

Gay-ambassadors in the Netherlands

*A qualitative research on the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities
to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs*

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Master thesis Human Geography (Urban and Cultural Geography)

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Preface

After completing my bachelor's program, I almost immediately had to start thinking about what I would like to write my master thesis about. My bachelor thesis was about the importance of visibility in public space for gay and lesbian people in the city of Nijmegen. As I really enjoyed conducting that research and as I felt that I could learn more about the position of this 'group' of people in Dutch society, I decided to search for a research topic that would fit to this interest. After consultation of my thesis supervisor, Roos Pijpers, I approached *Movisie* (the Netherlands centre for social development), a Dutch organization which has as its mission "(...) to promote the participation and independence of citizens (...) by supporting and advising professional organizations and government institutions in the field of welfare, care and social development" (www.movisie.com). One of the main topics *Movisie* focuses on, is LGBT-emancipation, the emancipation of lesbian women, gay men, bisexuals and transgenders. Luckily, I could conduct my master thesis research for them. Read the rest of my thesis to find out what this exactly is about☺.

After months of searching, thinking, doing, writing, revising, stressing and crying, also I have come to a point where I can say: I am done with my thesis. Five and a half years of studying Human Geography at the Radboud University Nijmegen come to an end here with what should be the 'masterpiece' of the whole education program. Five and a half years of some lows, but definitely more highs. I met my boyfriend during the Geographical Approaches course and now we are living together. I got to know my best friends. I joined the board of the student association *Mundus* and different committees and I learned a lot about myself and my skills there. Now it is time to say goodbye to this part of my life and to see what the rest of it will bring.

Of course, I cannot say goodbye without saying thanks to a couple of persons. First, I would like to thank Roos Pijpers for coming up with good ideas, being patient and trustful and guiding me through the difficult parts of the research process. She has been of great value for finalizing both my bachelor thesis and my master thesis. Thanks to Rianne van Melik for co-judging my thesis. Furthermore, thanks to Judith Schuyf and Juul van Hoof of *Movisie* for proposing a very interesting research topic and for giving me the opportunity to do my research internship at *Movisie* and to make use of their extensive expertise regarding the topic of research. They have helped me to look further in both theoretical and practical terms. Thanks to the interviewees for taking time for responding all my questions. Thanks to other colleagues (and a dog!) of *Movisie* for the fun I had during my internship. Thanks to my mother and sister for their patience, trust and good advices. Thanks to other relatives and friends for listening and being there when I needed them. And last, but definitely not least, thanks to my boyfriend Jos for being able to live together with the most stressed person on earth and still saying 'I love you'.

Happy reading!

Jikke van 't Hof

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Summary

In both research and policy practice, the visibility and social acceptance of lesbian women, gay men, bisexuals and transgenders (LGBTs) in the Netherlands has received increasing attention in recent years. Clearly, the position of LGBTs is getting better, but there are still many steps to be taken to achieve full acceptance in various parts of society. The Dutch government also believes that there are still several steps to be taken in order to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. Therefore, different policy plans have been developed to improve LGBT-emancipation. LGBT-emancipation in the Netherlands has more and more become a responsibility of local governments instead of the national government. In recent years, two programs, the *Koploper*-program and the Local LGBT-policy program, have been launched by the Dutch ministry of Education, Culture and Science to encourage the development of local LGBT-emancipation policy that focuses on different societal fields, 'groups' and aspects of everyday life. A growing number of Dutch municipalities are working on this. Four municipalities, Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam, have decided to appoint so-called gay-ambassadors or pink ambassadors as part of their local LGBT-policy. These ambassadors have been appointed by the municipality to help to increase the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in the municipality.

The goal of this research is to gain insight into the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in order to make recommendations with regard to the appointment of such ambassadors for LGBT-emancipation in other Dutch cities. Four research questions have been posed that have helped to reach this goal.

- **Research question 1**

How can the (possible) contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people be theorized?

It has been argued that the ambassadors could be seen as 'pullers', 'connectors' and (in)formal networkers who are operating in a network or participation society. In this light, also the role of contact and the applicability of the contact hypothesis have been discussed. It has been stated that, in theory, the ambassadors are well positioned to influence the materiality and meanings of different spaces in their municipality in favor of LGBTs. Translating this to the specific LGBT-issues being at stake, it has been stated that gay-ambassadors, for example by acting as visible key individuals, could help to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs and, in the end, are striving for full (symbolic) citizenship, the right to the city and the right to difference for LGBT people. Thus, a combination of (geographical) theories and concepts has been applied to the topic of research.

- **Research question 2**

How can the appointment of gay-ambassadors, and (Dutch) LGBT-policy ideas more generally, be looked at in contextual and critical terms?

Two lines of thought have been paid attention to that help to criticize and contextualize some of the principles of (Dutch) LGBT-policy ideas and, as part of that, the appointment of gay-ambassadors. First, attention has been paid to different authors who have argued that LGBT-policy adapts too much to the heteronormativity of society, which might also lead to homonormativity. They argue

that this has an assimilating and ‘mainstreaming’ effect for LGBTs. Second, there are some scholars who discuss LGBT-policy as having a negative effect for other minority ‘groups’, mainly Muslim people, in Dutch society. However, although the critiques are well-taken, the choice has been made to initially look at the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities from a less critical viewpoint.

- **Research question 3**

How do the gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel contribute to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people in their municipality?

Case study research has been conducted in three of the four municipalities that have appointed gay-ambassadors. As in the fourth municipality, Schiedam, not so much has happened yet, it has been decided to not discuss this case extensively. After interviewing 22 people, collecting documents and conducting observations, an extensive analysis and interpretation process has been gone through.

The analysis and interpretation of the cases yields a multifaceted picture of the deployment and contribution of the gay-ambassadors. The ambassadors have been deployed in different ways and in various societal fields. Fields have been chosen of which it is proven that there are still problems with the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs nowadays, despite the steps LGBT-emancipation has gone through in the Netherlands. The ambassadors have mainly focused on the fields of education/children and youth, eldercare/seniors and sports. Although also a focus on ethnic and religious minority groups is deemed to be important, not so much has been done about this yet. In the field of sports, creating openings remains difficult, but based on this research, no firm conclusions can be drawn about the reasons for this. In the fields of education and eldercare, there have also been quite a lot of obstacles, but these fields generally seem to be more accessible. In the field of education, this seems to be mainly due to the legislative changes on the national policy level that force schools to pay attention to sexual diversity in their curriculum. With regard to seniors, it can be stated that initiatives like pink salons seem to have some effect. Clearly, also in these fields, several steps still need to be taken.

It has been shown that the ambassadors are volunteers who work on behalf of the municipal council and who sometimes work closely together with other organizations. They can be seen as ‘boosters’ who can help to take the municipal LGBT-emancipation policy forward. The precise approach and contribution of the ambassadorship varies per municipality and seems to be very dependent on the local situation and on the people who are active there. The ambassadors have mainly focused on creating openness for discussion about LGBT-issues by talking with people on different levels, varying from a focus on managements and boards of organizations to a focus on for example students, teachers and residents of care homes. Related to that, they have contributed to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in their municipality by organizing and taking part in activities. It has been shown how these talks and activities can be seen as ways the ambassadors try to influence the meanings and materiality of city space. Furthermore, it has been shown how their deployment can be seen as a way of striving for full citizenship, the right to the city and the right to difference for LGBTs.

Clearly, the concepts of visibility and acceptance are very closely interrelated and it cannot so easily be grasped what striving for these means. By applying concepts that focus on the role, position and contribution of the ambassadors, these ideas have been further substantiated and looked at from different angles. The desire for the right to the city and thus the right to participate has been

presented as a more practical, comprehensible translation of what it means to strive for visibility and social acceptance.

- **Research question 4**

What are the implications of the findings of this case study research for the possible appointment of gay-ambassadors in other municipalities in the Netherlands?

Generally, based on this research, it could be stated that municipalities should basically pay attention to the following aspects when these want to appoint gay-ambassadors:

- Exchange experiences with other municipalities. What is (not) working well and why (not)? However, be also very aware of the fact that it is very important to adapt the ideas to the local context and to the 'type' of ambassadors ('heavyweights' vs. 'hands-on types').
- Think about how the appointment of gay-ambassadors might fit well into a broader local LGBT-emancipation policy. What is their position? What could they contribute?
- Tune in with other parties that are involved or interested, such as antidiscrimination bureaus, knowledge centers and LGBT interest organizations.
- An ambassador is not an official, but a volunteer. Adjust the tasks and expectation to this.
- Think about a clear demarcation of the tasks and expectations and about how these should be communicated to the different involved stakeholders to avoid confusion.
- A municipality should not be reliant on gay-ambassadors for carrying the local LGBT-policy. Their involvement should, emphatically, be seen as an instrument alongside other instruments and not as 'crux' that will solve everything. LGBT-emancipation is a continuous process and the appointment of gay-ambassadors could be seen as one of the tools to contribute to this.
- Pay attention to finding a *diversity* of ambassadors, depending on the tasks one wants to give them. Should they function as 'diplomats'? Should they organize activities? Should they be role models for a certain group? Focus on 'characteristics' like types of networks, knowledge, background, etcetera.
- If 'LGBT' is taken as a starting point, do not only focus on L and G, but also focus on B and T.
- Try to find enthusiastic people who already have large networks in the municipality and/or who have network and organization power.
- Weigh the costs and benefits of deploying ambassadors, taking the local context into account: can they really contribute to what is already there?

Summarizing, it could be stated that the appointment of gay-ambassadors could be a good complement to existing LGBT-policy and to the involvement of different professional organizations and interest organizations in Dutch cities. However, the different cases make very clear that a well-working ambassadorship does not come naturally. Therefore, each municipality should consider whether and how this intervention is workable in its specific context. The examples that are given in this research and the abovementioned recommendations could contribute to this consideration process. It is not a blueprint, but a directive.

Samenvatting (Dutch)

De zichtbaarheid en sociale acceptatie van lesbische vrouwen, homoseksuele mannen, biseksuelen en transgenders (LHBT's) in Nederland hebben de afgelopen jaren steeds meer aandacht gekregen in zowel onderzoek als in de beleidspraktijk. De positie van LHBT's verbetert duidelijk, maar er moeten nog veel stappen gezet worden om volledige acceptatie te bereiken in verschillende delen van de samenleving. De Nederlandse overheid vindt ook dat er nog verschillende stappen gezet moeten worden om de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT's te verbeteren. Daarom zijn er verschillende beleidsplannen geschreven om LHBT-emancipatie te verbeteren. LHBT-emancipatie is in Nederland steeds meer de verantwoordelijkheid geworden van lokale overheden in plaats van de nationale overheid. De afgelopen jaren heeft het Nederlandse ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap twee programma's, het *Koploper*-programma en het *Lokaal LHBT-beleid* programma, gestart om de ontwikkeling van lokaal LHBT-emancipatiebeleid, dat focust op verschillende maatschappelijke domeinen, 'groepen' en aspecten van het dagelijks leven, aan te moedigen. Steeds meer Nederlandse gemeenten zijn hiermee bezig. Vier gemeenten, Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Capelle aan den IJssel en Schiedam, hebben besloten om zogenaamde homoambassadeurs of roze ambassadeurs aan te stellen als onderdeel van hun lokale LHBT-beleid. Deze ambassadeurs zijn benoemd door de gemeente om te helpen met het vergroten van de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT's in de gemeente.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is om inzicht te verkrijgen in de bijdrage van homoambassadeurs in Nederlandse steden aan de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT's en op basis hiervan aanbevelingen te doen met betrekking tot de aanstelling van zulke ambassadeurs voor LHBT-emancipatie in andere Nederlandse steden. Er zijn vier onderzoeksvragen geformuleerd die geholpen hebben om dit doel te bereiken.

