - improved their lives and/or their neighbourhood. While most certainly enjoy participating, there is a **disconnection between the official aims** of many initiatives and the **benefits that are experienced by participants**. For example, in the case of initiatives that seek to reduce unemployed participants' 'distance from the labour market', the added value in practice turns out to be more social contacts and increased self-confidence, rather than finding a job or voluntary work. In other cases, participants develop initiatives or contacts that they experience as highly valuable, but that they feel are not recognised as such by professionals.

Residents (both participants and non-participants) are sceptical of the current 'neighbourhood policy doctrine' in Amsterdam and the Netherlands, which places an emphasis on the role of resident participation in order to improve the neighbourhood and to compensate for budget cuts by placing more responsibility on residents. While in general, the interviewed residents agree that participation is a social good, they also point out that there are often constraints on people's ability to participate stemming from other obligations such as work, school, informal care, to barriers such as lack of language skills and health concerns, and inclination and personality type.

Participation is somewhat of a zero-sum game: Many of the participants in our sample can be active in neighbourhood initiatives because their personal circumstances allow for it. They are often retired, unemployed, or working part-time, and many state that they have become more or less active as a result of changes in their personal circumstances. Participants stress that participation of the type that is envisioned in current policies demands a lot of time, effort, and skills, and is often not feasible without extensive and permanent support from institutions.

Apart from these more general observations, the studied initiatives differ in the degree to which they are able to realise their stated aims and intentions. They also generate different dynamics with respect to interethnic encounter. The main findings for each initiative are briefly discussed (see also Table 5).

Table 5. Effects of initiatives in Amsterdam neighbourhood case studies

Initiative	Outcomes match stated aims and intentions?	Creates interethnic encounters?
Vrouwenbazaar	No	No
Pek-o-Bello	No	Partially
VoorUit	Yes	Yes
Dobbekamer	Yes	Yes
Tante Ali	Partially	Partially
Buurthuiskamer Eigen Haard	Partially	Partially
Buurtambassadeurs	Partially	Yes
De Handreiking	Partially	Yes

Vrouwenbazaar (Van der Pekbuurt, group-based, bottom-up) aims to empower migrant women, promote intercultural understanding, and contribute to neighbourhood social cohesion. Activities are mostly attended by migrant women from Arab-speaking countries, most of whom do not live in the neighbourhood. Despite good intentions, the initiative is not very successful as it has **trouble attracting a diverse range of participants**. Some residents actively dislike the organisation as its meeting place used to be the premises of another neighbourhood centre (frequented by working-class ethnic Dutch) which had to close down. Due to financial problems, the *Vrouwenbazaar* lost their meeting space which was converted into a more general neighbourhood centre (where they still organise activities).

Pek-o-Bello (Van der Pekbuurt, place-based, bottom-up) calls itself a neighbourhood enterprise or 'trust' which aims to have residents take over tasks that are currently performed by the district government, such as the maintenance of public space. Like the *Vrouwenbazaar*, *Pek-o-Bello* is controversial in the neighbourhood because it is believed to **compete with other neighbourhoods organisations** for subsidies and some residents do not think that the initiators are representative of the neighbourhood. While *Pek-o-Bello* makes the effort to reach out to residents and collect ideas by organising meetings and being visible at neighbourhood activities, they have not yet organised many activities and have trouble attracting a diverse group of participants (especially non-ethnic Dutch, non-middle class participants).

Dobbekamer, *Tante Ali*, and *Eigen Haard buurthuiskamer* (Slotermeer-Noordoost, place-based, hybrid) are three neighbourhood centres that are similar in design. All three offer a

place for residents to socialise and organise activities. While different ethnic groups organise activities, **within activities there is more ethnic homogeneity**. Some participants indicate that they feel excluded because of their ethnic background. However, other activities are

more successful and have generated friendships as well as more superficial encounters. In all three centres, activities that are most successful are **coordinated by very active volunteers** or housing association employees who attempt to create inclusive environments. However, these very active volunteers also indicated that this takes up a lot of time and energy, and some reported feeling overburdened.

VoorUit (Slotermeer-Noordoost, people-based, top-down) is a project initiated by VU University which is operative in a number of Amsterdam neighbourhoods. Students are provided with rent-free housing in exchange for performing voluntary work in their neighbourhood. In Slotermeer-Noordoost they organise children's activities and language classes. The students are successful in reaching residents, also from hard-to-reach groups, and are liked and trusted. Because they live in the neighbourhood, there is a low threshold for participation in activities. The benefit of the initiative's top-down structure and the incentive for students in terms of rent-free housing is that **the organisation is relatively professional**. However, this also means that residents are mostly involved as rather 'passive' participants.

Buurtambassadeurs (H-buurt, place-based, hybrid) is an initiative that aims to bridge the 'gap' between residents and the district government through the appointment of neighbourhood ambassadors who can act as intermediaries. In H-buurt, the ambassadors were already active in some capacity but have now broadened their focus to include all neighbourhood residents. The initiative is partially successful as it allows individual residents to build more extensive and diverse networks, but also demanding as they are expected to **represent the neighbourhood and advocate for the neighbourhood residents** on the one hand, and on the other hand to **communicate and uphold 'common norms' and liveability standards** which are determined by the district administration and housing associations. Both H-buurt ambassadors indicate feeling overwhelmed by the demands of their voluntary work.

De Handreiking (H-buurt, hybrid) is a neighbourhood centre that intends to activate vulnerable residents with the aim of finding employment or voluntary work. The initiative is partially successful as it **draws an ethnically diverse range of participants** who appreciate the activities offered (mostly Dutch language classes, hairdressing, and various crafts). Activities are ethnically mixed, even if participants do not always have interethnic contacts but rather socialise 'side-by-side'. However, the desired methodology of having residents themselves design activities and learn from each other is as of yet not really implemented as the centre is very dependent on the efforts of (paid) social workers. In addition, the aim of improving participants' chances on the labour market is rather ambitious.

2.1.2 Vienna

The aims and intentions of the analysed initiatives mainly correspond to the outcomes - with some exceptions. Initiatives tend to cater to specific social groups and thus a strong interethnic mix of participants is mostly not achieved. Some initiatives also produced **unexpected positive side effects**. However, participants' motivations and expectations regarding participation differ with respect to the various initiatives. Some examples will be given below.

Table 6. Effects of initiatives in Viennese neighbourhood case studies

Initiative	Outcomes match stated aims and intentions?	Creates inter-ethnicity
Free pre-school	Partially	Partially
Neighbourhood Centre	Partially	Partially
Gardening around the Corner	Yes	Partially
Matzner Garden	Partially	Partially
Learning Together	Yes	Partially
Community Center Herbststraße 15	Yes	Partially

Free pre-school provided by the City of Vienna (group-based, top-down, citywide) is available to all Viennese children. The initiative aims to help integrate children from all social groups and increase the compatibility of family and work commitments for parents. The empirical data, however, shows that there is a shortage of places which, together with the requirement of both parents' employment²⁰, leads many parents to choose a private kindergarten for their children. Especially for migrant women the employment requirement can represent a vicious circle (when work requires childcare and vice versa). In addition, both Austrian and non-Austrian²¹ interviewees thought that the **children's German language skills were more improved in the private kindergarten**, something attributed to the better carer-child-ratio.

The *Neighbourhood Centre*, provided by the *Hilfswerk* (place-based, top-down, citywide), is conceived as a low threshold meeting point in the neighbourhood for people of all social strata and education groups. The study demonstrates, however, that **mainly specific social groups are attracted**, usually pensioners and people in difficult (psychological) life situations. This audience, which is often (no longer) working, can be related to the

²⁰ This applies for the time before the obligatory years of pre-school (two years before enrollment in elementary school).

²¹ The terms 'Austrian' and 'non-Austrian' do not refer to citizenship, but to migration background.

centre's schedule. The mostly Austrian participants use the donation-based classes to better structure their days as well as to be active and meet other participants. The findings also show that the regularity of the activities provides a basis for more in-depth contacts. However, there is **no evidence that this form of social bonding results in a higher degree of neighbourhood attachment**. This might also be due to the larger extended area from which participants come to the neighbourhood centre.

