

At home in Rotterdam



▢ Management

1 *Project name*

At home in Rotterdam (Thuis in Rotterdam)

2 *Contact*

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3 *Partner organisation*

Museum.

4 *Funding*

A subsidy granted by the Municipality of Rotterdam to the Zadkine Regional Training Centre.

▢ Medium

Museum exhibitions and theatre.

Actors were used in the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum.

Material heritage from the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum collection and non-material heritage in the form of stories about the history of democracy and universal suffrage.

▢ Project

1 *Aims / objectives*

To familiarise newcomers to the Netherlands with their new homeland and to answer questions like, 'Why is the Netherlands like it is?' and 'In what way is this different from my own frame of reference?' To ease the students' integration into society by providing them with this knowledge.

2 *What learning was involved*

Employing the knowledge that they had gained in role playing, students used cognitive and socio-emotional skills. The students were challenged to adopt a position towards the group, the actor and the teacher.

3 *Which methodologies used*

An interactive approach. The Dutch Tax and Customs Museum [Belasting & Douane Museum] used actors who encouraged students to participate with role play.

4 *Where / when it was*

The Harbour Museum [*Havenmuseum*], the Marine Corps Museum [*Mariniersmuseum*], the National Museum of Education [*Nationaal Onderwijsmuseum*], the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum and *the Stichting Kunstzinnige Vorming Rotterdam* (SKVR), a foundation providing artistic and cultural education. The project started on 16 January 2003 and is ongoing

5 *Planning / preliminary work*

Developing a connection between the different historical institutions and the SKVR. Defining lesson themes jointly with teachers from the Zadkine Regional Training Centre [ROC]. Translating Dutch cultural heritage to the students' situation and experience.

6 *Any exhibition / art / artefacts involved*

The Dutch Tax and Customs Museum displayed paintings, pieces and objects illustrating the development of democracy in relation to the history of taxation, and the development of universal suffrage.

7 *Any follow-up / longer-term contact with the target group*

The project was made possible by funding from the Municipal Authority. At the time of this writing, it was unknown whether the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum would receive a subsidy. Efforts are also being made to use the project to reach a new group of students enrolled on an integration course. The focus in this case is on immigrants who have been living in the Netherlands for years but have not yet integrated into Dutch society. The museum intends to receive these groups without an interpreter. The language level of the current lessons will thus have to be adapted.

8 *Involvement of other partner organisation*

The *Thuis in Rotterdam* ('At Home in Rotterdam') partners consulted frequently to determine the lesson content, to reach a consensus on the connection between the various organisations and to discuss the logistics

of the project.

▢ Type of project

Hearing and seeing during the introduction and evaluation of the lesson and hearing, seeing and feeling during the theatre performance.

Website : www.belasting-douanemus.nl

▢ Roughly how many people were involved?

1 *As direct participants*

Students enrolled on an integration course at the Zadkine College Regional Training Centre in Rotterdam.

0 during the development, 15 people during a general evaluation.

2 *As indirect beneficiaries*

2.

3 *As staff*

3 (Dutch Tax and Customs Museum educator, SKVR educator, director of the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum)

4 *Others*

head of the tour-guide team at the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum

▢ Participants' ages

Ages varied greatly (from 18 to 55).

▢ Disadvantage due to social or economic factors, discrimination or disability

1 *Economic disadvantage*

No information available. The project involved students enrolled on an integration course, some of whom had come to the Netherlands for political, and others for economic, reasons. Many of these participants were, by Dutch standards, economically disadvantaged. To what extent that held true for Thuis in Rotterdam students is not known.

2 *Social disadvantage*

Many participants were not proficient in Dutch and were thus socially disadvantaged.

3 *Migration / Immigration issues*

The target group came from three different language groups: Turkish, Arabic and Papiamentu.

4 *Learning difficulties*

Unknown. The level of the students varied widely – some had been to university, while others were illiterate. There were both illiterate and semi-literate students.

5 *Unemployment*

Unknown. The project often involved school-age students in the initial phase of their integration.

▢ Participants' needs

How were these identified? What were they? How many participants were consulted and/or involved in influencing the project?

Two teachers from the Zadkine Regional Training Centre, working with five educators from the participating institutions, determined the participants' needs. The participants themselves were involved at different stages of the evaluation.

▢ Outcomes and lessons learned

1 *Participants' benefits and outcomes:*

At the time of this writing, no evaluation was available.

2 *Overall learning points*

- Collaboration between participating organisations led to the logistic and overall improvement of the project. At the time of this writing, the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum was looking into the possibility of offering the programme to another target group at the Zadkine Regional Training Centre because enrolment in the current target group was declining.
- The organisations let the students make an evaluation at the end of their lessons.

So far, the problems have been of a primarily practical (i.e. not fundamental) nature. The evaluation of the Dutch Tax and Customs Museum in Rotterdam (included in a report drawn up in January 2004) shows that communication between the museum and the Zadkine Regional Training Centre could have been better. On a number of occasions, for example, groups dropped out at the last minute without phoning in advance.

The pilot project also proved to be a useful learning process with regard to the division of tasks. For instance, it turned out that the teachers of Dutch as a second language were too busy to give the museum lessons, which were ultimately entrusted to educators and tour guides.

The dropout rate of groups has diminished considerably in the last six months. Following an analysis of the dropouts, a decision was made to look for other groups of students enrolled on an integration course. Groups which visited the museum as a class and were therefore not invited individually never presented problems.

One important lesson learned was that with intercultural programmes, it is good not to view problems as difficult or insoluble. Project developers must have a flexible attitude, be able to evaluate programmes at every level and, if need be, adapt them. Given that these groups are fairly new and cannot be compared with other target groups, it is not surprising that problems of a different nature might also arise.