- **Onderzoeksvraag 1**

Hoe kan de (mogelijke) bijdrage van homoambassadeurs in Nederlandse steden aan de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT's bekeken worden met behulp van theoretische begrippen?

Er is betoogd dat de ambassadeurs kunnen worden gezien als 'trekkers', 'verbinders' en (in)formele netwerkers die opereren in een netwerkmaatschappij of participatiemaatschappij. In dit licht zijn ook de rol van contact en de toepasbaarheid van de contacthypothese besproken. Er is gesteld dat de ambassadeurs in theorie de positie hebben om materiële aspecten en de betekenissen van verschillende ruimten in hun gemeente te beïnvloeden ten gunste van LHBT's. Wanneer dit vertaald wordt naar de specifieke LHBT-vraagstukken die aan de orde zijn, kan er gesteld worden dat homoambassadeurs kunnen helpen bij het verbeteren van de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT's door bijvoorbeeld op te treden als zichtbare sleutelfiguren en dat ze uiteindelijk streven naar volledig (symbolisch) burgerschap (*citizenship*), het 'recht op de stad' (*right to the city*) en het 'recht op verschil' (*right to difference*) voor LHBT's. Een combinatie van (geografische) theorieën en concepten is dus toegepast op het onderzoeksonderwerp.

- **Onderzoeksvraag 2**

Hoe kan de benoeming van homoambassadeurs, en (Nederlandse) LHBT-beleidsideeën meer in het algemeen, bekeken worden in contextuele en kritische termen?

Er is aandacht besteed aan twee gedachtegangen die helpen om sommige principes van (Nederlandse) LHBT-beleidsideeën en, als onderdeel daarvan, de benoeming van homoambassadeurs, te bekritisieren en te contextualiseren. Eerst is aandacht besteed aan verschillende auteurs die hebben betoogd dat LHBT-beleid zich te veel aanpast aan de heteronormativiteit van de samenleving en dat dit ook kan leiden tot homonormativiteit. Ze stellen dat dit een assimilerend en ‘mainstreaming’ effect heeft voor LHBT’s. Ten tweede zijn er enkele wetenschappers die betogen dat LHBT-beleid een negatief effect heeft voor andere ‘minderheidsgroepen’, vooral moslims, in de Nederlandse samenleving. Hoewel deze kritieken duidelijk zijn, is ervoor gekozen om in eerste instantie naar de bijdrage van homoambassadeurs in Nederlandse steden te kijken vanuit een minder kritisch perspectief.

- **Onderzoeksvraag 3**

Hoe dragen de homoambassadeurs in Rotterdam, Alkmaar en Capelle aan den IJssel bij aan de zichtbaarheid en de acceptatie van LHBT’s in hun gemeente?

In drie van de vier gemeenten die homoambassadeurs hebben benoemd, is case study onderzoek uitgevoerd. Omdat in de vierde gemeente, Schiedam, nog niet zo veel gebeurd is, is besloten om deze casus niet uitgebreid te bespreken. Na het interviewen van 22 mensen, het verzamelen van documenten en het uitvoeren van observaties, heeft de onderzoeker een intensief analyse- en interpretatieproces doorlopen.

De analyse en interpretatie van de casussen leveren een meervoudig beeld op van de inzet en bijdrage van homoambassadeurs. De ambassadeurs zijn op verschillende manieren en in verschillende maatschappelijke velden ingezet. Er zijn velden gekozen waarvan het is bewezen dat er tegenwoordig nog steeds problemen zijn met de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT’s, ondanks de stappen die er in Nederland zijn gezet op het gebied van LHBT-emancipatie. De ambassadeurs hebben zich vooral gericht op de velden onderwijs/kinderen en jeugd, ouderen(zorg) en sport. Hoewel een focus op etnische en religieuze minderheidsgroepen ook van belang wordt geacht, is er nog niet zo veel gedaan op dit gebied. In het domein van sport blijft het creëren van openingen moeilijk, maar op basis van dit onderzoek kunnen hierover geen harde conclusies getrokken worden. In het onderwijsveld en in de ouderenzorg zijn er ook veel obstakels geweest, maar deze velden lijken over het algemeen toegankelijker te zijn. In het onderwijsveld lijkt dit vooral te komen door de wetwijzigingen op nationaal beleidsniveau die scholen dwingen om in hun curriculum aandacht te besteden aan seksuele diversiteit. Met betrekking tot ouderen kan er worden gezegd dat initiatieven zoals roze salons enig effect lijken te hebben. Het is echter duidelijk dat ook in deze domeinen nog verschillende stappen gezet moeten worden.

Het is duidelijk geworden dat de ambassadeurs vrijwilligers zijn die namens het gemeentebestuur werken en die soms nauw samenwerken met andere organisaties. Ze kunnen gezien worden als ‘anijagers’ die kunnen helpen om het gemeentelijke LHBT-emancipatiebeleid verder te brengen. De precieze benadering en bijdrage van het ambassadeurschap verschilt per

gemeente en lijkt sterk af te hangen van de lokale situatie en de mensen die daar actief zijn. De ambassadeurs hebben zich vooral gericht op het bespreekbaar maken van LHBT-onderwerpen door te praten met mensen op verschillende niveaus, variërend van een focus op directies en besturen van organisaties tot een focus op bijvoorbeeld studenten, docenten en bewoners van verzorgingshuizen. Daaraan gerelateerd hebben ze bijgedragen aan de zichtbaarheid en acceptatie van LHBT's in hun gemeente door het organiseren van en deelnemen aan activiteiten. Dit onderzoek heeft laten zien hoe deze gesprekken en activiteiten gezien kunnen worden als manieren waarop ambassadeurs proberen om de betekenissen en materiële aspecten van ruimte te beïnvloeden. Daarnaast heeft dit onderzoek laten zien hoe hun inzet kan worden gezien als een manier om te streven naar volledig (symbolisch) burgerschap (*citizenship*), het 'recht op de stad' (*right to the city*) en het 'recht op verschil' (*right to difference*) voor LHBT's.

Het is duidelijk dat de concepten zichtbaarheid en acceptatie nauw met elkaar verbonden zijn en dat het niet gemakkelijk is om te vatten wat het streven hiernaar betekent. Door het toepassen van concepten die focussen op de rol, positie en bijdrage van de ambassadeurs, hebben deze ideeën verder vorm gekregen en zijn ze bekeken vanuit verschillende invalshoeken. Het streven naar het 'recht op de stad' (*right to the city*) en dus het recht om deel te nemen (*right to participate*) is gepresenteerd als een meer praktische, begrijpelijke vertaling van wat het betekent om te streven naar zichtbaarheid en acceptatie.

• Onderzoeksvraag 4

Wat zijn de gevolgen van de bevindingen van het case study onderzoek voor de mogelijke benoeming van homoambassadeurs in andere gemeenten in Nederland?

Over het algemeen kan er op basis van dit onderzoek gesteld worden dat gemeenten aandacht moeten besteden aan de volgende dingen wanneer ze homoambassadeurs willen benoemen:

- Wissel ideeën uit met andere gemeenten. Wat werkt (niet) en waarom (niet)? Wees echter ook bewust van het feit dat het erg belangrijk is om deze ideeën aan te passen aan de lokale context en het 'type' ambassadeurs ('zwaargewichten' vs. 'praktische types').
- Denk erover na hoe de benoeming van homoambassadeurs past bij een breder lokaal LHBT-emancipatiebeleid. Wat is hun positie? Wat zouden ze kunnen bijdragen?
- Stem af met andere partijen die betrokken of belanghebbend zijn, zoals antidiscriminatiebureaus, kenniscentra en LHBT belangenorganisaties.
- Een ambassadeur is geen ambtenaar, maar een vrijwilliger. Pas de taken en verwachtingen hierop aan.
- Denk na over een duidelijke afbakening van de taken en verwachtingen en over hoe deze gecommuniceerd moeten worden naar de verschillende betrokken partijen om verwarring te voorkomen.
- Een gemeente moet niet afhankelijk zijn van homoambassadeurs voor het dragen van het lokale LHBT-beleid. Hun betrokkenheid moet nadrukkelijk gezien worden als een instrument naast andere instrumenten en niet als een 'crux' die alles op zal lossen. LHBT-emancipatie is een doorlopend proces en het aanstellen van homoambassadeurs kan gezien worden als één van de hulpmiddelen om hieraan bij te dragen.

- Besteed aandacht aan de *diversiteit* van de ambassadeurs, afhankelijk van de taken die men hen wil geven. Moeten ze functioneren als 'diplomaten'? Moeten ze activiteiten organiseren? Moeten ze rolmodellen zijn voor een bepaalde groep? Focus op 'kenmerken' zoals soorten netwerken, kennis, achtergrond, etcetera.
- Als 'LHBT' het uitgangspunt is, focus dan niet alleen op L en H, maar ook op B en T.
- Probeer enthousiaste mensen te vinden die al grote netwerken in de gemeente hebben en/of die netwerkkracht en organisatorische kracht hebben.
- Weeg de kosten en de baten van het inzetten van ambassadeurs tegen elkaar af en neem hierbij de lokale context in ogenschouw: kunnen ze echt bijdragen aan wat er al is?

Samenvattend kan er gesteld worden dat het benoemen van homoambassadeurs een goede aanvulling kan zijn op bestaand LHBT-beleid en op de betrokkenheid van verschillende professionele organisaties en belangenorganisaties in Nederlandse steden. De verschillende casussen maken echter duidelijk dat een goed werkend ambassadeurschap niet vanzelf ontstaat. Daarom moet elke gemeente overwegen of en hoe de inzet van homoambassadeurs werkbaar is in de specifieke context van deze gemeente. De voorbeelden die worden gegeven in dit onderzoek en de bovenstaande aanbevelingen kunnen bijdragen aan dit denkproces. Het is geen blauwdruk, maar een richtlijn.

List of translations

In this research report, different sources are quoted that have been written by Dutch ministries, municipalities and (societal) organizations. In the list of references and in the text, these ministries, municipalities and organizations are referred to in Dutch. The ministries and organizations are referred to in Dutch and English the first time these are mentioned. In order to make the translations easily findable, here the different names and their translations are listed.

Dutch	English
Art. 1 Bureau Discriminatiezaken	Art. 1 Bureau Discrimination cases
Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS)	Statistics Netherlands
COC Nederland	COC Netherlands
College van burgemeester en wethouders	Board of Mayor and Aldermen
Gemeente Alkmaar	Municipality of Alkmaar
Gemeente Rotterdam	Municipality of Rotterdam
Gemeente Schiedam	Municipality of Schiedam
LHBT Gemeenten	LGBT municipalities
Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties	Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport	Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport
Parlementair Documentatie Centrum Universiteit Leiden	Parliamentary Documentation Centre, Leiden University
Rijksoverheid	Government of the Netherlands
Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR)	Scientific Council for Government Policy

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Chapter 1 Gay-ambassadors in the Netherlands: context and introduction of the research

1.1 Introduction

Over the last decades, many developments have taken place in the Netherlands in relation to the emancipation of LGBTs (lesbian women, gay men, bisexuals and transgenders). Pierik and Felten (2013) of *Movisie* define LGBT-emancipation as “(...) the process which is aimed at eliminating inequality of LGBT-citizens in society” (Freely translated from Dutch; p. 48). Schuyf and Van Hoof (2011, p. 7) of *Movisie* and *COC Nederland* (COC Netherlands) (n.d.:a), a Dutch interest organization for LGBTs, distinguish three phases of gay emancipation: after the decriminalization of being gay (first phase) and obtaining more or less similar legal rights for homosexuals with the possibility for same sex marriage (second phase), now a third phase has been reached in which social acceptance of LGBTs is the main goal that is strived for. Schuyf and Van Hoof (2011) define social acceptance as “(...) making sure that what the law says with regard to non-discrimination and equal rights will also belong to the norms and values of the society and its members” (Freely translated from Dutch; p. 7). ‘What the law says’ primarily alludes to the first Article of the Dutch Constitution: “[a]ll persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances. Discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race or sex or on any other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted” (Parlementair Documentatie Centrum Universiteit Leiden (Parliamentary Documentation Centre, Leiden University), n.d.).

