The struggle to belong-

Dealing with diversity in the 21th century in urban settings

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Learning about diversity through city-to-city partnerships; the case of Dutch-Moroccan & Dutch Turkish municipal partnerships

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Abstract

Most literature on North –South partnerships focuses on learning by Southern partners, usually considered the main objective. This also applies to city-to-city (C2C) partnerships, with some exceptions (Johnson and Wilson 2006, 2009). In contrast, this paper focuses on reciprocity and mutual learning as potential strengths of C2C partnerships between migrant-destination countries and migrant-sending countries. C2C partnerships are usually long-term relationships, involving governmental and non-governmental actors, in which trust can build up, facilitating knowledge exchange and reciprocal learning. The types of reciprocal learning and the conditions stimulating it as well as the extent to which they build stronger local government in both countries, are the focus of this paper. Transnational linkages between Dutch municipalities (as a migrant-destination country) and Morocco and Turkey (as migrant-sending countries) are interesting to explore. They reflect a strategy of Dutch local governments to reach migrant groups within their constituencies and learn about dealing with (cultural) diversity in their own locality. The paper explores how local governments in the Netherlands learn from their peer local governments in migrant-sending countries and to what extent the international engagement contributes to strengthening local government – civil society interfaces in the Netherlands. The case studies of Dutch-Moroccan and Dutch – Turkish municipal partnerships were studied through participatory observation and interviews in both countries. The paper concludes that Dutch local governments and NGO's involved in C2C cooperation learn in various ways; reflection on their own work processes, learning on general cultural exchange and on (cultural) diversity. C2C was also used in bridging the gap between local governments and citizens, mainly when NGOs were involved strategically.

Introduction

In the 1960s and 1970s migrants from Morocco and Turkey were recruited to work in the Dutch industrial and agricultural sector. The majority of these migrants have stayed in the Netherlands and brought their families to their new home country. The largest migrant groups living in the Netherlands today are still of Moroccan and Turkish origin, next to migrants of Suriname origin (the latter having a different migrant history as a former colony). In the large municipalities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam approximately half of the population is of non native origin. In several smaller municipalities which use to have industries within their constituencies (like Haarlem, Gouda and Deventer) their number is also significant comprising around 20- 25% of the population (CBS 2011, Municipality of Amsterdam O+S , 2010, municipality of Haarlem 2011, municipality of Gouda 2010, municipality of Deventer, 2010)[1]. Linking up with municipalities in the main migrant sending countries is one of the strategies Dutch local governments use to learn how to deal with the increased diversity within Dutch society. This fits within the debate about inter-organizational learning, as related to public sector governance (rather than private sector companies). This paper focuses on municipal partnerships between migrant sending and destination countries and seeks to answer the question *to what extent and how local governments in migrant destination countries learn from their peer local governments in migrant sending countries.*

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[1] Data assessed from websites 24th may 2011.

Another challenge for local governments is related to establishing linkages towards migrant groups within their consistencies as the gap between local governments and migrant communities is generally wide because of communication barriers, hierarchical relations and general distrust by migrant communities against authorities. C2C partnerships are considered a tool to strengthen the relation with migrant community. Therefore the second research question of this paper is *to what extent the international engagement contributes to the strengthening of local government – civil society interfaces in the local governments in migrant destination countries.*

There is an extensive body of literature on knowledge exchange and learning in (C2C) partnerships to draw on. For this paper I will built on an article published before, in which I have drawn a framework for analysis for reciprocal learning in C2C partnerships in migrant sending and destination countries (van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). With use of this framework the potential of different kinds of projects, different kinds of knowledge exchanged (ranging from tacit, contextual/ embedded to generalized knowledge) and the recognition of knowledge was explored. I will elaborate on this framework by drawing more intensively on the work of Johnson and Wilson who in turn build on the work of two social philosophers Jürgen Habermas (1929-) and Michel Foucault (1926-84). Before I do so I will shortly focus on learning about diversity in local government processes, introduce the topic of C2C cooperation and describe relevant theories on knowledge exchange and learning in (municipal) partnerships. The paper continues by describing the case studies, followed by an analyses of learning in C2C partnerships and strengthening the interfaces between local government and civil society.

Learning about diversity in local government processes

One of the main challenges of local governments in migrant destination countries is dealing with increased diversity within their constituencies as a large part of the population comprises migrants and their children originating from different countries. Stimulating social cohesion and participation of different groups within society is among their main concerns (Haus & Heinelt, 2005; Vemeulen and Pennix, 2000)[2]. Michel Foucault argued the art of (modern) government requires knowing one's population – its needs and characteristics – in order to make it governable. The challenge of dealing with diversity is related to wider globalization and migration processes. Local authorities are the geographical spaces where local and global are connected which can pose them for new questions and challenges possibly requiring new knowledge and new policies.