Gardening around the Corner, provided by the district government and the urban renewal offices (place-based, hybrid, citywide), was developed primarily to improve the urban environment through the legalisation of former ad-hoc 'guerrilla gardening' activities. Residents take care of the designated small green plots on the street because they want to make their neighbourhood a nicer place by contributing to urban greenery and due to lacking a privately-owned garden. It is a voluntary activity, mostly carried out by Austrian middle-class residents, which triggers communication in public space - with neighbours as well as with strangers. While this is not the initiative's primary intention - neither for the organisers nor the participants - **new contacts and supportive practices** (e.g. watering or donation of plants) **have emerged as a positive side effect**.

The goal of *Matzner Garden*, organised by local residents (place-based, bottom-up, 14th district), is to provide a space for urban gardening and activities in the neighbourhood, to promote contacts among local residents and reinforce their feeling of belonging. Conceived as a voluntary activity, the founders want to facilitate knowledge exchange and participation possibilities through the garden, e.g. with workshops and other events. Primarily Austrian, middle-class residents are engaged in this initiative. The study showed that **people from migrant groups did often not feel addressed or included in the initiative** even though they were explicitly invited to participate.

Learning Together (group & place-based, bottom up, 16th district), an association funded by public and private sponsors, provides resources, training and information for immigrant women, children and families to promote their integration. While aiming to achieve equal opportunities for immigrant families in general, there is a focus on the Turkish community. The audience, which is therefore exclusively of a non-Austrian background, participates in the initiative primarily to improve their German language skills, but also seeks counselling and advice. Since the teachers are usually Austrians with Turkish language skills, **the initiative has a good effect on 'vertical relations'**, that is, relations of individuals to institutions. The initiative has an empowering effect on the participants.

The community centre *Herbststraße 15*, provided by the Urban Renewal Office 16, Caritas and the district government (place-based, top-down & bottom-up, 16th district), aims at bringing people together to create something in and for the neighbourhood. It offers a teaching and learning space, space for activities such as sewing or cooking as well as the providing of social and rent advice sessions and language lessons. In the sewing course, for example, women of different ethnic backgrounds (mainly Muslim women) got together. The initiative offered them a space to meet other women outside of their home, talk,

make friends, but also learn something new - more or less independent of their German language skills. The initiative has an **empowering effect** since participants gain **extended information on available (free) services in the district and city** through informal conversations.

2.2 Comparative conclusion²²

Most of the studied initiatives are oriented towards neighbourhood residents in general. A few have more specific target groups, such as young people or parents. The initiatives are mostly small-scale projects started and financed by a variety of actors - including municipalities, housing associations, welfare organisations, and residents themselves. When comparing the two cities, one notes that Vienna has more top-down projects, while in Amsterdam hybrid organisational forms are dominant - where formal institutions such as city district administrations and housing associations set up projects in collaboration with active residents. Looking at all the neighbourhood initiatives in these cities - rather than just the ones selected by ICEC - this difference becomes even more pronounced. This is because the selection in each city deliberately included different types of initiatives.

The Amsterdam projects are characterised by an organisational structure where residents are encouraged to take responsibility for their neighbourhood. Initiatives often aim to improve liveability by activating residents and bringing them into contact with one another. Similar to Vienna, the added value of many of the analysed initiatives does not lie solely in the creation of new social contacts, but also in the low-threshold services that are offered. When these services are provided by fellow residents rather than professionals, this also stimulates social interactions and can lead to further involvement. The Amsterdam initiatives generally strive to create a cosy atmosphere, where residents can feel 'at home'. Although participants appreciate this, these types of projects also tend towards (ethnic) homogeneity of participants. This means that other residents can feel excluded, and in some cases this even resulted in conflicts between different resident groups. The initiatives and activities which generated the most - positively experienced - interethnic contacts were the ones actively moderated by active residents or social workers.

In the Viennese context, a difference was found between initiatives depending on their organisational form (top-down or bottom-up). A strength of the analysed top-down projects is that they offer low-threshold opportunities for residents to come into contact with institutions like educational organisations or housing associations. On the other hand, the more structured form of these initiatives offers fewer opportunities for (interethnic) contacts with other participants. These contacts are easier to establish in bottom-up initiatives, however here as well contacts are generally intra- rather than interethnic.

²² Adapted from Hoekstra (forthcoming)



These projects - depending on the type of activity - draw participants who resemble each other in terms of ethnicity, social class, lifestyle etc. Activities where participants are seen to set up and maintain public or common areas - like common urban gardens - do not necessarily result in contacts with other participants but they do lead to short interactions and encounters with residents and passers-by in public space.

The neighbourhoods in which our case study initiatives are located are embedded within specific urban and national contexts. The two cities face different challenges in terms of neighbourhood policy, which also influences the initiatives present and their dynamics and outcomes. In Vienna, maintaining access to public space and greenery are important themes. This is connected to the increasing privatisation of these places due to high population density and population growth. In Amsterdam, decentralisation and cuts in public services have resulted in an appeal to active residents to develop their own initiatives. At the same time, concerns about the lack of (socio-cultural) integration of ethnic minorities demand that these initiatives are inclusive of all neighbourhood residents.

3. The impact of participation on neighbourhood belonging

In this project, **neighbourhood belonging** is understood to consist of three dimensions: **social embeddedness**, **place attachment**, and **co-responsibility**²³. Our study identified several key factors that contribute to residents' belonging, such as family members and friends living in the neighbourhood, knowing the area well, and feelings of safety.

Referring to the investigated initiatives, the analysis suggests a rather weak influence of top-down initiatives on neighbourhood belonging for both cities. In contrast, participation in bottom-up or hybrid initiatives tends to show a stronger relation to neighbourhood belonging.

3.1 Social embeddedness

Social embeddedness is understood as the social dimension of neighbourhood belonging, covering a **broad range of social ties and contacts**, from friendships to very casual encounters. It is about whom people meet, deliberately or not, and how they experience these contacts. This broadness is deliberate as it is recognised that people might have different expectations and desires with respect to neighbourly relations, and especially regarding interethnic relations. Our research indeed finds that residents differ greatly in the degree to which they have (interethnic) neighbourhood contacts, and the importance of neighbourhood social embeddedness in their social lives. A broad pattern that emerges is that **closer social ties exist more often with those neighbours who are more proximate** (e.g. direct neighbours or those living in the same complex) and with those who are **more ethnically 'similar'**. The role of neighbourhood initiatives in social embeddedness lies in creating more fleeting, **superficial encounters** between people who might not otherwise know each other and thereby generating a wider sense of comfort in the neighbourhood. It should also be recognised however that **initiatives can create negatively experienced social contacts and conflicts** as a function of bringing people together.

²³ For more details on the conceptual understanding, see Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2016); ICEC website (www.icecproject.com/project/theory).

3.1.1 Amsterdam

Neighbourhood initiatives increase social embeddedness for their participants mostly through an increase in superficial, fleeting encounters at the site of the initiative and in the neighbourhood in general. These encounters consist for example of exchanging **greetings or small talk with passers-by, shopkeepers**, or during organised activities. As a consequence of participating in neighbourhood initiatives, participants start to recognise and acknowledge more 'familiar faces' in the neighbourhood and become a familiar face to others as well.

While these contacts were more 'light' than the organisers of many initiatives envisioned, they are nevertheless highly appreciated by participants. Participation results in **increased public familiarity** both directly - because participants run into each other in the neighbourhood - and indirectly, for example when participants interact more with (non-participants) strangers as a result of better language skills, more self-confidence, or a lessened experience of cultural distance. Especially small-scale contacts across ethnic boundaries have increased for participants in this manner.

Deeper or **more sustained social contacts** can also develop as a consequence of participation, with some interviewees having made friends at activities. In other cases, participants have become active through friends who already participated, but have made additional contacts, including interethnic ones, at activities. However, this is the **exception rather than the rule**. Interviewees tend to distinguish between social roles (e.g. neighbour/co-participant/friend/relative) and to have distinct social expectations for these categories. While some became friendly with other participants during activities, they emphatically state that they do not consider them friends and that they would not, for example, invite them to their house. Particularly for participants of non-ethnic Dutch descent, or those who have recently moved to the neighbourhood, participation is a way to 'get out of the house' and be in the company of other people. These participants indicate that they felt isolated before they became active, and that their participation had resulted in becoming more active in general and has given them the confidence to 'explore' the neighbourhood and surrounding areas.