Related to the issue of acceptance, the issue of visibility of LGBTs is important. Schuyf and Van Hoof (2011) make clear why thinking about the visibility of LGBTs is of interest:

[m]ost people are heterosexual and do not have an eye for LGBTs in their environment. They automatically assume that other people are heterosexual as well. That creates an immediate dilemma: that LGBTs have to show that they are LGBT all the time themselves, or otherwise will not be seen. However, when they are visible, they often get the blame that they ‘flaunt’ with it. Heterosexuals do not have to be explicit about their love life: they are part of the majority and form the norm. Therefore, the visibility of LGBTs is an important issue. Because of the attention value – not everyone is heterosexual –, because of the diversity – not everyone is the same – and finally for safety – when many LGBTs are visible, the risk for the individual is reduced. (Freely translated from Dutch; p. 46)

Thus, both social acceptance and visibility can be seen as important topics that are related to the emancipation of LGBT people and both issues need attention.

In this research report, the results of a master thesis research on a specific policy intervention that focuses on enhancing the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs will be outlined. This research was conducted during a research internship at the ‘Participation and active citizenship’ team of *Movisie*. It has been decided to do case study research on the contribution of so-called ‘gay-ambassadors’ in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in order to make recommendations with regard to the appointment of such ambassadors for LGBT-emancipation in municipalities in the Netherlands. In this report, it will be shown how this research has been conducted in a scientifically founded way.

In this first chapter, attention will be paid to the broader project framework (paragraph 1.2), the research objective (1.3), the practical and scientific relevance of the research (1.4) and the research questions (1.5).

1.2 Project framework

In this paragraph, the topic of research will be introduced further. In subparagraph 1.2.1, the relevant main results of different studies on the acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBTs) in the Netherlands will be paid attention to in order to come to a clear picture of the current state of LGBT-acceptation in the Netherlands. The second subparagraph (1.2.2) will contain a brief look at Dutch policy ideas regarding LGBT-emancipation. In subparagraph 1.2.3, Dutch LGBT-policy will be positioned in relation to LGBT-policy in other European countries. In subparagraph 1.2.4, attention will be paid to the ways in which the Dutch national policy ideas can be and are translated to the local level. In the fifth subparagraph (1.2.5), a specific local LGBT-policy intervention, namely the appointment of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities, will be introduced. This will be the main topic of this research.

1.2.1 Acceptation of LGBTs in the Netherlands

In the introduction, attention has been paid to a definition of the social acceptance of LGBTs. This definition of Schuyf and Van Hoof (2011) will be used as a basis in this research. Over the past couple of years, different studies have been conducted on the acceptance of LGBTs in the Netherlands. The most well known reports about LGBT-acceptation in the Netherlands have been written by researchers of the *Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau* (SCP, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research).

In 2006, Keuzenkamp, Bos, Duyvendak and Hekma edited a first SCP-report on the acceptance of homosexuality in the Netherlands, which was published on behalf of and financed by different Dutch government departments. It is stated that the situation of homosexuals in the Netherlands was not clearly positive or negative. Although the opinions of Dutch people about homosexuals in general population surveys have changed in a positive way since 1970 (p. 13), and the equality of rights between homosexuals and heterosexuals has increased, there were signals about a decrease of tolerance of homosexuality (p. 14). The main conclusion of the report is that homosexuality was accepted not by all, but by most people (Keuzenkamp, 2007, p. 7). 'Groups' by which homosexuality was still less accepted, were youth and some ethnic minorities (p. 7). Thus, the degree of tolerance for homosexuals varied.

In 2010, again a very extensive research report on various aspects of the acceptance of homosexuality was presented (Keuzenkamp (ed.), 2010). In this report, it is, again, concluded that, overall, Dutch people accepted homosexuality, but that some groups were quite negative about it. However, the situation seemed to be improving in comparison with earlier surveys (p. 14). Next to this, it became clear that Dutch people are quite positive about homosexuality in comparison with people from other European countries, in particular in comparison with Southern, Central and Eastern European countries (p. 14). This comparison will be developed further in subparagraph 1.2.3.

In 2011, a short 'interim report' was presented on the acceptance of homosexuality (Keuzenkamp, 2011). An indicator that was developed by the SCP in order to be able to monitor the development of the attitude of the Dutch population regarding homosexuality showed, with some

remarks, that the 'homo-negative' part of the population decreased from 15% in 2006 to 10% in 2010 (based on answers to various propositions about homosexuality) (p. 32).

A next extensive report was published in 2012. In this report, the acceptance of homosexuals and bisexuals is extensively looked at from the perspective of homosexuals and bisexuals themselves, instead of from the perspective of the 'general population' (Keuzenkamp (ed.), Kooiman & Lisdonk, 2012, p. 109). Although the used information cannot be seen as representative for all gay and bisexual people in the Netherlands, the research nonetheless reveals interesting insights about their experiences (p. 109). An important outcome was that "[a]ccording to gays and lesbians themselves, acceptance of homosexuality in the Netherlands is generally good" (p. 110). However, respondents indicated that in different situations they were confronted with negative reactions to their homosexuality, varying from 10% of the lesbian women and 6% of the gay men who received negative reactions from their parents, to respectively 14% and 5% at work, to 10% and 7% in the world of sport and to 29% of the lesbians and 23% of the gay men who received negative reactions in public space in 2011 (p. 111). Thus, being visibly gay in the Netherlands is not always unproblematic. Next to this, it was concluded that "(...) a sizeable proportion of gays and lesbians either consciously or unconsciously adapt their behaviour in order to avoid negative reactions" (p. 112). "The motto propagated by the Dutch government (...) of 'just being able to be gay', is thus evidently not yet applicable everywhere in Dutch society" (p. 115).

Two 'groups' of people that have been less well examined, are bisexuals and transgenders. In the report of Keuzenkamp (ed.), Kooiman and Lisdonk (2012), one chapter is especially dedicated to bisexual people, although there is less information available about this 'group' than about lesbians and gay men. It is, based on the *Culturele veranderingen in Nederland* ('Cultural changes in the Netherlands') survey 2010, made clear that both the percentage of bisexual people that is not open about their sexual preference (30% against 2%) and the percentage of 'open' bisexual people that does not feel accepted by everyone is higher than the percentage of lesbians and gay men in these respects (p. 114). However, "[r]ecent population research (2011) has shown that the general attitude towards bisexuals is no different from that towards gays and lesbians. The vast majority of the Dutch population think that, just like gays and lesbians, bisexuals should be free to lead their lives as they wish" (p. 114). Here, the same remarks as indicated above apply, though.

In 2012, for the first time an extensive research was conducted on the position of transgenders in the Netherlands on behalf of the Dutch ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap) (Keuzenkamp, 2012). Transgenders (as defined in the research of Keuzenkamp) are people whose birth sex and gender identity are not (entirely) in accordance with each other and people whose birth sex and gender identity are in accordance with each other, but who (sometimes) have a different gender expression (p. 9). It is estimated that about 0.6% of the men and 0.2% of the women of the 15 to 70 years old people identify themselves as transgender, based on the people that report an ambivalent or incongruent gender identity in combination with dissatisfaction with the own body and the wish to (partly) change the birth sex by the use of hormones or by undergoing surgery (p. 9). However, this percentage increases to about 5% when all Dutch people with an ambivalent gender identity are counted (Rutgers Nisso Groep, in Schuyf & Van Hoof, 2011, p. 9). Thus, the exact numbers clearly depend on the definitions used. Although the group of 250 interviewed people in Keuzenkamp's research (conducted between September 2011 and April 2012) cannot be seen as representative for all transgenders in the Netherlands, the research provides interesting results. 29% of the respondents (almost) never, or only occasionally, use the desired gender identity and many respondents are not open about being transgender

(Keuzenkamp, 2012, p. 10). About 37% of the respondents did not always feel safe in the year before they joined the research and 42% was confronted with negative reactions because of being transgender (p. 11). Most of the respondents received negative reactions in public space, at work and at school (pp. 11-12).

In the spring of 2013, Keuzenkamp and Kuyper (2013) published a final *SCP*-report in which they confirm what has been outlined above: in general, LGBTs in the Netherlands are accepted, but there are also groups in society which are less accepting. Next to that, bisexuals and transgenders are less accepted than gay and lesbian people. Transgenders encounter the most resistance: “[b]eing clearly recognisable as a man or woman and behaving accordingly is still regarded as important in the Netherlands” (p. 30).

1.2.2 National LGBT-policy in the Netherlands

In the previous subparagraph it has become clear that, in general, the acceptance rate of gay men, lesbian women, bisexuals and transgenders in the Netherlands is quite high. Today, in the Netherlands we have reached the point where a ‘further broadening and deepening’ of social acceptance, in the words of Keuzenkamp, Kooiman and Van Lisdonk (2012, p. 116), is the main focus of gay-emancipation. Historically, the Netherlands are doing quite well: “[e]ver since the ‘sexual revolution’ of the 1960s, the Netherlands has been at the forefront of championing erotic freedoms” (Hekma & Duyvendak, 2011, p. 625). The year 2001 can be seen as a pivotal one in the Dutch gay-emancipation history, as this was the year that marriage also became possible for same-sex couples: “[i]n the eyes of the law, homosexuality and heterosexuality were now nearly equal, though legal equality did not mean social equality” (Ibid.). This means that there are still reasons to assume that specific policy and action to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in the Netherlands are needed, not least because of the often problematic position of and the lack of knowledge about bisexuals and transgenders.

The Dutch government also believes that there are still several steps to be taken in order to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. The last decennia, the government published several documents about the improvement of gay-emancipation. Different steps have been taken in order to improve the visibility, social acceptance and equality of LGBTs in the Netherlands. In 2001, the Dutch ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport) published a report which focuses on both the past and the future of Dutch gay-emancipation policy. Back then, it was already stated that

[f]ull acceptance of the homosexual, lesbian and bisexual lifestyle is (...) no stable condition. The social recognition of homosexuality is subject to a continuous process of domination and adaptation, of repression and emancipation, of toleration and intolerance. The upward trend of increasing acceptance is not a given, relapse is possible. (Freely translated from Dutch; Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, 2001, p. 8)

Thus, the Dutch government had to keep being busy with gay-emancipation. This also becomes clear in a policy document of the ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap) that was written a couple of years later, in 2007. In this document, a two-sided image is given of the acceptance of homosexuality: “[a] double picture has emerged. Although, because of the emancipation process, homosexuality is visible at many places and its acceptance is generally broad, gay-emancipation certainly is not completed” (Freely translated from Dutch, p. 10).

So, it is stated repeatedly that attention should be paid to the visibility and acceptance of gay people.

More recently, the 'emancipation-horizon' has been broadened. In 2011, the Dutch government has started to use the term LGBT-emancipation instead of gay-emancipation. For transgenders, this is the first time they are included in the emancipation policy. Before, bisexuals were already part of the Dutch emancipation policy, but now, they are also explicitly mentioned as being part of it (Pierik & Felten, 2013, p 10). Although the 'group' of LGBTs is more and more seen as being one, at least politically, it is important to keep in mind differences between L, G, B and T. Throughout this report, it will become clear that, next to the 'practical' differences between L, G, B and T that have been discussed in the previous subparagraph, there are also differences in the focus on L, G, B and T in practice, policy and academic research.