The mandate of local governments and their linkages with civil society actors are also related to worldwide decentralization processes taking place. These processes imply new challenges for local governments as they bring a changing mandate, new powers and duties to local governments (Helmsing, 2000; Pierre & Peters, 2000, see also van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). As a result of these reforms local governments are said to increasingly work as actors in governance networks, including civil society organizations and the private sector (Pierre,

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[2] Moreover during the last 10 years tensions within Dutch society have increased due to historical events like 9/11 (11th September 2001) and two murders (Theo van Gogh in 2004 and Pim Fortuyn in May 2006) and due to an increased popularity of right wing political parties which amongst others contributed to a significant change in the discourse on issues related to migrants and in a more inward orientation (Scheffer, 2007, see also van Ewijk & Baud, 2009,).

2000:4, see also van Ewijk & Baud, 2009: 219). Gaventa stresses that rebuilding the relationship between local government and civil society calls for 'working both sides of the equation'; strengthening local institutions while at the same time enhancing the empowerment of civil society to participate in local decision making. (Gaventa, 2001, Bontenbal, 2009; 182). Dutch local governments have a large mandate and related large budget giving them relatively a lot of space to develop their own policies in which they are generally used to work with various partners within their locality (Andeweg & Irwin, 2002). Compared to the Netherlands, local governments in Morocco and Turkey still have strong linkages with national levels of governments. Due to recent decentralization processes, they have a slowly increasing though still limited mandate (Wunsch, 2001; Jari, 2010; Sozen & Shaw, 2002; Ertugal 2010). Both in Morocco and Turkey national government has dominated civil society for a long period of time while recently reform processes have taken place giving civil society actors more room to act (Dimitrivova, 2010; Sater, 2007; Ottaway & Riley, 2006; Ulusoy, 2009). This also implies local governments slowly start working together with other actors within their municipalities. It can be argued that despite the different stage of decentralization in the Netherlands on the one hand, and Turkey and Morocco on the other hand, the challenge of working on a 'more active and engaged civil society which can express demands of the citizenry, and a more responsive and effective state' (Gaventa, 2001: 2) is important in all three countries, although the kind of challenges are different.

Introduction to C2C cooperation
Local governments have used C2C cooperation or 'town twinning' for various purposes in recent decades. Clarke has defined town twinning as 'the construction and practice, by various groups and to various ends, of relatively formal relationships between two towns or cities usually located in different nation-states' (Clarke 2009:496). These 'various ends' are broad and include strengthening local governments, increasing development, alleviating poverty, cultural exchange, peace building, civil society strengthening, economic development and raising public awareness. Objectives have changed over time; first C2C partnerships were established within Europe after the Second World War with the purpose of peace building and reconciliation. Later on C2C partnerships between the global North and South and Western en Eastern Europe were established with the main aim to contribute to poverty alleviation (Clarke 2009; Bontenbal 2009; Hoetjes, 2009). Town twinning usually include 'various groups' or NGOs like private and community-based organizations. The involvement of several actors implies knowledge exchange can both occur vertically; between local governments or between nongovernmental organizations in the two localities involved (also called inter-municipal learning), and horizontally; between governmental and nongovernmental organizations within one locality (also called intra-municipal learning) providing different opportunities for exchange and learning (Johnson & Wilson, 2006; Devers-Kanoglu, 2009, Bontenbal 2009). Furthermore peer-to-peer knowledge exchange is specific, though not exclusive, to these partnerships. Usually there is long term commitment and most municipal partnerships have a lifespan of several years whereby relations can be gradually deepened and extended (van Lindert, 2009). The involvement of 'various groups' over longer periods of time and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, results in local

governments fulfilling a rather unique role in international cooperation (van Lindert 2009; University Utrecht & University of Amsterdam, 2010).

In the Netherlands, the interest in linking up with municipalities in migrant sending countries fitted in a new focus of local government in which international relations were considered as possibly instrumental to their own needs or development[3] (Hoetjes, 2009; van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). The focus on the main migrant sending countries is related to the objective to learn on issues related to increased diversity within society. I argued before that through international exchange Dutch municipalities try to 1) build bridges towards migrant groups by showing a sincere interest in the destination countries and by so doing in citizens of migrant origin and 2) to learn about issues related to increased diversity and 3) to actively engage migrants and migrant organizations in the programs for cooperation (van Ewijk & Baud, 2009)[4]. Most ties with municipalities in migrant sending countries were established at the beginning of the 21st century with a few exceptions. These ties were partly supplementary to existing ones and partly replace older ties[5]. In June 2007, 22 of all (443) Dutch municipalities (5%) were engaged in exchange projects with local governments in one of the main migrant sending countries (van Ewijk, 2007). By the beginning of 2011 this number was more or less the same. By establishing relations with local governments in migrant sending countries it can be argued Dutch local governments have entered 'transnational space'[6]. In case a Dutch municipality is linked to a municipality situated in a region where most migrants originated from this linkage has a *translocal dimension*. The majority, however, are not based on such a direct translocal linkage (van Ewijk, 2009).