Interethnic encounters with other participants **are not always experienced positively**. **Language is often experienced as a barrier**, particularly for those who do not speak Dutch well and/or there is no common language with fellow participants. Participants who speak 'minority languages' in the context of the particular initiative indicate that they feel excluded by others who are unwilling to talk to them in Dutch. All studied initiatives have an (unofficial) policy to speak Dutch whenever possible. However, this is difficult to enforce and more so because it detracts from the sociability experienced by those who can speak Arabic/Spanish/Twi, etc. with each other. Many of the selected initiatives strive to offer a space that is akin to a 'living room', where residents are free to walk-in and socialise, and are encouraged to feel at home. This ideal of homeliness can be at odds with the goal of inclusivity (which these initiatives also aspire to, as they are the potential 'home' of all neighbourhood residents). Often, **certain activities become dominated by**

residents of particular ethnic (sub)groups who, intentionally or not, **make participants of a different ethnic background feel unwelcome**. A way to avoid this, which was employed by some initiatives, is active moderation of activities and group discussions. This was sometimes done by residents but more often by professionals. A 'moderator' or discussion leader takes care to emphasise any shared interests or experiences between participants, as well as insist on using Dutch as a shared language whenever possible.

Another risk to social relations in the larger neighbourhood is the **competition between different initiatives** for funding or other resources. Having to share neighbourhood locations can easily lead to tensions, as does the perception that the distribution of resources between initiatives is unequal. All kinds of conflicts that did not start out as interethnic ones (such as disagreements around the division of scarce resources, generational conflicts around the use of public and semi-public spaces, use and cleaning of shared spaces, noise, and personal conflicts) are easily interpreted along ethnic lines.

3.1.2 Vienna

The importance of meeting places and the question of how to create them in order that they function as bridges between different groups are crucial issues for the case study neighbourhoods in Vienna. While such meeting places tend to strengthen bonding *within* a group, it is **more difficult to make them work as bridging venues** between groups. It might be argued that planning departments ought to play a more active role in designing meeting places that facilitate get-togethers. Especially in Vienna, a new understanding of 'places that work' (to bring people together) is necessary, where the success of such a place is not only measured by the number of complaints. It is important to accept that negative or conflictual contacts might also be necessary, or at least unavoidable, in order to create social embeddedness. Here, the future support of mediating actors such as Fairplay or Wohnpartner must be emphasised as crucial to facilitating communication amongst neighbours. Also the domains of sports, school, culture, and politics can be used to promote social embeddedness.

The concept of social embeddedness in this study includes horizontal and vertical contacts of residents. In Vienna, the analysis illustrates that individuals often face a dilemma between anonymity and social control. On the one hand, some interviewees would like to have better contact with their in-house neighbours; on the other hand, many fear that they could be observed by nosy neighbours. At the same time, inter-generational divides (e.g. between students and elderly) and the high fluctuation of neighbours were identified as barriers for new contacts. Social networks mainly exist within, rather than beyond, ethnic groups. In general, many interview partners tend to be okay with living side-by-side as long as this is possible without severe conflicts.

In the neighbourhood, spaces of encounter (e.g. kindergartens, playgrounds, parks, pubs) are crucial meeting points for (non-)participants in Vienna. Here, horizontal contacts arise, are established and maintained. The studied initiatives facilitated horizontal contacts to different degrees, some with the opportunity of developing closer contacts. While, for example, the Neighbourhood Centre provides this possibility, the structure of Gardening around the Corner does not enable participants to get into closer contact as they are each concerned with their own section of the garden. The latter does however facilitate communication with strangers on the street as pedestrians often stop to ask the gardeners questions about the garden. This initiative simultaneously enables vertical contacts to institutions (*Gebietsbetreuung and district government*). Concerning vertical contacts, the Neighbourhood Centre in Vienna was mentioned as another example of a relevant social institution (with respect to advice services or for issuing the 'art & culture pass' for unemployed persons).

Moreover, visible and approachable political actors seem to be of crucial relevance in Vienna, too. In Gumpendorf (6th), several interviewees mentioned the district mayor as a contact person for issues regarding the neighbourhood. Knowing the mayor personally makes a person feel that they are able to shape the neighbourhood and 'be heard'. In Breitensee (14th), vertical contacts were rarely mentioned, which might be considered evidence that possibilities to develop such contacts (e.g. knowledge of relevant actors and possibilities to meet them) are underdeveloped in this neighbourhood.

3.2 Place and neighbourhood attachment

Place attachment can be understood as a sense of belonging in many ways. **A place where one likes to live**, a liking of certain spaces or physical places, and a place where one wishes to spend time. Urban design of public space can play an important role in an individual's identification with this space. According to our research across the two cities, some residents claim to be **rather indifferent to places and spaces**, highlighting the **stronger importance of social ties**. It might be argued that reinventing public space can contribute to enhancing place attachment. It might be the case that some public spaces are no longer used as the needs of residents have changed. Is it possible to create public space that allows for all residents to feel comfortable there? It is vital to take into account that various groups tend to occupy or make use of public space at different times over the course of the day and night.

Place attachment has both positive and negative aspects. **Positive aspects** include using and taking care of neighbourhood spaces, and could be promoted through **activities that take common fields of interest** as a point of departure, e.g. topics that larger groups of residents have an interest in such as childcare, dogs, sports, or cooking. Place attachment can also have **negative aspects**, e.g., when specific groups' claims of public space **exclude other groups** from accessing, or feeling safe and comfortable in these spaces.

3.2.1 Amsterdam

The neighbourhood is not necessarily a place of attachment for the interviewed residents. **Social networks and daily trajectories often encompass a larger area than just the neighbourhood**. However, many of the people interviewed did indicate that they spend the majority of their daily life in the neighbourhood. Uniformly appreciated in the studied neighbourhoods was the connection to the rest of the city through the neighbourhood's location and the availability of nearby public transport, and the presence of greenery and parks. **Ethnic Dutch** informants are more likely to feel connected to the **historical and aesthetic aspects** of the neighbourhood, while **non-ethnic Dutch** are more likely to **stress social contacts** and **neighbourhood amenities**.

It is not clear how participation influences place attachment. In some cases, participants indicate that they got to know the neighbourhood better. However, this **mostly relates to social rather than physical aspects**. Others state that due to their involvement their perception of neighbourhood boundaries has changed. Whereas before they only felt attached to a small area (their street or apartment block), due to their involvement what they view as 'their' neighbourhood has become larger. Finally, for some informants, attachment to the physical area is a motivation to become involved, in order to influence the direction of (future) urban renewal operations.

3.2.2 Vienna

Regarding place attachment, the Viennese case study findings show that interviewees seemed to be more attached to the neighbourhood in Gumpendorf (6th) district than in Breitensee (14th) and Hippviertel (16th). This observation might be connected to the fact that several interview partners mentioned the 'urban village character' of the Gumpendorf neighbourhood.

The findings from Gumpendorf also suggest the tendency for **neighbourhood attachment of non-Austrian residents to be sometimes stronger** than that of Austrian residents, which might be attributed to the positive image of the 6th district as a social prestige factor for immigrants. In addition, the comparably higher economic status in Gumpendorf enables Austrian respondents to '**escape**' from city life whenever they want to. The allotment garden or the weekend cottage in the more rural parts serve as '**compensation spaces**' for **overused and limited private spaces in the city**. The aspect of available options to escape the city life are also applicable to the Hippviertel (16th) case. Noise, overuse and limited options for privacy makes residents want to 'escape from the neighbourhood'. Contrary to Gumpendorf, the spatial radius of respondents is smaller in Hippviertel and mostly applies to larger open spaces within city boundaries (e.g. Schmelz in the 15th, Türkenschanzpark in the 18th or Prater in 2nd district). In Breitensee (14th), respondents rather emphasised the availability of green and open spaces and did not indicate a need for compensation spaces.

To summarise, a direct connection between participation and place attachment in Vienna could not be established for most analysed initiatives. The bottom-up initiatives in the 14th district, however, do indicate such a link. As with the Amsterdam result, this effect rather applies to social than to physical aspects.

3.3 Co-responsibility

According to the Council of Europe, **co-responsibility** is an overarching topic including four key themes: living environment, social balances and sense of belonging, relations between people and with institutions, and commitment and participation.

As Bloomfield (2012)²⁴ argues, six steps are necessary in order to reach co-responsibility: Minimal engagement, formal and engaged partnerships, co-governance, co-management, co-production and co-responsibility. Co-responsibility can thus be defined as the **final phase of a long-term development** and integration process. Obviously, it has a high threshold since a high level of interaction is a prerequisite. At the moment, the first two steps, engagement and partnerships, can be observed in the neighbourhood case studies in Amsterdam and Vienna.