The current government, which is operating since 2012, is continuing the attention for LGBT-emancipation. The government has published an overview of the core goals for the improvement of the social acceptance of homosexuality. These core goals are the acceptance of homosexuality in the living environment (at work, at school, in retirement homes and at sport clubs), the acceptance of homosexuality by ethnic and religious minority groups, improving the openness for discussion about homosexuality in the Caribbean part of the Netherlands, improving the help for transgenders in the domains of work, care and education and, finally, the provision of information about sexual diversity at schools (Rijksoverheid (Government of the Netherlands), n.d.). Thus, the ideas of the government focus on both certain 'domains' and 'groups' to improve the social acceptance of LGBTs. In order to reach the goals, the government for example provides financial aid to societal organizations and gay- organizations that work together in so-called *Gay-Straight Alliances* (GSA's). Another example is the obligation (since 1 December 2012) for primary and secondary schools to provide information about sexuality and sexual diversity to their students (Rijksoverheid, n.d.).

In a more recent document (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2013), ideas about Dutch emancipation policy for the years 2013-2016 are outlined. 'Equality', 'independence', 'freedom of choice' and 'responsibility' are, and have already been for many years, important notions for the emancipation of LGBTs in the Netherlands (p. 1), responsibility meaning that the government should, next to developing laws and regulation, "(...) make people aware of the consequences of their choices, stimulate them to take action themselves and make clear that the government cannot and does not want to take all the responsibility for that [emancipation]" (Freely translated from Dutch; pp. 5-6). Acceptation and safety of LGBTs receive lots of attention (p. 5) and to reach these goals, according to the ministry the development of rules and regulations and, next to that, recognizing and encouraging the power of people in cooperation with societal organizations is important (Freely translated from Dutch, p. 7). Thus, (LGBT-)emancipation policy is seen as a combination of government intervention and the activation of citizens and societal organizations.

The Dutch LGBT-policy is highly influenced by *COC Nederland* (COC Nederland, n.d.:a; Holzhaacker, 2012). This organization is committed to the social acceptance of LGBTs all over the world. The *COC* works via an 'inside-out' approach, which means that it "(...) support[s] coalitions of LGBTs and straight people and empower[s] them to make a change from within their own community or organization" (COC Nederland, n.d.:a). This, the people of the *COC* believe, "(...) has a stronger effect than a top down approach" (Ibid.). Furthermore, cooperation between LGBTs and straight people is thought to work best for reaching emancipation, social acceptance and equal rights. So-called 'Frontliners', people who take the lead in the process of enhancing social acceptance in different situations, play a central role in reaching these goals. Next to this, to reach

more people and to enhance the effectiveness of the organization, *COC Nederland* works closely together with all kinds of societal organizations (Ibid.). These ideas and practices clearly show that there are important connections between the Dutch government and *COC Nederland*, since, at least in the core, they aim for the same kind of goals.

1.2.3 Positioning Dutch LGBT-policy

Different authors have paid attention to developments in LGBT-emancipation policy and activism in both the Netherlands and other countries. The Netherlands form a specific context to talk about the visibility and acceptance of LGBT people because the country “(...) is perhaps unique in developing an explicit ‘homo-emancipation’ policy and is often looked at as the model for sexuality politics and legal redress in relation to inequalities on the basis of sexual orientation” (Jivraj & De Jong, 2011, p. 143). As has been mentioned in the previous subparagraph, next to this, policy and ‘activism’, mainly represented by *COC Nederland*, work closely together to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBT people. Holzhacker (2012) states that this way of working together is exceptional compared to the situation in other European countries. He calls the Dutch way of working together ‘high-profile politics’, meaning that “(...) the *COC* reaches out to the public with visibility campaigns, it forms coalitions with other CSOs [(civil society organizations)], reaches out to political parties and cooperates with a largely sympathetic government” (p. 42). He compares this with the ways of interaction between CSOs and their political environments in Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom and Hungary. As the political environments and the public opinions toward LGBT-equality are less supportive there, cooperation between political parties and CSOs is much more difficult or is not possible at all. The interaction between CSOs and their political environment in Italy and Poland can, according to Holzhacker, be called ‘morality politics’, meaning that public visibility is reached by protest, making coalitions is difficult, the interaction with the government is confrontational and focus is mainly put on domestic struggle and possibly importing ideas from abroad (p. 30). Interaction between CSOs and the political environment in the United Kingdom and Hungary can according to Holzhacker called ‘incremental change’ and is characterized by small-scale events, discreet cooperation, discreet lobbying and possible exchange of ideas and resources with other countries (Ibid.). Thus, this comparison shows that the Netherlands indeed could be seen as an exceptional example of cooperation between the government and *COC Nederland* and other LGBT-organizations.

Kuyper, Iedema and Keuzenkamp (2013) confirm the positive position of the Netherlands, by stating that “Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France and Spain were the most tolerant countries [of Europe] in 2008/2010” (p. 66). Elfering, Spierings and Sombekke (2013) are also quite positive about the position the Netherlands take in comparison with other European countries. However, they break down their judgment in two parts. According to them, in relation to policy that focuses on lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, the Netherlands is seen as one of the leading countries, together with Belgium, Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom, Iceland and Sweden (p. vii). Interestingly, this ranking is different from the ranking that has been referred to by Kuyper, Iedema and Keuzenkamp (2013), but both groups of authors are quite positive about the position of the Netherlands. However, Elfering, Spierings and Sombekke (2013) state that “[i]n comparison with LGB-policy, the Netherlands must (...) realize that it absolutely is not a leader when it comes to T-legislation” (Freely translated from Dutch, p. vii). They base these conclusions mainly on information obtained from the so-called ‘Rainbow Europe Map 2011’ of *ILGA-*

Europe. The 2013 version of the survey of *ILGA-Europe* (2013a) confirms that there remain steps to be taken. It is stated that, in the period prior to the publication of the report,

[t]he Netherlands continued to work to fine tune its legislation and policy framework in different areas including asylum, parenting and legal gender recognition. Another positive development was the introduction of compulsory education on sexual diversity and sexual education at all primary and secondary schools which also explicitly refers to trans people. Meanwhile, concerns (...) [remain] regarding the social situation: half of the lesbian and gay people adjust their behaviour in public fearing negative reaction and half [of the] trans people experiences negative comments and harassment. (p. 165)

Interestingly, these rates are more negative than the rates presented in the *SCP*-reports that have been discussed in subparagraph 1.2.1. Unfortunately, it is not totally clear what specific sources the conclusions of *ILGA-Europe* are based on. Furthermore, *ILGA-Europe* has developed a ranking of "(...) the legal human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people" (*ILGA-Europe*, 2013c) in 49 European countries based on six categories (equality and non-discrimination, family, bias motivated speech/violence, legal gender recognition, freedom of assembly, association & expression and asylum) that are divided into different criteria (*ILGA-Europe*, 2013b). Based on the scores within these criteria, the Netherlands is ranked 8th among 49 European countries (*ILGA-Europe*, 2013c). The Netherlands has a positive score on 60% of the formulated criteria. The relatively poor circumstances for transgenders are confirmed: only 34% of the criteria within the category 'legal gender recognition' is scored positive. Furthermore, the scores for 'protection against hate speech/ crime (27%) and 'laws & policies against discrimination' (55%) are (relatively) low (*Ibid.*)

Concluding, it could be stated that the Netherlands are doing well when it comes to different LGBT-issues, also in comparison with other European countries, but that the reservations that emerge in different studies, mainly about the position of transgenders and the treatment of discrimination, should not be forgotten.

1.2.4 Local Dutch LGBT-policy: general developments

After zooming out to the European context, here attention will be paid to recent local LGBT-policy developments in the Netherlands. LGBT-emancipation in the Netherlands has more and more become a responsibility of local governments instead of the national government (Schuyf & Van Hoof, 2011, p. 11). Thus, the national government is clearly aiming at the decentralization of LGBT-policy. To enforce this, in 2007 the then minister of Education, Culture and Science invited 21 municipalities to become a so-called *Koploper* (frontrunner) for LGBT-emancipation. 18 municipalities decided to take part in the *Koploper*-program, which ran from 2008 until 2011. The goal of this program was to anchor LGBT-emancipation in local policy (p. 13). The *Koploper*-program formed the basis of a new program, called *Lokaal LHBT-beleid* (Local LGBT-policy), which will run until the end of 2014. This program was launched in 2011 by the ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The 18 municipalities that took part in the *Koploper*-program signed, together with 22 new 'LGBT-municipalities' a declaration in which they, inter alia, state that they want to maintain the achieved results regarding social acceptance and that they want to continue the shared commitment to this goal (Freely translated from Dutch; LHBT-gemeenten, 2011). Now, 41 Dutch municipalities take part in the program (Movisie, n.d.). These municipalities developed, in cooperation with the ministry of Education, Culture and Science, common goals, which focus on fighting against discrimination and

intimidation of and violence against LGBTs, increasing the safety, defensibility and wellbeing at school, in public space, at work, in healthcare, sports and the own social environment, encouraging coming out for the sexual preference and stimulating the openness for discussion about being LGBT among youth and within 'groups' where homosexuality is a taboo (Freely translated from Dutch; Ibid.). The common objectives are translated to several local goals, which are embedded in local policy and related back to the joint plans (Ibid.). All participating municipalities receive a financial contribution from the national government based on their local multiannual plans (Ibid.). This contribution amounts 20,000 Euros a year for small(er) municipalities and 50,000 Euros a year for the four largest municipalities (COC Nederland, n.d.:b). Thus, clear programs have been developed and financial resources have been made available in the last couple of years to encourage municipalities to develop LGBT-policy or to deepen existing policy that focuses on LGBT-emancipation.

1.2.5 Local Dutch LGBT-policy: the appointment of gay-ambassadors

One of the specific local LGBT-policy examples that are given in the *Roze gemeentegids* ('Pink municipal guide') (Schuyf & Van Hoof, 2011), a guide about LGBT-policy at the local level in the Netherlands, is the appointment of so-called gay-ambassadors. Based on the example of the deployment of gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, a large municipality in the Netherlands, Schuyf and Van Hoof state that these ambassadors are people who are very involved in the municipality, have a large network and are committed to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBT people in the municipality (p. 51). The idea is that the ambassadors use their extensive networks and their experience to get more attention for the position of LGBT people in various policy fields (Ibid.).

In 2010, in Rotterdam, five prominent people from the city were designated as gay-ambassadors (Schuyf & Van Hoof, 2011, p. 51; Gemeente Rotterdam, 2010). The then alderman of Participation and Culture, Rik Grashoff, explained that Rotterdam needed such ambassadors because the intolerance towards and discrimination against LGBT people was not generally recognized. According to Grashoff, ambassadors could help to improve this by making different aspects of sexual diversity more negotiable and more visible in the city, mainly at the level of the management of different organizations (Freely translated from Dutch; Gemeente Rotterdam, 2010). The appointed ambassadors have different backgrounds, are very involved in what happens in the city and have large networks (Ibid.). In 2011, in Alkmaar, a smaller municipality, gay-ambassadors were appointed who have as their task to improve the openness for discussion about LGBTs in the fields of secondary education, sport, healthcare and 'non-western communities' and to give unrequested advice to the municipality (Gemeente Alkmaar, 2012, p. 4). Like in Rotterdam, the ambassadors are presented as people who have different backgrounds, are very involved in what happens in the city and have large networks (p. 7). More recently, on *Coming Out Day* 2012, Capelle aan den IJssel, a neighboring municipality of Rotterdam, designated a couple of gay-ambassadors (Capelse Courant, n.d.). Three ambassadors would focus on promoting social acceptance of and enabling discussion about homosexuality within their networks. It was the idea to approach schools and organizations that deal with youth and seniors (Freely translated from Dutch; Ibid.). It was also stated that the ambassadors would like to increase awareness. This, then, would increase the social acceptance and visibility of gay people (Freely translated from Dutch; Ibid.). Finally, in Schiedam, which is also a neighboring municipality of Rotterdam, two so-called pink ambassadors, a council member and an alderman of the municipality, were announced on *Coming Out Day* 2012 in the course of the local multiannual plan for the development and implementation of the local LGBT-emancipation policy (Freely translated from Dutch; Gemeente Schiedam, 2012). It was stated that the pink ambassadors would

give the Board of Mayor and Aldermen solicited and unsolicited advice (Ibid.). On *Coming Out Day* 2013, these ambassadors were replaced and two new, independent ambassadors were appointed to make homosexuality widely discussable in Schiedam (Nieuwe Stadsblad, 2013). Thereafter, on December 1st 2013, these ambassadors and two other ambassadors were officially appointed by the involved alderman (Gemeente Schiedam, 2013).