Mutual learning in C2C cooperation

Mutual learning, referring to learning by both partners involved, is most likely to occur when partners bring in complementary resources which are regarded to be useful for the other members of the partnership (Baud & Post, 2002). Hastings has called this potential *synergy* (Hastings, 1996). These 'resources' usually include different knowledge's which are not necessarily equally valued (Johnson & Wilson, 2006: 79) (see also van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). Flexibility, the appreciation of diversity and openness to learn are generally seen to be relevant to enable the development of relations which are grounded in mutual trust and respect. Robinson, Hewitt and Harriss argue that we 'often need to learn to learn' and that 'one of the greatest challenges in inter-organizational relationships is to put aside our preconceived notions about others and be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things' (Robinson, Hewitt & Harriss, 2000:324, see also van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). Repeated engagement is said to be necessary to sustain and nurture trust (Vangen & Huxham, 2003;

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[3] Dutch municipalities became also interested in establishing linkages with municipalities in the so-called 'BRIC countries' (Brazil, Russia, India and China) with the objective of stimulating economic growth.

[4] The third modality of actively engaging migrants is debated; transnationalism is often perceived as a danger for integration. Portes, showed that being engaged in migrant sending countries can actually positively impact on migrant's integration in the destination countries (Portes, 1999).

[5] Mainly the four largest municipalities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague) have replaced their old twin cities for new ones.

[6] Vertovec, one of the leading authors in this field, refers to transnationalism as a process that "describes a condition in which, despite great distance and notwithstanding the presence of national borders (and all the laws, regulations, and national narratives they represent) certain kind of relationships have been globally intensified and now take place paradoxically in a planet-spanning yet common – however virtual – arena of activity" (Vertovec, 1999).

Wilson & Johnson, 2007). So partnership conditions like equality, trust and power and openness to learn are likely to effect the process of knowledge exchange and (mutual) learning. C2C cooperation has the potential for more equal partnerships because of the cooperation between colleagues – a peer group (van Ewijk & Baud 2009: 220). Despite the potential for more equality, emphasis in most twin cities is on North–South knowledge transfer. This one-sided focus is related to the central objective in most C2C partnerships of strengthening local governance in municipalities in the South which is stimulated by the influence of funding agencies such as national government programs, the EU and the World Bank (Pasteur, 1998:22 in Johnson & Wilson, 2006:74).

Based on the work of Habermas and Foucault, Johnson and Wilson have identified two main building blocks for learning in (municipal) partnerships. Partners involved should have 1) both sufficient professional similarity between officers in order to establish a basis of genuine dialogue and trust, or in Habermans's words, 'communicative action' requires shared 'life worlds' or 'background consensus' and 2) sufficient differences in order to have something to share in their dialogue (Johnson & Wilson, 2009:126-127). Johnson and Wilson argue that 'it is difference, not communality that is ultimately the source of learning and new knowledge' (Johnson & Wilson, 2009:26).

In an article published before I suggested that based on the partnership literature and especially on the work of Johnson and Wilson, three inequalities in partnership can be especially important in the context of C2C partnerships; unequal recognition of different types of knowledge, differences in material and financial resources which can be at the basis of power differences but also reduce the capabilities of Southern partners to make changes in practice and 'Northern' partners often consider themselves to have more advanced knowledge than 'Southern' partners (van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). In the same article I also concluded that mutual learning is likely to happen at the level of the city to city partnerships, but might not occur clearly at the level of specific projects within the city-to-city framework. Furthermore I argued that the type of knowledge exchanges found mainly consist of tacit and contextual embedded knowledge. For projects related to trans-national linkages and mobility and the integration of citizens of migrant origin, this knowledge was generally cultural. Lastly I concluded the form of exchange prioritizes such tacit and contextual embedded knowledge expressed through face- to-face, colleague-to-colleague exchanges visits and internships (van Ewijk & Baud, 2009).

For this article I will use a more complete framework of analysis for C2C cooperation based on more extensive research findings in which I have incorporated the two building blocks of learning identified by Johnson and Wilson as well as the importance of continuity and power and equality. I suggest the following dimensions play a key role in mutual learning in C2C partnerships; 1) similarity between professionals to establish dialogue and trust, 2) differences to learn from, 3) complementary resources brought in by partners involved, 4) recognition and appreciation of differences, 5) process-based trust built up through continuity and 6) power and equality.