Depending on the local (or national) context, co-responsibility can be understood as either **residents and practitioners working together** (which is the case in Austria) or as **governments and municipalities handing over responsibility** for maintenance to residents (which is the case in Amsterdam). In our interviews with (non-)participants, co-responsibility was often understood as referring to the **responsibility of each resident for peaceful coexistence, for the neighbourhood and its development.**

3.3.1 Amsterdam

Participation in neighbourhood initiatives influences co-responsibility in a number of ways. First, local initiatives assist residents who might be in a marginal position in a highly accessible way. Interviewed participants **greatly appreciate this informal help** by local professionals or active residents. Even when there is also formal assistance available (as is often the case), vulnerable residents might prefer help in the form of, for example, a neighbourhood centre where they can drop in without having to make an appointment, where they can receive assistance on a multitude of topics (often very minor, such as making phone calls or translating letters, but also debt counselling and advice on civic integration), and where assistance is offered that fits residents' life-worlds. **Volunteers at these centres often speak their language** and know about relevant personal and cultural circumstances. In this way, residents can become more empowered in living their daily lives, exchange information, and come into contact with others who have (had) similar experiences. Stakeholders of initiatives also use these kinds of services to draw people in who they then encourage to become active in other ways, or alternatively, participants in other activities who are known to face problems are encouraged to use these services.

²⁴ Bloomfield, J. 2012. "TOGETHER Final Report". Available online at <http://urbact.eu/final-report-together-network-already-line>.



Second, **participants who are more actively involved** in planning and organising activities indicate that they **feel responsible for the reputation of the neighbourhood**, its future development, and the social situation of their fellow residents as a consequence of their participation. They **enjoy being known in the neighbourhood** as someone whom people approach if they are in need of assistance. As such, they experience increased self-confidence and personal fulfilment. However, **many also feel overburdened**. They feel personally responsible for the success of the initiative as well as the welfare of other participants, and therefore often have trouble letting go and delegating to others. As familiar faces in the neighbourhood, they are approached by other residents for information or advice, which can be time-consuming and feel like they are always 'on duty'.

Boundaries need to be established not just vis-à-vis other residents, but also in dealing with professionals, who sometimes expect too much time and commitment from unpaid volunteers. Another challenge, which was described most poignantly by one of the H-buurt neighbourhood ambassadors, is the **ambiguous position of active residents** as on the one hand representing and advocating for the neighbourhood residents, and on the other hand being expected to inform residents about and help enforce 'common norms' and liveability standards. As such, the neighbourhood ambassador is sometimes seen by fellow residents as an institutional representative themselves, and therefore they have to deal with the mistrust and anger of some residents who do not want to be told how to behave, or who are afraid that they will pass on personal information to institutions. Another frustrating aspect of active involvement in organising activities is the **necessity to navigate bureaucratic requirements** (for example, application procedures for subsidies). Subsidies are generally awarded for specific activities or projects and have to be reapplied for every year. This is especially an obstacle and deterrent for lower educated residents, who consider it a waste of time and tend to experience 'the system' as unfair and hypocritical. Higher educated active residents, on the other hand, while also being critical tend to view this as networking and learning opportunities.

Finally, some participants describe their motivation to become active as a **reaction to institutions** (the district government, housing associations, welfare organisations) **neglecting what residents consider to be their duties**, thereby 'forcing' participants to take matters into their own hands. As such, they can only be described as '**reluctantly co-responsible**'. This goes along with a considerable disenchantment with institutions, especially from the side of those residents who are the most active.

3.3.2 Vienna

Our data illustrates that **transforming activity and participation into co-responsibility is a highly complex task**. Interviewees in Vienna generally regarded co-responsibility as important, especially when it comes to conflicts in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, the question of **individual capacities for co-responsibility** arises, with personal overload or time limitations often representing barriers to engagement in local activities. Especially in **socially distressed neighbourhoods** with a high share of single-parental or unemployed households, **time and financial constraints are the main reason for not becoming more active**. There is a clear need to support residents who are active in the sense of 'participating in initiatives' and to empower those becoming co-responsible. Otherwise, there is a risk of **one-sided responsibility** represented by those residents who do have the capacity for networking and shaping their neighbourhood. Moreover, **co-responsibility is difficult to activate if there is a general lack of belonging or feeling of attachment to the neighbourhood** by residents. Those who do feel responsible and become active in a self-organised, bottom-up initiative are often highly educated, homogenous groups that are used to demanding service (e.g. financial subsidies, permissions) from the local administration.

Finally, our analysis identifies a general lack of understanding with regard to self-responsibility and 'power to affect change'. Our study is able to draw on substantial observations and informal conversations with residents, non-profit-organisations as well as public stakeholders that highlight the effect of a historically grown habitus within a social welfare state regime. As such, the city government and policymakers are perceived by residents as being the bodies who have the power to decide on these changes. This notion can be understood as a point of endeavour both for policymakers as well as the broader society to start a debate about co-responsibility in Vienna.

In order to promote co-responsibility, a focus on similarities and common interests rather than on differences among groups seems vital. Residents should be involved in long-term decision-making and planning even though it is often a complex and long-term process. At the same time, small projects can be implemented on the everyday level, but a **long-term vision and funding security** is vital for creating co-responsibility.

3.4 Comparative conclusion

Our comparative analysis on effects of participation on neighbourhood belonging shows the general relevance of social embeddedness, place attachment and co-responsibility at the neighbourhood level. However, residents' interpretation and perception of these concepts are very diverse.

While **social embeddedness** in Amsterdam reflects a nuanced understanding between light and deeper social (interethnic) contacts, the Viennese results rather evolve around the importance of publicly available social spaces. Those spaces serve mainly as bonding elements within distinct ethnic groups and play a less important role in connecting groups of different ethnic composition. Amsterdam seems to build on a longer tradition of community spaces that can be used by different ethnic groups. However, here interethnic encounters are not always appreciated as language barriers and the dominance of some groups in community spaces may create exclusionary effects. In light of increasing competition when it comes to the distribution of public support and grants for local initiatives, the strength of low threshold meeting places for the community is a weakness at the same time. Local initiatives - no matter whether organised in bottom-up or top-down way - depend on long-term funding strategies to build sustainable networks in the neighbourhood. As soon as long-term strategies are at risk, the spaces of encounters created through local initiatives become fragile, too. Planning uncertainty in combination with people-dependent bottom-up structures may injure the creation of social contacts in the long run. In this context, our results also show the relevance of a political dimension in social embeddedness with regard to a feeling of 'being heard'. This applies to the possibility of maintaining community spaces where neighbourhood initiatives take place. It also applies to the accessibility of local policymakers and easy-to-reach neighbourhood funds to undertake small initiatives in the neighbourhood. In this regard, social interaction between local residents and policymakers can be added as an additional component that contributes to social embeddedness.

While **place attachment** might be explained as the 'place where one likes to live', the underlying perceptions of place attachment differ significantly across the cities. While in Amsterdam, mostly social aspects contribute to place attachment, the role of spatial and physical aspects are more important in Vienna. In both cases, neighbourhoods are of crucial relevance as much of our respondents' daily life practices and routines still occur here. Moreover, (some) neighbourhoods might also convey social status to (some) residents. Aesthetics, location and spatial characteristics (e.g. density, access to public space) influence the feeling of 'where one likes to live'. It even influences the individual resiliency to cope with diversity when options of 'escaping overused spaces' in the neighbourhood are available, as the results in Vienna show. However, the effects of (non-)participation in local initiatives cannot be straightforwardly combined with place attachment. We would argue that there is no strong evidence of effects of (non-)participation on place attachment.

Finally, **co-responsibility** completes our understanding of neighbourhood belonging. The challenge within this study can be found in the implementation of a very vague concept that is rather new in some local contexts (such as Vienna) and more established in other local contexts (such as Amsterdam). Considering the general understanding of co-responsibility as collaborative interaction between residents and practitioners as well as public stakeholders to create public value, our analysis may add to a more resident-driven understanding of co-responsibility. Regardless of whether residents are self-active and as such co-responsible or not, there are certain risks in the notions of co-responsibility. If co-responsibility is supported and strengthened by public stakeholders and policymakers, this might increase the sense of neighbourhood belonging. However, the task of being co-responsible easily causes overburdening. Keeping bureaucratic tasks to a minimum and providing long-term support and acknowledgment is crucial here, otherwise, co-responsibility runs the risk of creating frustration and disappointment. Policymakers should be aware that co-responsibility is perceived differently among residents and is highly dependent on the availability of personal resources such as time, information and self-confidence.