Thus, different municipalities have chosen to appoint gay-ambassadors. Important questions in relation to the role of the gay-ambassadors are how and what they actually contribute to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in their municipality. These questions are relevant within the framework of the advisory role that *Movisie* fulfills in relation to the municipalities that take part in the Local LGBT-policy program. Researching policy interventions and formulating recommendations with regard to these interventions could help to support municipalities in choosing ways to develop appropriate local LGBT-emancipation policy.

1.3 Research objective

This research has gaining a better insight into the specific role of gay-ambassadors as its main focus. The research will mainly focus on the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs and the implications of this for both practice and theory. The goal of this research can be formulated as follows:

The goal of this research is to gain insight into the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in order to make recommendations with regard to the appointment of such ambassadors for LGBT-emancipation in other Dutch cities.

Here, it will become clear how this goal will be reached with the help of different steps. First, in subparagraph 1.3.1, attention will be paid to the practical implementation and relevance of this research. Second, attention will be paid to the theoretical embedding and relevance of the research (subparagraph 1.3.2).

1.3.1 Practical implementation and relevance

In order to reach the main research goal, the choice has been made to conduct a case study research. As has become clear in subparagraph 1.2.5, Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam are four municipalities that have appointed so-called gay-ambassadors or pink ambassadors. All four municipalities are situated in the western part of the Netherlands, Alkmaar in the north and Rotterdam, Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam in the south (see picture 1; Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam are not shown separately, as these are neighboring municipalities of Rotterdam). Rotterdam is the largest city in the Netherlands after the capital Amsterdam. On 1 January 2013, Rotterdam had 614.543 inhabitants (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS; Statistics Netherlands), 2013c). Alkmaar is a much smaller municipality, with 94.958 inhabitants on 1 September 2013 (CSB, 2013a). Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam are even smaller, with respectively 66.238 (CBS, 2013b) and 76.538 inhabitants on 1 September 2013 (CBS, 2013d).

In Rotterdam and Alkmaar, the ambassadors have already been working for a while (respectively since 2010 and 2011). This means that it can already be investigated what has been done and how the ambassadors have contributed to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in the municipality. In Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam, the ambassadors have only been appointed in

the fall of 2012. It will become clear that it is nonetheless interesting to investigate what is happening in Capelle, because the ambassadors have already undertaken a couple of things there. It will turn out that, in Schiedam, not so much has happened yet. Therefore, this case will not be discussed extensively and will not be mentioned as one of the case municipalities in the research questions.



Picture 1 Location of case municipalities (map made with maps.google.nl)

The research is of practical relevance because it aims to contribute to knowledge development about the contribution of a certain local policy intervention that focuses on the improvement of the visibility and the acceptance of LGBTs. Good and contributing LGBT-policy is of great importance, as this policy aims at improving the position of, estimated, almost one million people in the Netherlands (or about 6% of the total population) (Schuyf & Van Hoof, 2011, p. 4). As more and more LGBT policy-ideas are elaborated at the local level, it is very relevant to look at how national policy ideas are elaborated in different municipalities and how such interventions contribute to the position of LGBTs. In the end, the knowledge gathered has helped to formulate and substantiate some clear preliminary recommendations with regard to the appointment of gay-ambassadors in different municipalities in the Netherlands. These recommendations will be discussed in the final chapter of this report.

Although there are methodological difficulties related to talking about the contribution of a policy intervention which cannot be evaluated ex-ante and ex-post, this research into the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel can possibly function as a point of reference for the appointment of these ambassadors in other municipalities. As there are no longer existing or previously examined examples of this policy intervention available, it is not possible to create a better research situation. Importantly, this research does not have the character of a policy evaluation. Of course, some parts will have an evaluative character, but the deployment of gay-ambassadors will explicitly be looked at from a (partly) geographical perspective and in the context of broader (LGBT-)policy ideas. The case study approach that has been chosen offers the possibility to carry out an in-depth analysis of and, thus, to gain a better insight into the

contribution of gay-ambassadors to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. In chapter 3 it will be clarified how the case study research in the four municipalities has been conducted and which methodological ideas and grips have been taken into account.

1.3.2 Theoretical embedding and relevance

In the second chapter of this research report, different useful ideas will be elaborated that help to theorize, contextualize and criticize the deployment of gay-ambassadors. It will be argued that the ambassadors could be seen as ‘pullers’, ‘connectors’ and (in)formal networkers who are operating in a network or participation society. In this light, also the role of contact and the applicability of the contact hypothesis will be discussed. It will be stated that, in theory, the ambassadors are well positioned to influence the materiality and meanings of different spaces in their municipality in favor of LGBTs. Translating this to the specific LGBT-issues being at stake, it could be stated that gay-ambassadors, for example by acting as visible key individuals, could help to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs and, in the end, are striving for full (symbolic) citizenship, the right to the city and the right to difference for LGBT people. Thus, a combination of (geographical) theories and concepts will be applied to the topic of research. Precisely this combination of ideas can be seen as the added theoretical value of this research.

This line of argumentation could be supplemented with discussions that have been going on in (geographical) literature about LGBT-issues. Therefore, after developing the aforementioned line of thought further in the second chapter, attention will be paid to contextualization and criticism that are derived from literature. Different scholars (cf. Claes, 2013; Hekma & Duyvendak, 2011; Hubbard, 2001; Jivraj & De Jong, 2011; Lewis, 2012; Mepschen, Duyvendak & Tonkens, 2010; Robinson, 2012; Valentine, 2003) present quite skeptical ideas about the influence and contribution of certain ways of looking at LGBT-emancipation. In paragraph 2.2, it will become clear that, with special attention being paid to the case of the Netherlands, they have quite strong arguments against some ways LGBT-emancipation policy and certain attitudes of and toward LGBT people work out nowadays. However, it will be argued that the critiques will mainly function as contextualization, as this research initially starts from the idea that specific LGBT-policy interventions could have a positive contribution for many LGBT people. In this way, a more practical, instead of a mainly critical, way of looking at a specific LGBT-policy intervention in the Netherlands is the most important. Of course, the critical stances should be kept in mind, as these provide interesting viewpoints which will also help to place this research in a broader perspective. By keeping both more general and more focused critiques in mind and by choosing a specific viewpoint for this research, the research could contribute to the discussion about the (dis)advantages and the contribution of such policy interventions, specifically of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities.

1.4 Research questions

Related to the research goal and the rest of this introductory chapter, different research questions can be posed. These research questions aim to cover both the theoretical and the practical aspects of the research project. First, two research questions have been formulated which aim to cover the relevant theoretical insights, contextualization and criticism.

- **Research question 1**

How can the (possible) contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people be theorized?

- **Research question 2**

How can the appointment of gay-ambassadors, and (Dutch) LGBT-policy ideas more generally, be looked at in contextual and critical terms?

These questions will be answered in the second chapter of this research proposal.

In subparagraph 1.2.5, a first step has been taken to describe what the gay-ambassadors have been appointed for. Case study research in Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan de IJssel and the internship at *Movisie* helped to learn much more about the contribution of the gay-ambassadors. The research question that can primarily be related to this fieldwork part of the research can be formulated as follows:

- **Research question 3**

How do the gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel contribute to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people in their municipality?

This question will mainly be answered in chapters 4 and 5. Finally, this research aims to come to recommendations about the appointment of such ambassadors for LGBT-emancipation in other municipalities in the Netherlands. Related to this, the following research question can be posed:

- **Research question 4**

What are the implications of the findings of this case study research for the possible appointment of gay-ambassadors in other municipalities in the Netherlands?

This question will mainly be answered in the concluding chapter.

Clearly, these research questions have not been answered in a definite order, as the research process was iterative in nature. This also means that both the research questions and the theoretical and contextual ideas were subject to changes during the process.

Chapter 2 Theorizing the contribution of gay-ambassadors

In the previous chapter, the topic of research has been introduced by first focusing on a broad context regarding LGBT-emancipation (in the Netherlands) and thereafter concentrating on the topic of research, the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. In this chapter, first the role and the contribution of the gay-ambassadors will be theorized (paragraph 2.1). It is important to keep in mind that much of the consulted research actually mainly focuses on LG-issues, instead of on the whole 'range' of LGBTs. The terms 'gay', 'homosexual', 'queer' and 'LGBT' are sometimes used as if these are interchangeable, but of course these terms could have different meanings for different people. Second, interesting contextual knowledge of ways of thinking about LGBT-issues and criticisms on (Dutch) LGBT-policy will be paid attention to in paragraph 2.2. Finally, in paragraph 2.3, based on the discussion that will have been developed up till that point in the thesis, position will be taken in the presented debate.

2.1 Theorizing the contribution of gay-ambassadors

In this paragraph, attention will be paid to the role and the contribution of gay-ambassadors in theoretical terms. This means that their potential contribution will be discussed in different steps. In subparagraph 2.1.1, the role of the ambassadors will be expressed in terms that could indicate their position. The second subparagraph (2.1.2) will be dedicated to theorizing the role of contact between homosexuals en heterosexuals and its potential influence on the acceptance of LGBTs. Third, in subparagraph 2.1.3, the discussion will turn to the role of space and, fourth, in subparagraph 2.1.4, to the role of citizenship. In subparagraph 2.1.5, the lines of thought about space and citizenship will be brought together by focusing on Lefebvre's concepts of the right to the city and the right to difference. Finally, in subparagraph 2.1.6, a visualization of the relation between different organizations, policy ideas and concepts will be presented, which is based on the ideas that have been discussed in the first chapter and that will be discussed in this paragraph.

2.1.1 Gay ambassadors as 'pullers', 'connectors' and networkers

As has been discussed in subparagraph 1.2.5, the gay-ambassadors, who are ideally people with large networks and knowledge about what is happening in their municipality, in theory are appointed to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in different domains and groups. In (geographical) literature, no specific ideas can be found about the role and the contribution of gay-ambassadors. However, their role can be looked at in broader terms.

First, broader developments in Dutch society should be paid attention to. The Dutch ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties) (2012) states that

(...) the society of today is a network community in which citizens, societal organizations and governments do no longer have a relationship of authority with each other, but manage to work together as partners. This calls for a reorganization of tasks between governments, market and society. The success of interventions is likely to be greater when those who those interventions personally touch can play a role in those themselves. (Translated from Dutch, p. 11)

Although this quotation comes from a report about policy for ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands, it fits a broader tendency in Dutch society of a changing role for citizens, societal organizations and governments. This changing role has also been paid attention to in a quick scan of literature about active citizenship (Van de Wijdeven, De Graaf & Hendriks, 2013). Although more attention will be paid to different forms of citizenship in subparagraphs 2.1.4 and 2.1.5, the ideas of Van de Wijdeven, De Graaf and Hendriks are already interesting here to contextualize the assumed position of the gay-ambassadors. They state that, from the 1980s onwards, thinking about citizenship has been changing:

[w]here, until the seventies, in particular the discussion was about obtaining citizenship, the emphasis shifted to the question what a *desirable form* of citizenship is. Where, previously, the focus of the citizenship discussion was mainly on citizenship as a legal status, now citizenship as 'good behavior' came more into the picture. Where the debate about citizenship in earlier decades mainly dealt with the *rights*, the debate has now shifted to the *duties*. And where it was first mainly on passive *citizenship*, now *active citizenship* came into the picture. (Freely translated from Dutch; p. 7)

Recently, in September 2013, King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands mentioned the term 'participation society' during his King's speech. The King stated that "[t]he classical welfare state changes slowly but surely into a participation society. Of everybody who can, it is asked to take responsibility for his or own life and environment. (...)" (Freely translated from Dutch; Rijksoverheid, 2013a). Furthermore, the King sees the Netherlands as "(...) [a] country with a compact and powerful government, that gives space and offers opportunities where it is possible and protects if that is necessary, so nobody falls through the cracks" (Freely translated from Dutch; Ibid.). The Dutch minister of Education, Culture and Science, Jet Bussemaker, endorses this and indicates that "(...) the government does not withdraw from society, but cooperates with citizens. The division of roles changes" (Freely translated from Dutch; Rijksoverheid, 2013b). Although there has been lots of discussion about the notion of the participation society in Dutch society, as it is quite difficult to grasp its meaning, it fits well to the abovementioned statement about changing citizenship that has been retrieved from literature.