Introducing the case studies

Before analyzing the process of knowledge exchange and learning in the municipal partnerships, I will briefly introduce the main case studies. In the selection of cases the involvement of NGOs has been leading while it was also considered to be relevant to include both large and medium sized municipalities as the large municipalities have several linkages and cover a substantial number of total C2C partnerships with migrant sending countries. The paper specifically builds on three case studies of Dutch-Moroccan municipal partnerships (Rotterdam – Casablanca, Amsterdam- Larache and Zeist- Berkane) and two case studies of Dutch – Turkish municipal partnerships (Amsterdam – Kocaeli and Haarlem – Emirdağ). In the period 2007-2011 interviews were held with policy officers, members of the administration and representatives of NGO's involved in exchange programs. In addition observations were made during exchange missions taking place both in the Netherlands and in Morocco and Turkey and during conferences and meeting in which policy officers of various municipalities involved in C2C partnerships participated. Table 1 presents an overview of the main dimensions which were found to be relevant including the involvement of NGO's, main projects for cooperation, the use of support programs, the municipal departments involved and the existence of transnational linkage.

Table 1. Overview of C2C cases focusing on exchange of local governments only and cases involving NGO's,

	Cases	Main projects [7]	Use of support programme	Main municipal departments involved	Kind of Dutch NGO's involved	Translocal linkages
Cases focusing on exchange local government only	Amsterdam-Kocaeli(Turkey)	Fire safety	LOGO East	International department Fire department	-	No
	Rotterdam – Casablanca (Morocco)	Exchange police	-	International department Police department	-	No
	Rotterdam – Casablanca (Morocco)	Domestic violence	MATRA	Health department	-	No
Cases with involvement of NGO's	Amsterdam – Larache (Morocco)	Social affairs	-	International department Social affairs department	Companies dealing with social affair programs NGOs	No
	Haarlem – Emirdag (Turkey)	Waste management & Environment	LOGO East	Individual officer with expertise in waste management	Migrant organization Private company Schools	Yes
	Zeist – Berkane (Morocco)	Youth participation Waste management/ environment	MATRA	Coordinator International cooperation + employees various departments	Citizens of migrant origin Youth organization Private companies	Limited

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[7] In the past several other programs for cooperation have taken place , while the same time new programs for cooperation are being explored.

Cases in which the exchange between local government bodies is central include the cooperation between Amsterdam and Kocaeli and Rotterdam and Casablanca. Rotterdam and Amsterdam, the two largest cities in the Netherlands, formulated international relation policies focusing particularly on the exchange between municipal departments. Both municipalities have no translocal linkage. The partnership between Amsterdam and Kocaeli (Turkey) was established after the earthquake in the Marmara region in 1999 while the choice of Rotterdam for partner municipality Casablanca was mainly related to the size of the city and the presence of a harbor[8]. During the research period the C2C partnership Amsterdam-Kocaeli mainly focused on projects on disaster management and cultural heritage which were financed through LOGO East, a support programme which was executed by VNG International, the international organization of the Dutch Local Government Association VNG and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The total municipal budget for the partnership was 30,000 euro's on a yearly basis. Amsterdam has more partnerships with local governments including Casablanca and Larache in Morocco. The cooperation between Amsterdam – Larache is involved as a case in this paper. Despite the policy of focusing on the exchange between local government departments formulated by the international desk, NGO's have been involved in this C2C partnership. The C2C partnership Rotterdam - Casablanca mainly focused on cooperation between the police departments of which a budget of 25,000 Euros is reserved. The public health department department successfully applied for MATRA funds to address the issue of domestic violence in Casablanca[9].

NGO's have been involved in the majority of C2C partnerships, like the case of Haarlem and Emirdağ (Turkey) and Zeist –Berkane (Morocco). The Haarlem-Emirdag partnership has a clear trans-local link; the majority of Turkish migrants currently living in Haarlem originate from the Emirdağ region as a result of recruitment policies of textile industries in the 1970s, followed by a period of family reunion and chain migration (van Ewijk, 2007). The municipal partnership was mooted by civil society; the CBO foundation Haarlem-Emirdağ based in Haarlem and NGO environmental organization TEMA based in Emirdağ approached the two municipalities in 2001 to start working together (van Ewijk, 2010). In the research period schools were also involved in an exchange programme. The two municipalities decided jointly to focus on a project of waste management and environmental awareness creation in Emirdağ which was financed through the LOGO East programme. The municipal budget of Haarlem is limited and primarily used for supporting the Emirdag foundation (approximately 4000 Euros per year). In the partnership between Zeist and Berkane several NGO's have been involved like private companies and a youth organizations. Zeist- Berkane is a partnership with a limited trans-local link as the majority of citizen of Zeist with Moroccan roots originate from regions around Teza and Meknes also located in the Northern part of Morocco. The partnership was born out of a platform in which different Moroccan and Dutch municipalities participated. The presence of the transnational organization SSR in Berkane[10] was an additional reason for Zeist to step into the partnership. This organization has fulfilled a facilitating role. The municipal partnership has focused on