Participants in local initiatives should be valued as active residents who care about themselves and their role in the neighbourhood. Starting from this position, co-responsibility becomes a less demanding concept and focuses on the potential in every resident: enabling active residents to become co-responsible residents.

4. Mechanisms of ‘success’ or ‘failure’

4.1 Amsterdam

Initiatives that seem **most successful** in bringing together people from different ethnic backgrounds (or the activities within these initiatives, as there can be considerable variation in diversity there) have in common that they are **(co)organised by relative ‘outsiders’** in the neighbourhood. For example, the VoorUit students occupy an almost liminal position. Although they live in the neighbourhood, which makes them highly accessible and trustworthy, they are students and as such seen by other residents as a separate social category, who usually were not familiar with the neighbourhood before and did not have neighbourhood social contacts. This allows them to strike a balance between creating familiarity and being diverse and inclusive. In contrast, initiatives led by a neighbourhood resident often struggle to draw residents from different ethnic groups, and such initiatives are quickly perceived as being ‘for’ a specific ethnic or social group even if this is not the intention.

Inclusivity can be at odds with attractiveness (to potential participants). Therefore, it is worth first considering **why inclusiveness is important in a specific initiative/activity**. In some cases, it might be enough to have limited or **selective inclusivity**. For example, a women-only activity might not be inclusive towards men, but will be more likely to draw residents who are hesitant to participate in mixed-gender activities. Some initiatives were successful in creating a side-by-side inclusivity whereby participants socialised and organised activities within their own mono-ethnic or monolingual social circles but in the same venue at the same time or at the same venue but at different times in the day/week. These kinds of encounters might still be successful in creating superficial sociability and public familiarity.

A general prerequisite for inclusive activities is **a common language between the participants**, preferably Dutch, which is used for general discussions. Much also depends on the pedagogical and interpersonal qualities of the organiser. It needs **to be a person who has some authority over the group and can direct activities** and discussions so that participants are challenged to engage with others they do not know well, rather than staying in their own social circle. An example here is the different atmospheres engendered by a Dutch language class in neighbourhood living room *Dobbekamer* in Sloterveer and in *De Handreiking* in H-buurt. Half of the women in the language class in Sloterveer are Moroccan and Arab-speaking. During classes, the Moroccan women would sit on the right side of the room, interacting mostly with each other in Arabic, while the other women sat on the left and spoke to each other in Dutch. In contrast, the language teacher in *De Handreiking* tries to set up her classes so that not many participants have a language in common.

A final way to improve inclusivity is by **attracting a wide range of participants in the first place, and retaining them**. Non-participant residents often indicate that they would like to have more activities, but at the same time they are unaware of initiatives which might suit their interests. While part of this might be socially desirable answers, a lot can still be gained from broader advertising and different forms of advertising (including in languages other than Dutch). Another approach can be to offer **more tangible rewards** to (some kinds of) participants, for example through offering certificates for completed training or courses, references, or small payments. This is not only important for 'ordinary' participants, but also those who are more actively involved indicate that they would like assistance to become more 'professional' or to learn new skills.

Local initiatives have a small group of regular participants and reach only a limited number of residents. **Non-participants are often not aware of existing projects**, but many are **also limited in the degree to which they want and can participate**, especially in the more 'active' manner that is often favoured by the municipality. While many initiatives present themselves as bottom-up, aiming to give residents a key role in their design and execution, **in practice all are funded wholly or to a large extent by public money**. They often also depend on professionals for organisational support. Furthermore, while the studied initiatives have ambitious aims and objectives, both regarding the effects on participants and on the neighbourhood, participants experience more modest effects. For example, it is highly doubtful that small-scale initiatives such as the ones studied in the ICEC project can contribute to a decrease in neighbourhood unemployment or an increase in liveability, absent more general policy initiatives.

4.2 Vienna²⁵

The type and design of an initiative, including its embeddedness within governance structures, influence who participates, their motivations and to what effect. Defining characteristics include top-down, bottom-up and hybrid as well as group- or place-based constellations of initiatives. In addition, we can distinguish initiatives that are for free as opposed to those with a fixed or donation-based fee. While some initiatives require German language skills, the latter are not very relevant in others. **In only a few initiatives could a 'real' or increased interethnic mix of Austrian and non-Austrian participants be observed.** The reasons and motivations for participation - voluntary versus required - have to be taken into consideration as well as those for non-participation, such as time and/or financial limitations, lack of interest, lack of knowledge of the initiative or other reasons specific to the initiative (e.g. not feeling welcome, a certain language barrier).

Our research shows that the **intensity and duration of interethnic contacts differ significantly between the selected initiatives.** While most of the analysed initiatives tend to create interethnic contacts that are limited to the duration of the respective course or initiative, if at all, *free pre-school* allows for more sustainable contacts. This initiative creates interethnic contacts between children (and parents) and has the potential for developing friendships and thereby enhancing contacts beyond need-based participation. Nonetheless, this potential is also present in other initiatives since most of them are based on regularity. However, **initiatives can also generate exclusion by practicing 'sameness'** based on ethnic background or participants' shared experiences of marginality and (psychological) vulnerability, for example in the sewing course of *Herbststraße 15*. In this way, sustained encounters might even deepen prejudice - for example, that children do not learn German in free pre-school because of a trend towards ethnic clustering - and result in disappointment, disengagement, or conflict.

The study suggests that **socialising within ones ethnic and social group is the norm**, while living-together beyond more or less separate social or ethnic groups requires sustained effort. An important theme is the role of initiatives for creating fleeting encounters and public familiarity that result in a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood. While neighbourhood initiatives often focus on more sustained encounters and aim to create strong community and cohesion, **participants do not necessarily desire close ties and may value more superficial contacts.** Greeting or recognising each other on the street- for instance in the context of *Gardening around the corner* - is often enough. Highly visible activities in public space, such as working in the garden, result in more positive perceptions of neighbours since their material and spatial characteristics facilitate encounters.

A key result of the study was the **identification of inclusionary and exclusionary effects of the investigated initiatives.** We found that barriers to participation result from both formal (e.g. language or employment requirements) and informal exclusion mechanisms (e.g. social composition of 'organisers', physical makeup, a certain ethnic dominance). The

²⁵ Based on Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2016)

mechanisms of exclusion not only refer to ethnic but also to socioeconomic differences as well as to the individual's ability and motivation to participate. Education and employment represent key dimensions: the higher educated feel more able to organise themselves; those not (regularly) employed have more time to participate but sometimes see participation as a barrier to finding a job rather than as a possible step towards labour market integration. At the same time, the design of initiatives and their specific offers to participants influence whether residents are interested and willing to invest time and energy. Finally, the success of an initiative not only depends on its design, but also on an individual's motivations and expectations of the initiative as well as on group dynamics (and other potential factors).

The Viennese case study shows that while the studied **top-down initiatives connect participants to educational and housing institutions**, they often provide **fewer possibilities regarding encounters with fellow residents and interethnic contacts**. **Bottom-up initiatives combine the two** as, next to their social function, they offer low-threshold access to representatives of Austrian mainstream society. It is thus vital that organisers and local institutional actors consider how the structure of their initiative influences who takes part, and consider using different incentives to 'give a voice' to social and/or immigrant groups who currently do not feel addressed by, nor interested in, existing initiatives.

4.3 Comparative conclusion

Measuring the **success of an initiative is a difficult task** as the various actors involved are likely to have different definitions of success and failure. Stakeholders, participants, policymakers and researchers might all have different (while overlapping) ideas on what constitutes the success or failure of a specific initiative. While measuring effects seems to be a more neutral and objective task, there might also be disagreement as to what is a positive and what a negative effect. In addition, effects can take place on different levels and it might be a complex task to take into account all levels or to define which levels or aspects are relevant (and to whom).

As mentioned above, our study focused on the **success of initiatives to create and promote interethnic encounters** on the one hand and **neighbourhood belonging** on the other hand. What we did in this study was to compare initiatives' aims and intentions (as found in their mission statements) with the initiatives' actual effects according to the interviewed participants and stakeholders. Additionally, we analysed whether the initiatives were able to foster inter-ethnicity. Non-participants were interviewed to investigate the effect of (non-)participation on neighbourhood belonging. The analysis of the initiatives also revealed **unintended side effects** with regard to our study focus, for example the creation of superficial contacts through gardening in the public space.