These interpretations of a changing society express an emphasis on the own responsibility of citizens. In subparagraph 1.2.2, it has already become clear that 'responsibility' is one of the main notions within the current Dutch (LGBT-) emancipation policy. Within this policy, the appointment of gay-ambassadors can be seen as a specific policy implementation that fits well within the abovementioned developments and the demand for sharing and taking responsibility. As will be elaborated in the final chapters, the ambassadors are citizens who volunteer, on behalf of the municipality, to strive for visibility and acceptance of LGBTs by contacting different people and organizations. Thus, the ambassadors could be seen as 'the citizens' who are given and taking responsibility as a partner of the local government and societal organizations in order to reach a better position for LGBTs.

In a report of the Dutch *Scientific Council for Government Policy* (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR), 2012) attention is paid to conditions for the success of the involvement of citizens. First, the report pays attention to the deployment of so-called 'key-figures', who are, according to the WRR, crucial for this involvement (p. 79). The WRR names two kinds of 'key-figures',

namely 'pullers' and 'connectors'. 'Pullers' are described as people who are willing to take the lead (Ibid.). Also the role of 'connectors' is important for enlarging the involvement of citizens. They are compared with 'bilinguals', as

(...) they can move in different networks, can bridge the gap between groups of citizens on the one side and policy makers or managers on the other side. They can ensure that people end up with the right people, that two groups with different backgrounds and cultures can work together and that people for whom 'the government' seems far away, have an entrance 'via via'. (Freely translated from Dutch, pp. 81-82)

Theoretically, gay-ambassadors can be seen as both 'pullers' and 'connectors'. They are supposed to be people who are willing to take the lead to reach more visibility and acceptance for LGBTs. Furthermore, at least in the case of Rotterdam, they have been chosen because they are supposed to be people with large networks who can try to make the link between the 'group' of LGBT people, policy makers and managers and the wider society. Thus, in that sense, in line with what has been stated by the WRR, in theory the appointment of gay-ambassadors meets a condition for the success of the involvement of citizens in dealing with important societal issues. Interestingly, the alleged role of the gay-ambassadors has many similarities with the role that is attributed to so-called 'Frontliners' by COC Nederland, as has been discussed in subparagraph 1.2.2, because they are supposed to take the lead and play a central role for LGBT-emancipation. Here, an overlap between government ideas and the ideas of interest organizations seems to come to the fore.

Furthermore, the WRR (2012) mentions the role of informal and formal chains and networks in dealing with societal issues. According to the WRR, the role of informal networks that build on formal networks is important (p. 86). As has been made clear, gay-ambassadors are, inter alia, supposed to connect with managers in different societal organizations. Theoretically, they can turn from the formal to the informal level of networking to get something done. They have an important role as 'connectors', because they ideally make formal connections that 'normal citizens' cannot make so easily and ideally have the ability to use these formal connections for a more informal way of networking.

2.1.2 The role of contact: the contact hypothesis

Based on the previous subparagraph, it can basically be assumed that gay-ambassadors, by acting as 'pullers', 'connectors' and networkers, can contribute to enlarging the visibility and social acceptance of LGBTs in their municipality. Thus, by making contact, theoretically, steps could be taken to improve the position of LGBTs. This reasoning shows important parallels with the so-called contact-hypothesis and the assessment of this hypothesis in research on the attitudes towards homosexuality. The contact hypothesis was originally formulated by Allport in 1954. This hypothesis "(...) asserts that many forms of prejudice can be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals" (Herek & Capitano, 1996, p. 1). The hypothesis forms the basis of several studies. Among these, one can find ideas of Herek, which have been extensively paraphrased by Kuyper and Bakker (2006) in their SCP-report on the attitude towards homosexuality. Herek has demonstrated correlations between so-called 'homo-negativity' and different factors. For example, and most important in relation to this research and the contact hypothesis, "(...) it turns out that having homosexual friends, relatives and family are related to a more positive attitude with respect to homosexuality" (Freely translated from Dutch; Herek, 1988, in

Kuyper & Bakker, 2006, p. 24). This, then, “(...) can be explained by the experience function of the attitude [, which is one of the four functions Herek distinguishes]: because people know someone who is kind and homosexual, people give meaning to that experience by having a positive attitude towards homosexuality” (Freely translated from Dutch; Kuyper & Bakker, 2006, p. 24).

To illustrate this experience function, reference can be made to the results of a telephone survey among, in the first wave, 538 gay men, and, in the second wave, 382 gay men and lesbian women in the United States in the early nineties of the last century which has been used as evidence by Herek and Capitano (1996) to support the contact hypothesis. Based on an analysis of this survey, it is stated that “[h]eterosexuals who had experienced interpersonal contact with gay men or lesbians expressed significantly more favorable general attitudes toward gay people than did heterosexuals without contact. This pattern was generally consistent across both waves of data collection” (p. 11). It turned out that “[t]he relationship between contact and attitudes was affected by three different aspects of the contact experience” (p. 12). Knowing more lesbian and gay people, more intimacy and direct disclosure led to higher correlations between contact and favorable attitudes (Ibid.). Thus,

(...) the results are consistent with the contact hypothesis: interpersonal relationships characterized by intimacy, shared values, and common goals are more likely to be associated with favorable attitudes toward gay people as a group than are superficial or distant relationships. (Ibid.)

Although intimacy, shared values and common goals do not all directly seem to be central ‘conditions’ in case of the deployment of gay-ambassadors, the above-mentioned ideas of Herek (1988, in Kuyper & Bakker, 2006) and the study of Herek and Capitano (1996) also offer some, although weaker, basis, for the idea that, at least in theory, the appointment of gay-ambassadors could lead to an improvement of the attitude towards LGBT people. This statement could be substantiated by one of the policy implications that Herek and Capitano draw from their analysis. They state that

(...) lesbian and gay activists (...) have often called upon gay people to disclose their sexual orientation publicly, that is, to come out of the closet. (...) Such calls to come out reflect a conviction that the tenets of the contact hypothesis are applicable to heterosexuals’ attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. Although not definitive, the findings of the present study suggest that this belief is fundamentally correct. (p. 14)

A similar kind of recommendation has come to the fore in an explorative research on the perceptions of and experiences of LGBTs with the societal acceptance of homosexuality and gender-identity in the city of Rotterdam and to their needs regarding societal interventions (Freely translated from Dutch; Mink & Schriemer, 2010, p. 13). Mink and Schriemer state that part of their respondents believes in the value of role models:

[w]hat Obama did for the black Americans, or, closer to home, [the Dutch-Moroccan mayor of Rotterdam] Aboutaleb for Moroccan people in Rotterdam, is what well-known LGBTs can do as well. And in that way, they are not only a role model for their own ‘followers’, but in this way

they also fight very powerful kinds of stereotypes about the target group [of LGBTs] among heterosexuals. (Freely translated from Dutch; p. 86)

Thus, also in the Dutch context, research (although of explorative, small-scale nature) makes clear that LGBT people who are open about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity could improve the attitude of heterosexuals toward LGBTs. Linking this to the appointment of gay-ambassadors, then, leads to the presumption that the ambassadors should be L, G, B or T themselves in order to reach a positive influence on the attitudes towards LGBT people.

Importantly, Merino (2013) states that contact is not only about interpersonal relationships, but also about “(...) the broader social and normative context in which contact occurs” (p. 1156). He states that this context has not been paid so much attention to in research on the contact theory, although “[t]here are several reasons to expect social context to influence the influence of contact. The sets of relations individuals are embedded in before they engage in contact are worthy of consideration” (p. 1157). In his research, Merino, “[u]sing national survey data[,] (...) examines how a key feature of Americans’ core networks – the level of religious conservatism or traditionalism – influences their same-sex marriage attitudes and moderates the effect of personal contact with gays and lesbians” (p. 1164). He comes to the conclusion that “(...) the effect of contact on same-sex marriage support is significantly weaker for individuals embedded in core networks with a higher proportion of religious conservatives” (Ibid.). This, then, leads to the broader conclusion that people’s core networks should be paid attention to when doing research on intergroup contact instead of only looking at it in individual terms (p. 1165). The abovementioned ideas of Merino (2013) could have important implications for recommendations about the public disclosure of one’s sexual orientation and the value of role models. Merino states:

[m]uch of the strategizing within the LGBT movement revolves around a politics of visibility, with the assumption that greater contact will reduce prejudice and increase support for policies that benefit sexual minorities. Even as Americans have more exposure to and contact with gays and lesbians, attitudes may be much slower to change in areas where religious conservatives make up a larger proportion of the population. (p. 1165)

Linking this statement to the deployment of gay-ambassadors in Netherlands, it might be doubted whether they could influence the attitude of the whole ‘group’ of heterosexuals toward LGBTs. However, in this research the more ‘positive’ findings of Herek and Capitano and the potential of gay-ambassadors to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBT people will be taken as a starting point. The importance of the social and normative context will be taken into account as well.

2.1.3 Gay-ambassadors as space-makers

Connecting the ideas about the possible role of gay-ambassadors as ‘pullers’, ‘connectors’ and networkers and the considerations about the applicability of the contact hypothesis to a geographical approach, it could be stated that the ambassadors should try to create space for LGBTs. Importantly, space cannot be seen as a neutral ‘thing’. Soja (2008) argues that “(...) the spatial shapes the social as much as the social shapes the spatial”. Johnston and Longhurst (2010) see space as “(...) something that is complex, changeable, discursively produced, and imbued with power relations” (p. 16). Thus, space cannot be strictly defined or delimited. Hubbard (2012) argues how and why space (at the level of the city) is an important notion to understand sexuality, as the city cannot be seen as

“(…) a neutral backdrop against which sexual relations are played out: it is an active agent in the making of sexualities, promoting some and repressing others” (p. xv).

These ideas about space could be linked to the attention Plate and Rommes (2007) pay to relations between the production of meaning and the production of materiality, specifically in cities. They argue, partially based on ideas of Lefebvre, a well-known French sociologist, that these productions are interwoven (p. 21): “(…) the city is at once a material, a symbolic and a social space” (p. 23). They conclude that

[c]ities and representations of cities can exclude people, or make people want to exclude themselves if their personal expectations do not fit with those of the designers or with general meanings that have been given to the city. Cities and representations of cities can force people to adjust themselves, their clothes, their patterns of mobility or their personal wishes to fit dominant norms of the city and of what it means to be in it. For those who don't feel 'at home' in the city, this adjustment may be more painful than for others; the further removed people are from the dominant norms, the more (physical and psychological) work these adjustments will cost. Ultimately, for some, the only option that remains is to change – the meanings or the materiality of – the city. (p. 35)

These considerations could be related to issues regarding the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. Blidon (2011) is very definite about visibility issues gay and lesbian people are dealing with in public space:

[s]pace shapes our life experiences and social interactions. Lesbians and gays' relations with public space are best summed up by invisibility, apart from a few exceptions in specific locations and at particular times of the year such as annual Gay Pride Marches.