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[8] Trans-local linkages are virtually non-existent as most migrants of Moroccan descent living in Rotterdam originate from the Northern part of Morocco.
[9] MATRA programme is a support programme by the ministry of Foreign Affairs initially focusing on the transformation of civil society in Middle and Eastern Europe.
[10] Stichting Steunpunt Remigranten (SSR) supports people who remigrated from the Netherlands to Morocco.

environmental issues and youth participation in which they made use of MATRA programme. A new programme is focusing on the establishment of a business centre for women organizations. The municipal budget is 4000 Euro per year.

Analyzing the (inter)national context for mutual learning

Before analyzing mutual learning at the local level, relations between the main kind of actors at the national and local level involved are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1. Main kind of actors involved in MIC with the connections between these actors
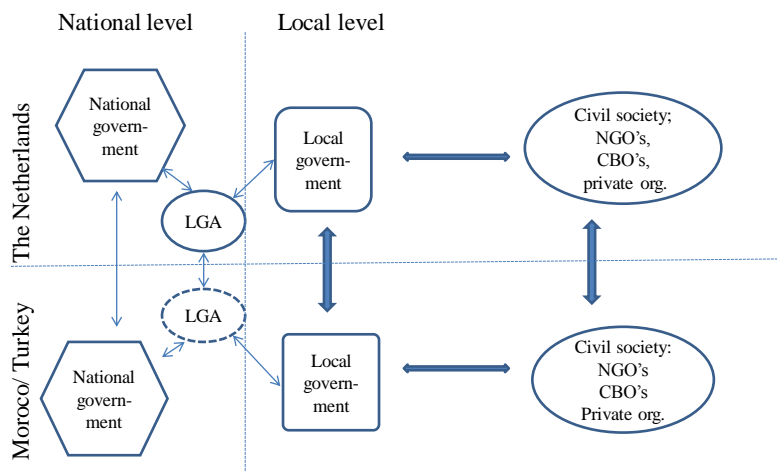
As discussed the national level is important in relation to the mandate of local governments. Furthermore support programs financed by national governments have fulfilled an important role. In the research period, 2007-2010, most partnerships made use of support programs like LOGO East (Turkey) and MATRA (Morocco) and focused on various issues like waste management, fire safety and youth participation. These support programs were fundamental and instrumental to the partnerships, as the financial resources put in by local governments involved is generally limited. As discussed before support programs generally hardly facilitate reciprocal learning. This also applies for the LOGO East and MATRA programme focused primarily on strengthening local governments in Morocco and Turkey. This does not imply mutual learning did not occur in these projects, but it was not incorporated within the framework for cooperation and therefore learning by Dutch municipalities was often not recognized and perceived as 'side-effects'. In most case this was not considered a problem at the project level as professionals involved were committed to contribute to strengthening local governance and development in their partner municipalities[11]. However, limitations to

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[11] Strengthening local governance processes in Turkish and Moroccan municipalities have been analyzed elsewhere (Ewijk & Baud, 2009 and van Ewijk, 2010).

learning possibilities were also related to the kind of actors involved in the exchange programs. In several cases the municipal departments dealing with social affairs, social cohesion or integration were not incorporated as the programs for exchange funded by the donor programs were central. Several officers from these departments regretted this lack of involvement and felt the international paragraph should be integrated and linked up to departments dealing with social affairs, diversity and integration. In programs at the local government level not supported by donor organizations, objectives of learning by Dutch municipality were more explicitly on the agenda.

The end of two main support programs LOGO East II and MATRA by 2010 has not ended the C2C partnerships but it did limit the intensity of the exchange process in many partnerships. It has particularly affected medium-sized municipalities, like the C2C partnership Haarlem-Emirdag, while it had virtually no impact on the two largest municipalities, Amsterdam and Rotterdam, having a larger budget and their own international desk. The end of the support programs has also decreased the involvement of civil society actors as I will discuss later on. It should be mentioned that recent (beginning 2011) decrease of exchanges was also related to changing policies and general budget cuts at the local level with are related to national budget cuts and the economic recession.

