

## There's No Such Thing as Zaankanters: Migration Past and Present



### D Management:

#### 1 Project name

Zaankanters bestaan niet. Migratie vroeger en nu. ('There's No Such Thing as Zaankanters: Migration Past and Present')

#### 2 Contact

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#### 3 Partner organisation

The Foundation for the History of Migration, established on 1 December 1999 for the purpose of publishing the book and realising the exhibition.

The following organisations were also involved in coordinating the project: the Federation of Support Services for Minorities, the Anti-Discrimination Centre of Zaanstreek-Waterland and the Service in Industrial Society on Behalf of the Churches [Dienst in de Industriële Samenleving vanwege de Kerken] (DISK).

#### 4 Partner organisation type

Museum.

## 5 Funding

Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation (sponsor) and the following grant providers: the Municipal Authority of Oostzaan, the Municipal Authority of Zaanstad, Cultural Outreach Action Plan [*Actieplan Cultuurbereik*], the Municipal Authority of Wormerland, the Honig-Laan Foundation [*Stichting Honig-Laanfonds*], the Gerrit Blaauw Fund [*Gerrit Blaauwfonds*], the Dutch Province of Noord-Holland, the Mondriaan Foundation, the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, VSBfonds, the National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development [*Nationale Commissie voor Internationale Samenwerking en Duurzame Ontwikkeling*] and the DOEN Foundation..

## D Medium

- A *book* of the same name was published in conjunction with the exhibition. The book included a number of articles and five interviews with migrants.
- A photo and film project was organised for the exhibition. Photographer Johan Koelen and film-maker Janna Dekker visited three migrants whom the museum had selected and made a film and photo impression, which was shown at the exhibition. The three migrants - a first-generation Turkish man, a second-generation Moroccan woman and a third-generation child of Cape Verdean descent - represented three groups of newcomers.
- *Visual material, clothing and other personal objects illustrated* the diverse heritage of migrants to Zaandam over time.

## D Project

### 1 Aims / objectives

The main aim of the project was to do justice to the diversity of the public and of the history of the Dutch town of Zaandam . Another goal was to present the cultural and social potential of the region. The exhibition built on and developed the topic of migrants using themes like living and working in the Zaanstreek area.

### 2 Who it was for

The general public, particularly inhabitants of the Zaanstreek area. Various. They shared a history of migration.

### 3 What learning was involved

A challenging narrative approach. The storyline used in the exhibition began with a number of video portraits of various migrants living in the Zaanstreek area.

### 4 Which methodologies used

A challenging narrative approach. The storyline used in the exhibition began with a number of video portraits of various migrants living in the Zaanstreek area.verhalen en leenden persoonlijke voorwerpen uit voor de

tentoonstelling.

5 *Where/when it was*

At the Museum of Zaandam [Zaans Museum] in Zaandam, the Netherlands. The exhibition ran from 21 December 2002 to 23 March 2003, and the book was published in 2002.

6 *Planning / preliminary work*

Historical research formed the basis of the project, and allowed various components to be developed:

- An exhibition for a wide audience, which of course included the first and subsequent generations of migrants;
- A publication focusing on the history of migrants in the Zaanstreek area from the seventeenth century to the present;
- Video portraits of, and conversations with, people involved (e.g. first-generation migrants, personnel managers, the keeper of a guest house);
- A cultural programme;
- Genealogical research on a number of families in Zaandam;
- A craft project at community centres in which women of various cultural backgrounds took part.