Although Blidon focuses on the French context, and problems with invisibility of LG(BT)s seem to be less dominant in the Netherlands, the discussion about the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs is also relevant for the Dutch context, as also in the Netherlands many LGBT people receive negative reactions in public space and adapt their behavior to certain norms (see subparagraph 1.2.1). Blidon states: “This self-censorship and these precautions taken by lesbians and gays [and bisexuals and transgenders] raise the issue of access to public space and beyond, the question of their right to the city” (based on Lefebvre, 1991). The idea of the right to the city will be discussed more extensively in subparagraph 2.1.5. Importantly, Dutch LGBT-emancipation policy does not only focus on public space, but also on different aspects of daily life that take place in semi-public or private spaces, such as work (the working space), health care (e.g. care homes) and sports (sport clubs). Thus, space is looked at in a broader sense here.

Clearly, ideas about (in)visibility in (public) space and the role of certain norms and values come together here. According to Stella (2012), “(…) becoming visible represents a way of resisting social norms that naturalise the heterosexual presence in public space and make homosexuality stand out as 'out of place'” (p. 1827). Thus, public space is seen by Stella as a source of the exclusion of LGBTs and as space that can be seen as being dominantly 'heteronormative' (see subparagraph 2.2.1 for a further discussion of the notion of heteronormativity). This idea can be extended to different other spaces in which daily life takes place. In paragraph 1.1 it was already made clear that social acceptance is understood here as the embedding of the content of anti-discrimination and

equal rights laws (in this case mainly Article 1 of the Dutch Constitution) in the norms and values of the (people living in a) society. This, then, could be coupled to the abovementioned arguments that (public) space (in the Netherlands) is dominated by norms and values that ensure the dominance of heterosexuality. It could be stated that the embedding of anti-discrimination and equal right laws in the norms and values of the (people living in a) society could be enhanced by the visibility of LGBTs in (public) space. This, then, can be translated to geographical terms by stating that being visible as LGBT could contribute to changing the meaning and materiality of space (in the city). This can also be linked to the presumption that the ambassadors should be L, G, B or T themselves in order to reach a positive influence on the attitudes towards LGBT people.

Richardson and Monro (2013) also point at the importance of certain ways of making LGBT visible to improve the acceptance of LGBTs. They have done research on “(...) lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equalities initiatives in local government in England, Wales and Northern Ireland” (p. 131), which they also call ‘sexualities equalities work’. They first refer to a research of Cooper et al. (2003) on sexualities equalities work at the local level in the UK during the 1990s. This research

(...) indicated that development of sexual equalities work was patchy across local authorities, often dependent on goodwill and reliant on individual ‘champions’ (...). In addition to the importance of leadership, the research identified the key role played by committed individuals in advancing the equalities agenda, very often who were lesbian and gay themselves. (Pp. 132-133)

Thus, this research stresses the importance of the commitment of (mostly lesbian or gay) individual ‘champions’ for advancing the attention being paid to the equality of LGBTs. This idea could be linked back to the contact hypothesis as it has been discussed in the previous subparagraph. The above presented idea of Cooper exhibits interesting similarities with the statement of Herek and Capitano (1996) about the importance of ‘coming out’ publicly and how this might have a positive effect on the attitudes of heterosexuals toward gay men and lesbians. The article of Richardson and Monro helps to translate these ideas to the context of local policy. Although they focus on the context of the UK, their research and the research they refer to has turned out to be very useful to consult in relation to the appointment of gay-ambassadors in the Netherlands. Namely, this research provides some ground for the idea that, also in the Netherlands, individual ‘champions’ and key individuals could be helpful, or might even be seen as central, for advancing the equality of LGBTs at the local level:

[a]lthough legislative and policy changes, as well as local government modernization, were identified as the main drivers of change, what the findings also clearly demonstrated in line with other studies was that there is an ‘implementation gap’ between policy and practice (...) which often manifests as the inclusion of sexual equalities in high level policy documents with little being done ‘on the ground’. (...) [E]ven though most of the participants in the study identified institutional and organizational changes as key to taking the sexualities equalities agenda forward, and some could see certain benefits even with a ‘tick-box approach’ in getting the issues on the agenda at least, they also expressed the view that the extent to which this was likely to be ‘made real’ was largely dependent on key individuals proactively ‘championing’ sexualities equalities initiatives. (p. 144)

Based on this, gay-ambassadors could thus be seen as key individuals who could contribute to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs, thus 'taking the sexualities equalities agenda forward'.

Bringing the different lines of thought about the role of space and the role of gay-ambassadors together, it could be stated that space should not be seen as a neutral backdrop against which gay-ambassadors act. Both the materiality and the meanings of space play a role in influencing the position of LGBTs. The other way around, influencing these aspects of space to make these more appropriate for LGBTs could be seen as the main task of the gay-ambassadors. Translating this to the specific LGBT-issues being at stake, it could be stated that gay-ambassadors, by acting as visible key individuals, could help to improve the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs.

2.1.4 Citizenship at the formal and the symbolic level

These ideas about space-making could then be coupled to ideas about citizenship. The concept of citizenship has already been noted in the discussion about the role of the gay-ambassadors in the light of a changing society. Here, more in-depth attention will be paid to this concept. Plummer (in Hubbard, 2001) defines citizenship as "(...) the political and social recognition that is granted to those whose behaviour accords with the moral values underpinning the construction of the nation-state" (p. 53). Thus, citizenship is more than a technical or judicial notion, as it is also about being recognized and respected within a community. It is about belonging, inclusion, and feeling included and accepted (Freely translated from Dutch; Claes, 2013, pp. 12-13). This more symbolic meaning of citizenship is also noticed by Valentine (2003), who uses the distinction of Epstein et al. between formal and symbolic citizenship to discuss the position of LGBTs. Formal citizenship includes, among other rights, for example the right to marry (p. 409). Symbolic citizenship focuses on "(...) whether one is considered to be a full member of the nation state" (Epstein et al., in Valentine, 2003, p. 410). Valentine (2003) states that "[j]ust as lesbians and gay men are excluded from formal citizenship, so too they are (...) excluded from symbolic membership of the nation in a number of ways" (p. 410). As has already become clear, in the Netherlands, by allowing same-sex marriage, in 2001 at least partial formal citizenship has been achieved for LGBT people, although there are still many steps to be taken, especially for transgenders. This is also noted by Valentine: "[t]he question of formal and symbolic citizenship is even more complex for those who define themselves outside the heterosexual/homosexual and male/female binaries", such as transgenders (p. 410-411). Gilbert and Dikeç (2008), based on Clarke and Gaile (1998), make clear how the formal and symbolic notions of citizenship are related:

[f]or the nation-state, the challenge is not only to ensure official [formal] citizenship provisions but to facilitate the equal practice of citizenship rights of its members, since the provision of citizenship rights does not necessarily mean that each member will equally join the fruits of these rights. (p. 253)

Broader ideas about formal and symbolic citizenship can, as the reference to Valentine (2003) has already shown, be related to the notion of sexual citizenship. Bell and Binnie (2006) see this as "(...) making sexuality part of citizenship, (...) [thus] using the idea of citizenship as a space for thinking about sexual identities, desires and practices" (p. 869). Claes (2013) defines sexual citizenship as "(...) the possibility to fully and with recognition of and respect for (non- or otherwise-heteronormative) sexual orientation, identity or sexual repertoires that one finds important establish

the own private and public life” (Translated from Dutch; p. 13). These ideas can be narrowed down to LG(BT)-sexuality. Cooper notes that

[w]hile sexual citizenship can be read in many ways, to the extent we think of it as a project of empowerment, anti-discriminatory measures for lesbians and gay men seem central to the programme aimed at giving non-heterosexual people rights and civic membership. (Pp. 921-922)

This, then, can be linked back to the earlier presented definition of and ideas about the social acceptance of LGBTs. This definition actually pleads for some kind of side-by-side citizenship, in which formal citizenship goes hand in hand with symbolic citizenship, thus connecting ‘what the law says’ to ‘norms and values’.

2.1.5 Combining space and citizenship: Lefebvre’s right to the city and right to difference

Sexual citizenship can be, and is by different authors, discussed in spatial terms. For example, Bell and Binnie (2006) state that

(...) debates about sexual citizenship were – and also continue to be – marked by questions of geography. From the mapping of the differential legal status of sexual minorities onwards, debates about sexual citizenship have also been debates about space. Key issues have included the ways in which private space and public space get defined around sexual acts, national differences in sexual citizenship, the ways in which sexual citizenship works at different spatial scales, global flows of ideas about sexual citizenship, and the different discursive and material sites from which right claims might be articulated. (p. 869)

Uitermark, Rossi and Van Houtum (2005) state that “(...) while the nation-state obviously remains important, a number of authors [e.g. Amin and Thrift, Isin and Purcel] have (...) suggested that the city is becoming increasingly salient as a site for generating, managing, negotiating and contesting cultural and political identities” (p. 622). This is also the case here, as LGBT-policy making in the Netherlands increasingly takes place at the local level. Thus, the spatial scale at which sexual citizenship works is of importance here. Furthermore, Bell and Binnie’s statement about the different sites for claiming rights for, for example, LGBTs, fits the way in which the role of gay-ambassadors has been researched here, as focus has been put on how they try to create space for LGBTs.

Here, a link can be established between the notion of citizenship and the right to the city-idea of Lefebvre that has already been mentioned in subparagraph 2.1.3. This concept was already discussed by Lefebvre in his book *Right to the City* back in 1968 (Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008, p. 252), but it is still relevant today. It is a multi-layered and extensively described and interpreted concept. Here, parts of the interpretation of Gilbert and Dikeç will be presented to elaborate a specific use of the concept and clarify its usefulness for further conceptualizing the theoretical role of gay-ambassadors. Although Gilbert and Dikeç discuss the notions of citizenship and the right to the city in relation to debates about immigration, their ideas also fit to the discussion about LGBT-emancipation and the deployment of gay-ambassadors more specifically. They underline the idea of Uitermark, Rossi and Van Houtum that, more and more, the level “(...) of the urban [is recognized] as a new spatial level where the practice or performance of citizenship unfolds through local affiliations, in contradistinction to a notion of citizenship conceived merely at an abstract level and national scale”

(p. 254). Here, a connection between citizenship and the importance of a specific spatial level of 'operation' comes to the fore again. This, then, links to the statement of Bell and Binnie (2006) that the ways in which sexual citizenship works at different spatial scales has been one of the key issues in geographical debates about sexual citizenship.

According to Gilbert and Dikeç (2008), "[f]or Lefebvre, the right to the city represents the right to participate in society through everyday practices (e.g. work, housing, education, leisure)" (p. 259). This definition touches on the main domains and discussions that can be related to LGBT-emancipation in the Netherlands nowadays (see paragraph 1.2.2). It is also a notion which is deemed to be of geographical importance. Hancock (2011) states:

(...) we, as geographers who care for justice, are interested in the issue of sexual preferences (...) [because] we are more than other social scientists concerned by the claim formulated by LGBT activists for a "place", a "visibility", a "right to the city", that are not purely metaphorical: for them, this refers to the possibility of living without having to hide an aspect of their identities and practices, of being recognized as legitimate in public space, without being threatened with violence.

Although Hancock talks about LGBT activists, this statement is also applicable to the role gay-ambassadors could have in claiming and influencing (the materiality and meanings of) space for LGBTs. Related to his idea about the right to the city, Lefebvre came up with the notion of the right to difference, which he defines as "(...) the right not to be classified forcibly into categories which have been determined by the necessarily homogenizing powers" (in Gilbert and Dikeç, 2008, p. 259). In paragraph 2.2 it will become clear that different authors see this right to difference as something that remains difficult to reach nowadays.