Successful initiatives thus enable **(lasting) contacts among diverse social groups**, including marginalised groups like immigrants. Ideally, they also **foster residents' feeling of belonging** through giving them a voice and an opportunity to make their own contributions with regard to the diverse activities. **Co-ownership and co-responsibility** seem to be closely related when it comes to neighbourhood initiatives. While solutions must always be context-specific, certain indicators could be identified as **'alert signs'** for developments in the wrong direction. Especially when the group of participants stays rather **homogenous** with regard to socio-economic and ethnic background over a longer time period it is important to check for possible exclusion mechanisms. **Barriers** for participation can range from **fees and other requirements** to feeling unwelcome or out of place. Therefore, we believe that **continuous or repeated monitoring** is a vital step towards guaranteeing that initiatives fulfil their aims and make a valuable contribution to peaceful interethnic coexistence and the promotion of neighbourhood belonging among all social groups.

These findings could not have been established without our quantitative survey. **Measuring effects on the individual and neighbourhood scale** requires a **qualitative, ethnographic approach**, which includes trust-building over a longer time period. Our participation as researchers in the diverse initiatives was crucial for the success of the study. **Co-creation** between citizens, stakeholders, urban actors, and researchers, as it was partially realised in this project through the implementation of **urban living labs**, is not yet mainstream because it is difficult to achieve. It is a long-term process, built on the abilities and willingness of involved actors and both established and new networks. Among the benefits of this qualitative approach is certainly in-depth knowledge of the investigated initiatives and their effects as well as the established networks which might be an important basis for future cooperation in research.

5. Relating findings to neighbourhood and urban policies

5.1 Implications for neighbourhood initiatives

5.1.1 Amsterdam: Balancing active citizenship, inclusivity, and sustainability

Initially, the selected initiatives were divided into 'place-based' and 'group-based' and clustered according to whether they were organised as 'top-down' or 'bottom-up'. During the fieldwork we found that these distinctions are not always clear-cut and therefore decided to include 'hybrid' as an additional category. All selected initiatives receive (sometimes significant) funding from either housing associations or local government, often from both. **None of the initiatives would be able to continue without this funding.** In fact, one of our initiatives - the *Vrouwenbazaar* - lost its premises as a result of changes in the municipal real estate policy and now makes use of a neighbourhood centre together with other neighbourhood groups. Another initiative - *De Handreiking* - was on the brink of losing its funding which would have spelt the end of this initiative. Even those initiatives initially characterised as '**resident-driven**' (bottom-up) are therefore very much **embedded in institutional structures**.

Furthermore, some resident-driven initiatives are **more bottom-up in theory than in practice**. Especially the neighbourhood centre *De Handreiking* (whose philosophy includes that residents design and execute activities) had trouble finding residents that can take on organisational roles. This might be due to the centre's relative newness, as in the two other centres which employ the same philosophy this works better. In some other initiatives too, a lot of the organisational work is done by professionals or 'professional residents' (notably students involved in the *VoorUit* project and full-time volunteers in other projects).

De Handreiking, as well as *VoorUit* and the three neighbourhood living rooms, are subsidised by housing associations. As such, they have to submit detailed records of activities organised, participants, etc. This is particularly burdensome for *De Handreiking*, which is supported by three different housing associations. Its employees spend a lot of time taking attendance (including name, address, and date of birth of all participants during every activity) and making reports, leaving limited time to engage with participants.

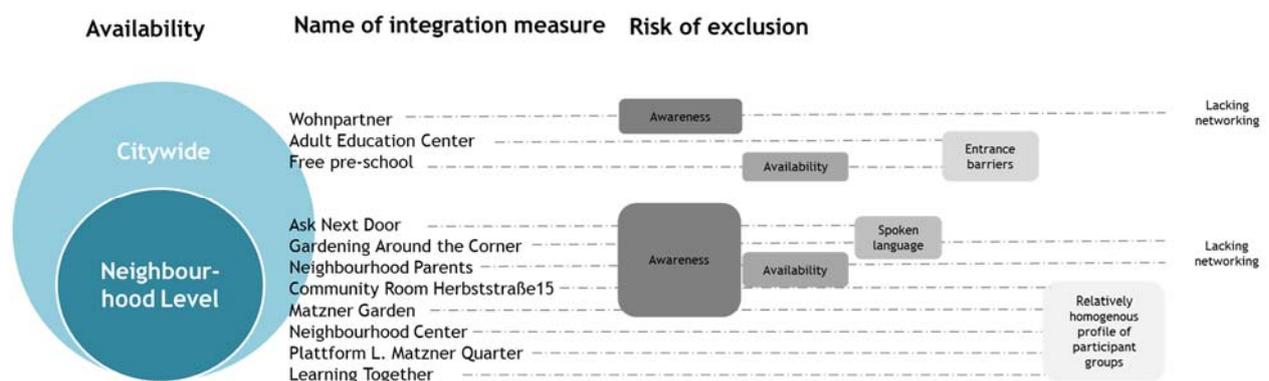
Summing up, all of the studied initiatives in the Amsterdam neighbourhoods can be classified as **hybrid** in the sense that they are dependent on financial support from public institutions for their survival, but operate according to the principle that residents themselves should design and carry out activities. 'True' bottom-up initiatives are rare, as

all initiatives eventually become embedded in institutional structures. On the other hand, all initiatives offer room for residents to not only participate but also to become involved more actively, and therefore offers them the opportunity to realise their plans for the neighbourhood. In the studied initiatives, **dependence on short-term subsidies creates insecurity** as the continued existence of the initiative is uncertain and in some cases (interethnic) neighbourhood relations deteriorated due to competition for funding. Furthermore, the requirement that initiatives are not only for, but also by, residents is not always realistic given a **general lack of organisational capital and its unequal distribution** in the neighbourhoods that need these initiatives the most. While there is currently a mix of active residents across social class (although ethnic Dutch are overrepresented), a too strong emphasis on 'active citizenship', which presumes a significant degree of independence and know-how from the side of volunteers, might tip the scales towards favoring activities by middle-class residents while inhibiting participation of non-ethnic Dutch residents and working-class ethnic Dutch.

5.1.2 Vienna: Creating integration and preventing exclusion

Integration initiatives - independent of whether they are at the city or neighbourhood level - per se aim at increasing integration during and after participation in the initiative. Our analysis shows, however, that unintended exclusionary mechanisms can lead to the exclusion of often hard-to-reach groups.

Figure 3. Initiatives' risks of exclusion



Source: own production

These **exclusion mechanisms concern the publicity and the availability of initiatives, the language primarily spoken or other entry barriers** such as fees. The study also shows that too much homogeneity in participant groups can have an exclusionary effect on individuals who do not identify with the dominant group within the context of the initiative

(e.g. clothing, ethnic background, age, gender). In addition, internal and external networking is required in order to embed integration initiatives into existing, more long-term policy structures.

The implications for **citywide measures** that are all organised in a **top-down manner** refer mostly to **awareness and entrance barriers**. While the offer by the Adult Education Centre and free pre-school are well-known, the formal requirements (e.g. fees, employment status) cause severe exclusionary effects especially amongst non-Austrian social groups. Although the inner-institutional perception (the stakeholder view) shows a the target group being to a large degree convinced, the external perception by (non-)participants shows a more nuanced opinion on the effectiveness of awareness campaigns. Despite the effectiveness of multilingualism, top-down measures especially benefit from word-of-mouth recommendations within the specific ethnic communities. As a result, our analysis supports the recommendation of **activating gate-openers** (e.g. well-connected mothers) to reach out to hard-to-reach communities.

As for the **neighbourhood-wide measures**, they are mostly organised in a bottom-up or hybrid manner and often lack more **(multilingual) awareness campaigns** as well as a profound **understanding on the “actual inter-ethnicity”**. While the first aspect of awareness raising campaigns can also be seen as information to be actively searched for by the respective target groups, the aspect of **homogenous settings and more intra-ethnic encounters in initiatives** aimed at interethnic encounters has to be emphasised critically. As access to hard-to-reach groups is mostly perceived as a first success, critical reflection on the heterogeneity within multi-ethnic groups is lacking. As the analysis shows, it is an ongoing task by initiators to promote not only inclusion and interaction of different ethnic, but also social groups. As such, we highly recommend some sort **of regular assessment** - as a preliminary form of systemised monitoring - to create a valid source for decision-making processes with regard to the design and success of designs. A better understanding of the “diversification within ethnic heterogeneity” may also help initiators to report in a more concise and persuasive manner to funding parties (e.g. district or city government).