Learning by Dutch local governments
Dutch local governments have formulated different policies towards involving civil society actors in international exchange programs. Policies range from supporting initiatives of civil society with no or limited involvement of local government to focusing on the exchange between local governments only without involving civil society actors. Policies towards involving civil society actors can also change over time; Rotterdam used to support initiatives at civil society, but has faced out these support programs. I will first analyze learning taking place in all C2C partnerships (with or without the involvement of NGO's) followed by learning taking place in C2C partnerships in which NGO's are also involved. I will make use of the dimensions of learning identified; 1) similarity between professionals to establish dialogue and trust, 2) differences to learn from, 3) complementary resources brought in by partners involved, 4) recognition and appreciation of difference 5) process-based trust built up through continuity and 6) power and equality.

General learning in all C2C partnerships
Dutch local governments and NGO's involved in the municipal partnerships expressed they learnt in various ways. First of all, nearly all respondents involved in the exchange activities mentioned that general cultural knowledge was exchanged which helped them putting issues they experienced in the Netherlands in perspective and they indicated they could use some of these lessons in the interaction with the migrant community. Most respondents mentioned they implemented lessons in a more subtle way like approaching people in a different way. This kind of learning was also recognized within the municipalities. An officer at the Rotterdam-Rijnmond Police Department indicated;

... management of our department feels it is important to train the 6000 police officers in cultural sensitivity. .. if you look at the representation of migrants [in our department] it is still very limited, I believe around 15%, while half of the population of Rotterdam is of migrant origin …

Police officers indicated they learnt a lot during their stay in Casablanca while they were also triggered to gain knowledge on Morocco as well on the Moroccan community in Rotterdam during the preparation of their visits.
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The mayor of Zeist expressed that being in Berkane helps him to be open to other ways of doing, which was useful for his own work in Zeist;

> For us an appointment is an appointment. When we are there [Berkane] things go differently. There are different kinds of mechanism which have similar meanings. If you don't experience this yourself, slowly a mechanism might creep in that you start measuring things according to your own standards.

On a more general level the cooperation provided reflection to own work practices. Dutch policy officers involved indicated they learnt from the exchange and that it has helped them looking at their own work with new eyes. Many respondents referred to the Dutch working processes being dominated by bureaucracy and regulations which has led to a loss of flexibility and creativity. A care organization in Nijmegen, for instance, mentioned that they learnt from the warm way in which their colleagues in Gaziantep treated people with a handicap. They received feedback from Gaziantep on their own working processes being dominated by timeframes, economic cutbacks and calculations.

This kind of learning, a form of deep or double loop learning[12], was based on differences; by experiencing different work processes people involved got new ideas. Complementary resources were put in; especially the enormous hospitality by various Moroccan and Turkish organizations was highly appreciated by Dutch people involved. The learning was by several respondents perceived as a side effect and as a result not always recognized. Generally it has not (yet) led to formulating new policies or implementing new policies as this kind of learning was generally recent and changing policies requires more fundamental changes involving budget, coordination and approval of other actors and higher levels of government.

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[12] Deep or double loop learning refers to transformative learning, going beyond copying or adapting knowledge.

Learning in C2C partnerships with involvement of NGO's

Learning on diversity particularly occurred in the C2C partnership in which NGO's were involved. Exchanging knowledge occurred mainly on the occasion partners from Morocco and Turkey were invited for exchange visits to the Netherlands. The municipality of Amsterdam, for instance, invited representatives from their partner municipality Larache in Morocco to a conference on social and literacy programs with the aim to learn from their peers. A policy officer expressed:

> "Where we [Amsterdam] tent to think in large models which are applicable on every location, they [Larache] are working with around 20 NGO's mainly because they have realized you have to offer tailor made programs. This was very interesting for professionals here. We realized we should perhaps stop thinking about one programme for everyone. Maybe you should organize something else for Moroccan women originating from the Northern part of Morocco and people originating from Iraq or Iran. This kind of things… it really makes people to think, we should perhaps arrange things in another way".

Visits of Moroccan and Turkish delegations to Dutch organizations like schools were used to discuss issues related to the integration of migrants in Dutch society like the limited involvement of parent of Moroccan and Turkish descent in schools. A policy officer of the municipality of Deventer mentioned that through the cooperation with their partner municipality in Turkey they identified important cultural differences in communication. The partner municipality criticized the Dutch approach of on the one hand communicating things as open to participate while at the other hand expecting people to participate. They advised to send clearer messages and make participation in meetings compulsory to parents. Also a policy officer in Zeist mentioned they gained a new insight on this topic through the exchange

> "One of the issues to discuss was; is this [limited involvement of parents in school] the case in Morocco as well? The mayor who has an education background referred to the big differences in schools situated in better urban areas and schools in the poorer and rural areas in Morocco. … They [the parents in poorer and rural areas] are often illiterate and look upon to the teachers and don't even think they could do something meaningful in school' …

In the examples described there was an openness to learn as well as sufficient professional similarities and differences to learn from. Moreover process based trust was built up facilitating the exchange of knowledge.