7 *Any exhibition / art / artefacts involved*

The exhibition used objects that the interviewees themselves provided - objects that were important to them or in their culture. These included crockery, paintings, utensils and books. Clothing from several cultures was also shown, including the Surinamese *koto misi* and *angisa*, as well as Moluccan clothing. Archival photographs were also shown. A craft project was launched in which a quilt by Gerardina van der Stadt which belonged to the collection served as the source of inspiration for a new quilt entitled *Souvenir van de Zaanstreek* ('A Souvenir of the Zaanstreek Area'). Women of Dutch descent and of foreign heritage from the Zaanstreek area made this quilt at three separate community centres. The Foundation for Amateur Art [*Stichting Beeldende Amateurkunst*] initiated the project, and the quilt was made under the supervision of artist Tasja Barelds

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

During the exhibition *Zaankanters bestaan niet!* ('There's No Such Thing as Zaankanters!' (people born and living in the Zaanstreek area), many contacts were made for the purpose of livening up the stories. The contacts provided a variety of objects and stories, a number of which were included in the permanent display. This manner of collecting objects dovetailed with the policy set by the Museum of Zaandam. Stories about the recruitment of migrant workers, living quarters and lodgings, the Sultan Ahmet Mosque, the *Souvenir van de Zaanstreek* craft project and the photograph and film project all came into play.

9 *Involvement of other partner organisation*

Self-help organisations, community centres and contacts at the Foundation

for the History of Migration [*Stichting Migratiegeschiedenis*] were used to locate migrants for information and interviews. A consultative group was also set up but failed because the participants did not show up. After a list of possible participants was drawn up, the participants were asked if they were interested in collaborating on the interviews. Of the people on the list, twenty-five of them were interviewed. The interviewees were very enthusiastic and helpful. They told their own personal stories and lent personal objects to be shown in the exhibition.

10 *Key words to reflect the concept of the project*

‘With a greeting, love and affection are given the chance to grow.’

Preacher Ülfet Görgülü in *Zaankanters bestaan niet, Migratie vroeger en nu* (‘There’s No Such Thing as Zaankanters: Migration Past and Present’)

**D Type of project**

1 *As direct participants*

The aim of the exhibition was to arouse the interest of the broadest possible audience, which included the elderly, children and minority groups from the Zaanstreek area in particular. It was hoped that these minority groups could be reached using an accessible and varied collection.

2 *As indirect beneficiaries*

Total number of visitors during the exhibition: 5,020.

3 *As staff*

4 members of staff; implementation: nearly everyone.

**D Participants’ ages**

Children, young people under 15 and people in their 50s were well represented among the visitors.

**D Disadvantage due to social or economic factors, discrimination or disability**

1 *Various*

Ninety per cent of the visitors were born in the Netherlands, and the parents of 82 per cent of the visitors were born in the Netherlands.

2 *Learning difficulties*

Many visitors came to the exhibition with members of their immediate or extended family. It is likely that some of the people attending did not speak Dutch and took in information with the help of their children.

**D Outcomes and lessons learned**

1 *Participants’ benefits and outcomes*

The Museum of Zaandam carried out an extensive visitor survey.

2 *Evaluation process*

The evaluation can be found in *Zaankanters bestaan niet! Migratie vroeger*

en nu (evaluation report on the exhibition and a book on the history of migration to the Zaanstreek area, organised by the Zaandam Foundation for the History of Migration).

### 3 Overall learning points

- Collaboration between organisations:  
Collaboration between the Museum of Zaandam, the Federation of Support Services for Minorities [Federatie Steunfuncties Minderheden ] and the Anti-Discrimination Centre [Anti-Discriminatie Bureau ] led to the establishment of the Zaandam Foundation for the History of Migration. The foundation facilitated the publishing of the book *Zaankanters bestaan niet!* and the realisation of the exhibition.
- Collaboration between organisations:  
Representatives from the target groups were active within the Foundation for the History of Migration. With their help, research on the history of migration and the objects was carried out.  
During the preparation period, the target groups were contacted on the basis of their ethnic or geographical origin. This proved ineffective, however. Only after a broad-based group of migrants was located through the regional women's organisation did the participation process go more smoothly.  
Another point is that little information was available on immigrants who had come to the area for reasons other than work. Although conversations did produce a great deal of information, unfortunately hardly any visual or textual material was available.