5.2 Implications for urban policies

5.2.1 Amsterdam

The following details some considerations regarding the design of neighbourhood policies and their possible outcomes. These are not meant as universal recommendations, rather they point to aspects of how these policies work out 'on the ground' in the studied neighbourhood initiatives that might be more or less favourable, and the implications for those working to create or maintain interethnic coexistence in diverse neighbourhoods.

Defining inclusivity: Consider why inclusiveness is important in a specific initiative or activity, and how it can best be achieved. In the current organisation of many initiatives being inclusive means that everybody is welcome in principle, but in practice this often means that not all groups feel equally welcome or called to participate. This is for example the case for those who would prefer to participate in same-gender settings, or in a language other than Dutch. In some cases, limited or selective inclusivity is more worthwhile, or the goal should be achieving side-by-side diversity rather than a complete mix.

'Thin' versus 'thick' sociality: Initiatives often do not generate strong social bonds where these did not exist before. However, they might still be successful in creating superficial encounters and sociality. Rather than friendships, encounters generated by initiatives more often consist of things like greeting one another on the street or engaging in small-talk. While these are perhaps seen as 'falling short' of more ambitious policy aims, these effects are appreciated by participants and do contribute to a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood.

Supporting active residents: In order to have a sustainable and diverse 'participation infrastructure', (potential) active residents need institutional support that is durable (i.e. not project-based). Current projects have enthused many residents - both those who were already active before and those who were not. Their efforts are integral to an initiative's success. However, participation requires energy and skills that are not always readily available to active residents. Many therefore state that they need more support (financial and otherwise) to continue in the future. This could include limited financial compensation or opportunities to professionalise or gain tangible skills. In addition, there should be a fair and realistic assessment of activities that should be paid versus unpaid work, and activities that are the responsibility of residents themselves versus of the municipality and/or housing associations.

Participation and wider neighbourhood relations: Residents cannot always reach a consensus on how neighbourhood budgets should be spent. Especially when the rules for subsidy allocations are unclear or there are budget cuts, existing communities and/or

organisations can become competitors to the detriment of social relations in the neighbourhood. Even though professionals strive to be as transparent as possible, for example regarding their criteria for financial support, this can still be a source of friction among residents who might have limited bureaucratic knowledge or inclinations. In addition, residents do not always agree with professionals or with each other on what the neighbourhood - or part of it - needs.

Rethinking ‘active citizenship’: While many residents are happy to be given the chance to become involved in their neighbourhood, others are not able or willing to be active citizens in this way, or not on a voluntary basis. Initiatives should be mindful of different capacities and desires to participate among residents. For many residents, the neighbourhood is not a major place of attachment, and this is not necessarily problematic. These residents might be active in very different ways (in paid, voluntary, or informal work outside the neighbourhood). Moreover, for some residents involvement is not feasible due to other limitations, including illness, poverty, or care obligations. It is therefore important to be mindful of differing potentials of residents to be actively involved in the neighbourhood.

5.2.2 Vienna

First, it should be noted that the urban neighbourhood itself might not always be the primary frame of reference, especially for younger and highly mobile residents. It is thus necessary to take into account spatial reference units and urban qualities beyond the neighbourhood.

Compensation spaces: Interviewees often make use of ‘compensation spaces’ (physically and socially) to overcome neighbourhood characteristics they are dissatisfied with, e.g., by visiting green spaces outside the neighbourhood or with a second home in the countryside. Our findings show that the socially relevant reference groups are often not the local communities, but the city more generally or in particular social networks which are spread across the city. Looking at intra-city mobility can thus also be informative for studying the relevance of the neighbourhood.

Effects of participation: In certain locally offered initiatives, effects of participation on an individual’s neighbourhood attachment seem to be more moderate than originally expected. However, the findings confirm that participation does tend to reinforce social embeddedness. From a realistic point of view, policymakers **cannot expect ‘hyper-active’ residents** as a dominant type. Instead, it is vital that supportive conditions are facilitated to allow co-responsibly (bottom-up) organised initiatives. To better involve immigrants, this could include a stronger - target group oriented and multi-lingual - information policy on the availability of services, support and grants as well as easier access to small grants.

Inclusivity versus exclusivity: In addition, it is important to consider the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of initiatives, based on the differentiated needs of target groups. Currently, it seems that *Gardening around the Corner* presents an inclusionary structure while the *Free Pre-school* is de facto exclusionary when it comes to certain groups (e.g., unemployed parents). The findings suggest that it is important to distinguish between top-down and bottom-up initiatives and their respective possibilities in creating a sense of belonging and promoting place attachment, social embeddedness and co-responsibility. Self-organised groups can sometimes be exclusionary (e.g. including mainly highly educated Austrian residents), and indeed organisers of top-down initiatives argue that the top-down nature of their initiative enables them to enforce the inclusion of non-Austrians. On the other hand, we find that bottom-up initiatives are more likely to create co-responsibility, which may also be a prerequisite for participation.

Interethnic coexistence: The currently observed, largely conflict-free interethnic coexistence seems to be maintained to a certain degree through the avoidance of deeper social contacts between ethnic communities. Many interviewees find that people and different ethnic groups live side-by-side in the local context, and many of them are already 'saturated' with contacts. However, this situation of conflict-free interethnic co-existence requires efforts to be maintained, both efforts to avoid conflicts but also to create neighbourhood attachment and co-responsibility. Possible questions for policymakers in this regard are:

- How might conflict avoidance (through contact avoidance) affect interethnic coexistence in the long-term?
- How does this apply to policy strategies, such as preventative vs. curative approaches?
- What are the medium and long-term aims of the political decision-makers in this respect?
- Which role do the strategies of other dominant groups beside public authorities play (e.g. real estate developers)?

The efforts for peaceful coexistence: Peaceful coexistence is an great asset that needs to be valued and promoted. The City of Vienna implements a broad package of initiatives that, together with a multitude of (supported) neighbourhood initiatives, promotes coexistence in the living environment, and thereby promotes integration on the neighbourhood level. It is essential that city administration and policies maintain mainly peaceful coexistence by continuing to take their duty to promote integration seriously. Realistically, social and ethnic mixing does not have to (and cannot) be forcibly created. Also living side-by-side without larger conflicts can have a stabilising effect on the neighbourhood. To this end, a commitment on behalf of the city is needed as well as continuous tangible support. Ideally, this strategy helps to increase residents' belonging and sense of community in a neighbourhood.

In order to promote the development of belonging and co-responsibility, we suggest several actions in different fields for policymakers in Vienna.

➤ **Spaces of encounter**

Interpersonal and neighbourly coexistence takes place in public space. This interaction can - but does not have to - be characterised as interethnic. It is crucial to acknowledge the potential of public space to enable social interaction and use it with regard to integration policies. Especially in these places, low-threshold encounters between neighbourhood residents can take place and convey a feeling of belonging. Loose, non-binding social contacts on the street and in public space are appreciated by most residents and have a positive effect on neighbourhood belonging.

➤ **Financing and design**

Creating a space of encounter does not require high financial investment. Public space only needs functional and creative planning to function as a space of encounter. This includes, for example, seating areas, designated areas for ball games or dogs, or parks. The space of encounter as such is produced by the residents themselves by meeting and interacting with each other. Urban planning and the specifications of functional forms of usage (play, rest, passing by, etc.) should be open for appropriation by different groups of users. The spectrum of forms of appropriation is unlimited and ranges from 'sitting in groups on the back of benches' to starting a neighbourhood garden on an adjacent site.

➤ **Community spaces are not yet neighbourhood spaces**

Our analysis illustrates that public space is under pressure and availability tends to decrease rather than increase. Private community spaces must be considered critical in this regard, especially in new building projects by housing cooperatives. While these create a feeling of belonging within the housing community, they separate themselves from their direct environment. Public space can then - even if the potential were there - no longer serve as spaces of encounter because these encounters take place in private community kitchens, on roof terraces, or at the swimming pool. In a growing city such as Vienna, where new building activities are increasing, it is therefore essential to create community places that are open to the outside too. This can happen, for example, through activities and parties, but also by including initiatives from the neighbourhood.