Constraints to learning

Some officers of municipal departments felt they could not learn much from their partner municipalities in Morocco and Turkey. First of all, a (felt) lack of complementary resources brought in by partners involved was mentioned as a constraint to learning. The municipality of Almelo and the main vocational training school (ROC), for instance, explored possibilities to exchange knowledge on a literacy program, but found that the kind of knowledge Denizli could offer was also available within the municipality of Almelo and concluded cooperation with Denizli is 'on bringing knowledge only'. Other respondents expressed they felt there

were not enough similarities to learn from and would rather focus on cities with more similarities in Western Europe for learning purposes. This felt lack of similarities could also be related to a limited 'openness to learn'. A coordinator of the international affairs department of Rotterdam expressed;

> For real knowledge exchange European cities are more obvious [then cities in Morocco and Turkey]. The same degree of organization, the same kind of problems, the same scale. It is easier to exchange things.

Although representatives of the Rotterdam -Rijnmond Police Department indicated they learnt about general cultural exchange and the governance system in Morocco and benefited from established network and personal relations with key persons for their operational tasks[13], learning on addressing youth of Moroccan descent causing problems within society, appeared difficult because of the different contexts. The head of a local police station of the Police Department expressed:

> As the content of the work is very different it is hard to lay it on top of each other. With other police departments in the Western world it is easier as there is more overlap.

An officer of Moroccan origin of former NGO municipality of Rotterdam who assisted in the translation during a visit of the Rotterdam police to Casablanca expressed;

> I felt they were seeking something where it was not to be found. Because the youth in Casablanca is another type of youth with a very different kind of background than youth here [In Rotterdam]. The way the police is dealing with citizens, the legislation, it is very different from here. So what do you want to learn from each other?

In the case of Zeist-Berkane possibilities to learn were limited as policy officers of Zeist did not came in contact with their peers during their stay in Berkane[14]. Although they expressed they did learn on general cultural exchange, they felt the exchange processes were too superficial. In this case limited use was made of what is regarded as one of the main strengths of C2C, namely peer to peer knowledge exchange restricting learning possibilities.

The different kinds of learning taking place, the implementation of lessons and the recognition of learning and limitations to learning are summarized in table 2. Research findings indicated that involving both kinds of actors – governmental and nongovernmental – proved to provide most possibilities for mutual learning and in doing so general research findings were confirmed.

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[13] For instance, the cooperation has helped in getting through the procedures of sending Rotterdam police officers to Morocco to interview a witness in a murder case committed in Rotterdam.

[14] These officers were involved in the establishment of a garden at the local hospital which was used to facilitate the exchange between youth of Zeist and Berkane.

Table 2. Learning by Dutch local governments through C2C partnerships with migrant sending countries

	Main kinds of learning taking place	Specific kinds of learning taking place	Learning taking place in local governments with/ without NGO's involved	Important learning dimensions[15]:	Learning dimensions: limitations
Learning by local governments and NGO's	Reflection on own work	Deep or double loop learning on own work processes like processes being too bureaucratic and lack of flexibility and creativity	Both	Similarities between professionals Differences to learn from Process based trust built up through continuity	Recognition
	General cultural exchange	Being able to understand issues related to cultural differences in the Netherlands	Both	Complementary resources brought in Recognized and appreciation of difference Process based trust built up through continuity	-
	Learning on diversity	Learning on diversity related to literacy programs and involving parents at school	Mainly C2C involving NGOs	Recognized Differences to learn from Process based trust built up through continuity	Lack of (perceived) similarities

Strengthening interfaces between local government and civil society

Not surprisingly, especially Dutch local governments involving NGO's mentioned the partnerships has helped to establish contacts with citizens from Moroccan or Turkish descent. Mayors, alderman and municipal officers as well as representatives of NGO's involved in exchange programs expressed that the C2C partnership has helped to break down barriers and facilitate the communication between the municipality and the migrant community. It also helped in addressing sensitive issues.

A police officer of the municipality of Zeist working at the neighborhood level mentioned;

> It is mainly about the connection. If you are in contact with each other you are able to understand each other. When I returned from Berkane I was able to build a better bridge to the youth. It shows you are sincerely interested.

Migrants and migrant organizations fulfilled an important role in the partnerships either as initiators, key persons, facilitators or a combination of these roles. Usually these migrants fulfilled key positions in the Dutch municipality, for instance as chair of a migrant organization or director of a private company. The existence of direct translocal linkages proved to be important in the extent of their involvement. In the municipality of Haarlem, the

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[15] The fifth dimension identified (process based trust built up through continuity) was found in all C2C partnerships

CBO Haarlem – Emirdag foundation in which several migrant originating from Emirdag are active, initiated the municipal partnerships and have been active right from the start. They still had many contacts in their home region and combined personal visits (paid at their own expenses) with exchange programs.