➤ **Gatekeepers from the communities**

Local actors who serve as gatekeepers to different ethnic groups are key to disseminating (information) offers. They act both as a community member and as a bridging contact person between different social groups. As a result, they enable access to hard-to-reach groups on a low-threshold and in a credible way and are therefore essential mediators. The challenge lies in identifying these people, gaining their trust and becoming active together with them in the neighbourhood.

➤ **Outreaching multilingualism**

At the beginning of any integration process stands a mutual basis of trust. Understanding integration as a bi- or multilateral process also means that the society and its urban governance representatives are required to proactively address and include migrants and marginalised groups. Since these individuals often do not feel addressed or included by existing activities and programmes, multilingual information is a good start. The transmission of information through gatekeepers within the communities (through word-of-mouth), however, tends to have a greater effect.

➤ **Low-entry barriers**

Financial and other prerequisites for participation (such as employment requirement, advanced German skills, IT skills, etc.) in initiatives can result in additional entry barriers and thus also lessens the value of these spaces as spaces of encounter. One example is the free pre-school, which requires employment of both parents in the non-compulsory pre-school years.

➤ **Bottom-up initiatives & cooperative governance**

The support system for individual bottom-up initiatives in Vienna is well established. However, acquiring this individual funding requires extensive knowledge and good German language skills. It is thus essential to support hard-to-reach groups with the slogan 'enabling instead of preventing'. This also includes cooperative governance structures that show a clear potential for improvement in Vienna. It is vital to improve connections between different institutional actors and enable and promote their cooperation. For instance, diverse municipal departments responsible for an overarching topic should also cooperate in the long-term funding of bottom-up initiatives and create synergies. Furthermore, migrants and marginalised groups need to be included already in the development stage of integration initiatives. The formal inclusion of hard-to-reach groups in already existing programmes, developed by the dominant middle class, is not conducive to the development of co-ownership.

➤ **Developing together: Long-term co-creation**

Initiative organisers - often private persons - need planning and funding security. To promote the sustainability of projects and the related trust-building, long-term processes of co-creation between municipal decision-makers and individuals should be the aim. Thereby, a stronger impact could be achieved, which should be a primary goal in integration issues.

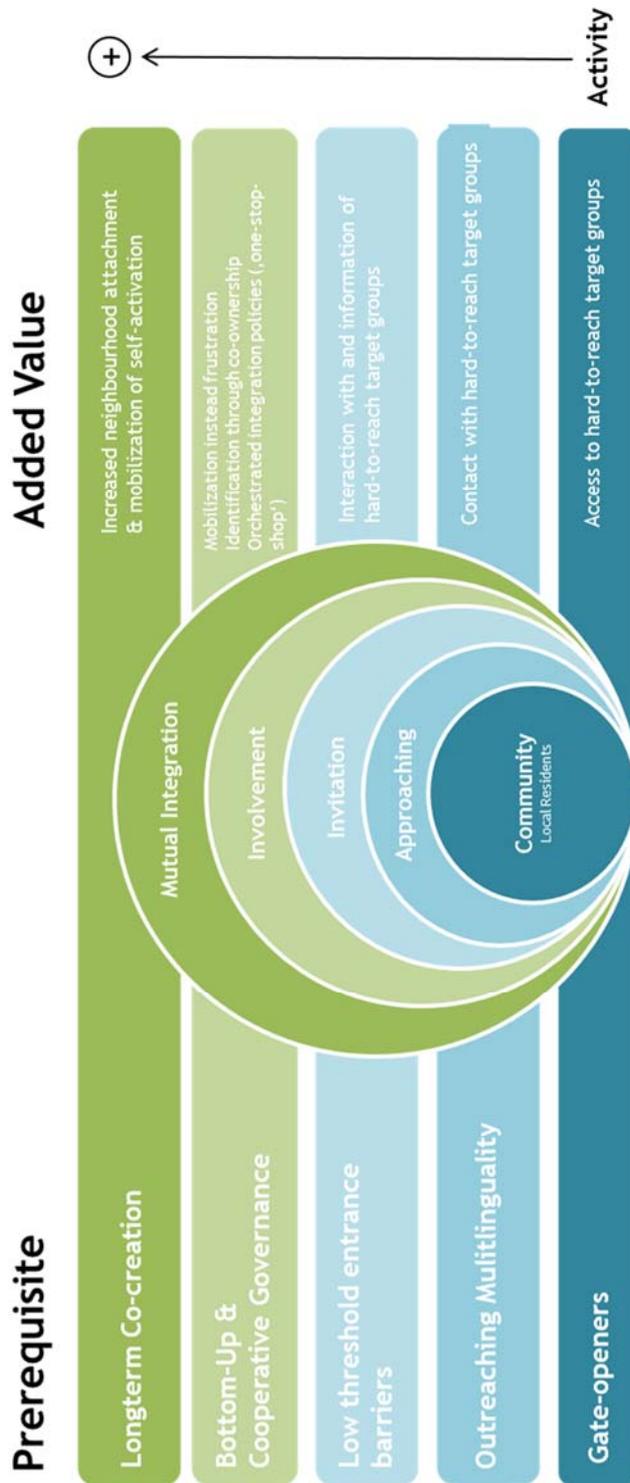


Figure 4. Prerequisites and added value of different levels of inclusion

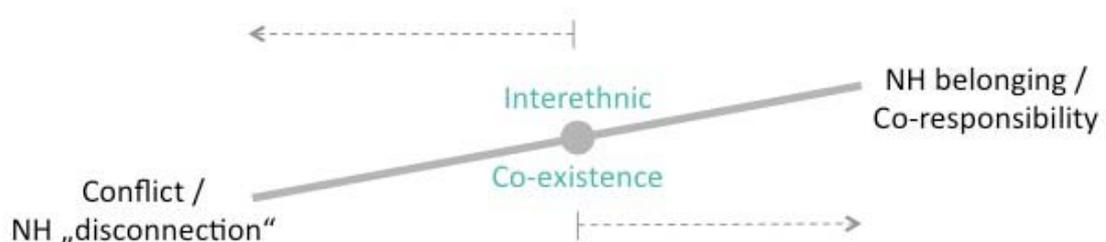
Source: own production

Last but not least, it should be mentioned that academic research creates momentum for political initiatives. As part of the research design, the ICEC team in Vienna attempted to create a mutual learning process between researchers, political stakeholders, and local residents through the ICEC urban living labs. The collaboration with the urban renewal offices represents the interaction between academia and intermediate political actors. However, the interest by municipality departments and local politicians in the ICEC results has to be mentioned, as well. We learned from political decision-makers that collaboration within a research project is important and can even go beyond initially intended project aims. In addition, the low threshold community space in *Herbststraße* (ULL16), for example, would not have been realised without the funding and expertise that an international research project offers. As such, research projects can provide a rationale and stimulus for implementing already existing ideas within local administrations.

5.3 Comparative conclusions

Based on the empirical findings as well as the theoretical discussion, we suggest that **interethnic co-existence** can be regarded as the **‘middle’ of a continuum**. If we conceptualise co-existence as the pillar of a see-saw, we can identify what could be a negative or a positive deviation from co-existence (see Figure 5). If peaceful co-existence - living side-by-side - is not upheld, this will potentially lead to conflicts and disconnection from the neighbourhood. If, in contrast, co-existence is promoted and strengthened, this may result in neighbourhood belonging.

Figure 5. The see-saw: Co-existence as the middle of a continuum



Source: Own production



Our analysis clearly indicates the **importance of investment in neighbourhood belonging** from the side of policymakers and public stakeholders. Peaceful coexistence is not simply a happy accident that occurs without any effort with respect to local integration initiatives. Rather, this stability - and a potential shift to the 'right side of the see-saw' requires long-term commitment from policymakers, in particular:

- Continuous support of local initiatives and provision of neighbourhood spaces
- Regular monitoring of inclusionary and exclusionary (side-)effects of existing initiatives
- Outreach activities to gatekeepers of hard-to-reach communities
- Acknowledging that neighbourhood belonging is a process that needs time, but offer opportunities to become engaged in the neighbourhood.

If **policymakers understand interethnic coexistence as a peaceful condition in the neighbourhood that enables neighbourhood belonging**, they will also be successful in communicating that belonging requires two prerequisites: A political and societal environment that allows neighbourhood belonging to develop for all residents, and a society that actively connects to its neighbourhood and gives something back to, and as, co-responsible residents.

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ICEC Publications

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