A citizen of the municipality of Zeist active in the partnership with Berkane mentioned;

> I was born there. So for me it was really… it moves me…I was born there, I have been there, I have seen it, I know people there, my family lives there. So you have that kind of a connection.

In some cases the involvement of migrants in the international exchange programs also increased their involvement in the Dutch municipalities. An officer of migrant origin of a NGO in Rotterdam referred to all the contacts people obtain in their own municipality to realize project in their mother country. A citizen of Moroccan origin involved in the exchange programs between Zeist and Berkane was motivated to organize cultural activities to stimulate the emancipation of the migrant community originating from Morocco. He mentioned that he started to think about what he could change in Zeist through his involvement in the municipal partnership. Although these are just a few examples, these findings are in line with the work of Portes arguing that being engaged internationally usually stimulates integration in host societies.

Respondents of several municipalities mentioned that through international exchange programs also new relations between municipality and NGO's were established and existing contacts were intensified. In a few cases the international programs were also used strategically. A municipal officer of Amsterdam mentioned;

> We do benefit from the contacts with other departments for our work in Amsterdam. It helps to settle barriers that exist within the municipality. … I also try to compose interesting delegations… people who have been working on the same kind of issues for years and who have never met each other. It really is beneficial if they spend some days together.

Although several migrants were involved, making use of their knowledge and networks was still limited especially in C2C partnerships without involvement of NGOs. An employee of migrant origin of a NGO in Rotterdam stated;

> Is really moves people if the municipality where they life and work is doing something with the country of origin. You just notice it, just the interest, yes, it really is appreciated. And people are prepared to be involved. 'Can we do something'… I feel it is a pity that the municipality keeps it [cooperation between local governments and cooperation at the civil society level] separate… and well, [in that case] what is the added value for the municipality, for the citizens itself?

Moreover, municipalities did not put much effort in informing citizens about the municipal partnerships. Most people interviewed, both from local governments and civil society organizations, expressed that the municipal partnership were not well known. Capacity in terms of budget and staff for communication was limited or non-existent. In some cases the

provision of information to citizens about the exchange programs were not regarded as a municipal task, or the main people involved were municipal officers only dealing with the exchange programs themselves not responsible for communication. A citizen of Moroccan origin living in Zeist involved in the exchange programs, said;

> It is a closed community, so to say, who is involved. It should be much more in the open.

Conclusions

In reciprocal learning processes in C2C partnerships I suggested the following dimensions play a key role; 1) similarity between professionals to establish dialogue and trust, 2) differences to learn from, 3) complementary resources brought in by partners involved, 4) recognition and appreciation of differences, 5) process-based trust built up through continuity and 6) power and equality. The paper illustrates several forms of learning do take place in C2C partnerships between migrant sending and destination countries ranging from more general learning on cultural issues to learning on diversity. Learning on general cultural issues in relation to own work processes mainly occurred during missions of Dutch officials to the migrant sending countries whereby 'differences to learn from' and the recognition and appreciation of differences were fundamental for actual learning taking place. Learning on issues related to policies on diversity in Dutch society mainly occurred when partner municipalities visited the Dutch municipalities and knowledge was exchanged on a peer to peer basis both between local governments and NGOs involved. Process-based trust being built up as well as both partners having sufficient knowledge on the context were important conditions for learning taking place. Limitations to learning were mainly a (perceived) lack of similarities between professionals involved. At a more general level the small municipal budget for international cooperation combined with the impact of support programs limited the extent of learning by Dutch actors taking place, as these programs are generally not supportive to reciprocal learning processes.

It can be concluded reciprocal knowledge exchange is partnerships can occur in various ways whereby exposure to other localities is important in being able to think 'outside the box' and more specific learning on diversity is mainly likely to occur in dialogue with partners in one localities whereby both partners have sufficient knowledge on the context. The different context between on the one hand the Netherlands and on the other hand Morocco and Turkey, was both an asset to learning - differences to learn from- as a limitation to learning - a (perceived) lack of similarities between professionals involved.

The paper also shows C2C partnerships can be an efficient way in strengthening the interfaces between local government and civil society especially when local governments actively involve civil society actors including migrant (organizations). Through involving NGOs and improving communication strategies, local governments can also draw on community based knowledge and networks. This potential is however limitedly used. Strategically embedding these partnerships within local government and society is also likely to increase support for these partnerships which has become more important because of current retrenchment policies at local and national level.

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