Lefebvre discusses a new interpretation of citizenship in the light of a changing societal context in relation to his 'basic' definitions of the right to the city and the right to difference (Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008). In short, this interpretation more or less resembles the way in which the notions of formal and symbolic citizenship have been discussed in the previous subparagraph:

Lefebvre's new citizenship rights evidently exceed an understanding of citizenship as the nationally defined bundle of rights (e.g. voting) and obligations (e.g. paying taxes). For Lefebvre, there is a series of additional rights crucial to fully participating in society. Such rights include the right to information, to express ideas, to culture, to identity in difference (and equality), to self-management. (p. 261)

Placing the right of the city in the light of problems that can be identified in relation to a dominant focus being put on formal rights of citizenship ("the nationally defined bundle of rights and obligations"), Gilbert and Dikeç conclude that "[t]here obviously is a need to complement formal rights of citizenship with an ethics cultivated by living together and sharing space. The right to the city may be seen in this perspective, and recognized as a new social ethics" (p. 261). Thus, also here, it could be stated that some kind of side-by-side citizenship in which both formal and symbolic aspects are included is plead for.

Relating this to the appointment of gay-ambassadors, it can, also building on the line of argumentation that has been presented in the previous subparagraphs, be stated that the ambassadors are supposed to try to influence the materiality and meanings of space in their

municipality by being visible as LGBT, thus striving for visibility and social acceptance of LGBTs. This, then, could be translated to even broader terms, by arguing that, in the end, the gay-ambassadors should contribute to reaching full citizenship, which comprises both a formal and a symbolic part, meaning that they are actually striving for the right to the city and the right to difference for LGBTs.

2.1.6 Visualizing the relations

In this paragraph, different theoretical lines of thought have been sketched which will be confronted with the empirical investigation of the role of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities in chapter 5. In figure 1, a visualization is shown of central aspects that have been discussed so far. An attempt has been made to visualize the process gay-ambassadors should follow in theory in order to reach visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. Furthermore, a next 'overarching' step, by arguing how increasing visibility and acceptance could be expressed in terms of influencing the materiality and meanings of space and striving for (symbolic) citizenship, the right to the city and the right to difference, has been added. Finally, the positions of national LGBT-emancipation ideas, local policy interventions and LGBT-organizations, as have been discussed in the project framework, have been added. Relationships have been presented between national LGBT-emancipation ideas, the influence of *COC Nederland* and other LGBT-organizations and the implementation of local LGBT-emancipation policy. This is depicted in the figure using two-directional arrows. The dotted line is added to show the, diffuse, distinction between the ideas that have been discussed in the project framework (upper part of the figure) and the ideas that have been discussed in this chapter so far. The one-directional arrows between the different theoretical concepts do not necessarily show causal relations, but these stress the order in which the concepts have been discussed. In this way, the structure of paragraph 2.1 is illustrated.

This visualization shows how, progressively, the construction of the theoretical framework has yielded a multiple perspective, which is rooted in geography, but which also contains aspects that are derived from other fields. All these components are useful in itself, but applying these separately would not lead to such an including picture as structurally combining these. For example, only focusing on ideas that say something about the role of the gay-ambassadors would not be sufficient. Thus, referring to the line of argumentation in the theoretical embedding and relevance (subparagraph 1.3.2.), combining different (geographical) concepts and perspectives can indeed be seen as a new way to approach the LGBT-issue.

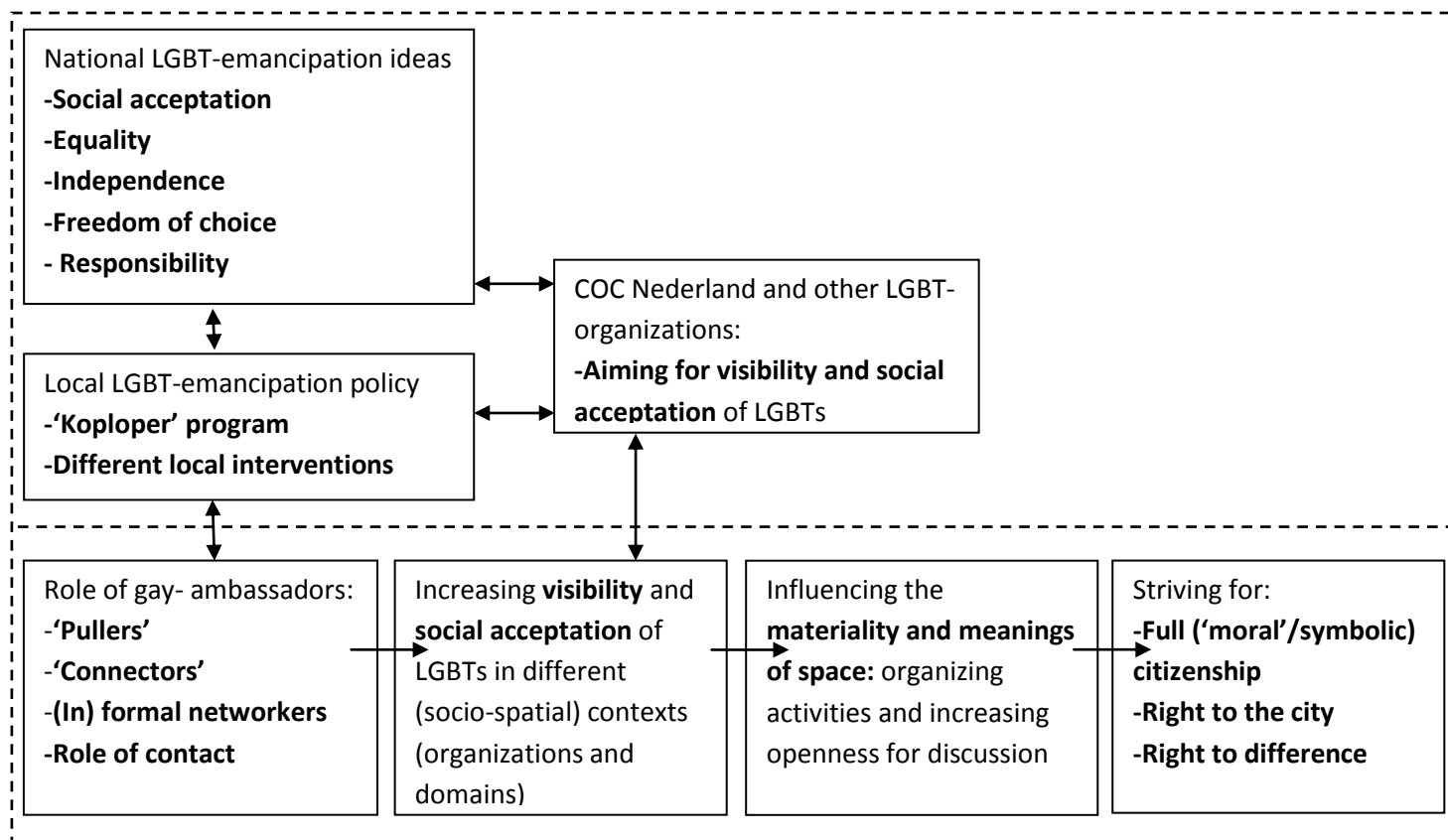


Figure 1 Visualization of the alleged relationship between different organizations, policy ideas and concepts

2.2 Further contextualizing and criticizing (Dutch) LGBT-policy

In the previous paragraph, the contribution of gay-ambassadors has been theorized with the help of different notions. Here, it will be shown how the appointment of gay-ambassadors in the Netherlands could be further contextualized and criticized, as it is good to keep in mind that there could be different reasons to not directly be in favor of the ways Dutch LGBT-policy and its (local) interventions work out. Of course, within the framework of this master thesis research, it has not been possible to pay attention to all possible discussions about LGBT-emancipation and -policy. Two prominent lines of debate that emerged during the literature study will be highlighted. First, in subparagraph 2.2.1, a broad discussion about hetero- and homonormativity will be paid attention to. Specific attention will be paid to ideas about these notions that have been developed in relation to the Dutch context. Second, in subparagraph 2.2.2, a narrower discussion about the negative role that Dutch LGBT-policy could have for different groups in society will be pointed at.

2.2.1 The role of hetero- and homonormativity

A broad line of critique can be related to the alleged heteronormativity of citizenship and space and the influence of homonormativity among LGBTs that have been identified by different authors. First, the notion of heteronormativity is of importance. Hubbard (2001) summarizes very well how the 'main' geographical research on sexualities during the 1990s sees "(...) space [as] sexed in a variety of complex ways" and at the same time being very 'heteronormative':

While such research has noted that there may be significant variations in the way that sex is represented, perceived and understood in different national contexts, collectively it has suggested that the organization of space in western societies serves to 'naturalize' heterosexuality. (p. 54)

Thus, both variation of context and the existence of certain 'heteronormative' structures in space and society should be taken into account when researching the position of LGBTs: space is not neutral. Robinson (2012) uses the definition of Valocchi to clarify what is meant by heteronormativity. He defines this as "(...) the set of norms that make heterosexuality seem natural or right and that organize homosexuality as its binary opposite" (p. 329). This idea can be related to the already presented idea of Stella (2012) about visibility as a way to resist heterosexual social norms, which can thus be summarized as heteronormativity (see subparagraph 2.1.3). Hekma and Duyvendak (2011) state that heteronormative structures are present in the Dutch context. Basing partly on a SCP-research of Keuzenkamp (2010), that has already been referred to in subparagraph 1.2.1, they state that

(...) while the Netherlands may seem exemplary in its acceptance of homosexuality, this applies more to its laws than to daily life. The work necessary to break through the heteronormativity remains enormous and most straight citizens see no need for such changes. (p. 628)

Referring back to subparagraph 2.1.6, creating space for LGBTs in the form of aiming for visibility and social acceptance, striving for the right to the city and the right to difference, then, could be seen as a way of aiming for breaking through heteronormative structures.

Additionally, the notion of homonormativity is thought to be important by different authors. Robinson (2012) pays attention to this concept, stating that it "(...) refers to the ways that gays and lesbians reinforce heteronormative institutions and norms (e.g. marriage, monogamy, gender conformity, etc.) when they argue that they are just like heterosexuals, with the exception of same-sex sexual object choice" (Duggan, in Robinson, 2012, p. 329). Hekma and Duyvendak have also paid attention to the concept of homonormativity. They state that

[t]he heteronormative discourse is adopted by gays and lesbians who are often eager to act 'normally' by shunning unmasculine (for men), unfeminine (for women) and explicit erotic behavior. Heteronormativity thus becomes homonormativity as well, compelling both gay men and lesbian women to behave like straight people, making them afraid of showing any 'gay' or 'lesbian' signs, and prompting them to criticize others for behaving too much like sissies or dykes. (p. 629)

Thus, both Robinson and Hekma and Duyvendak do not see 'resistance' or 'breaking through' but 'adjusting to' as the current dominant way space is created for LG(BT)s. This means that both hetero- and homonormativity could be seen as having a very assimilating effect on who is 'normal' and who is not. Robinson (2012) uses the concepts of heteronormativity and homonormativity to conclude that in the Netherlands, the heteronormativity of society and homonormativity within the LGBT 'community' have a negative impact on 'real' equality and acceptance (p. 334). In the next

subparagraph, ideas about hetero- and homonormativity will be linked to the alleged friction between pro-LGBT-policy and the position of other groups in Dutch society.

Here, some more attention will be paid to the alleged mechanisms of assimilation and normalization in the context of LGBT-emancipation. Hubbard (2001) states that “(...) national citizenships in the urban West have overwhelmingly been (and continue to be) based around socially-constructed visions of liberty and equality which (paradoxically) reinforce heterosexual identities” (p. 55). It could be stated that this is also the case in the Netherlands. LGBT-policy development and intervention in the Netherlands is more and more decentralized to the local level and the goals focus on the increasing importance of own possibilities and responsibility. This development fits within the growing importance in most western countries “(...) of new forms of social governance associated with neoliberalism (...) since the 1980s (...). Emphasis in neoliberal approaches is on individual freedom and rights, and the importance of self-surveillance and regulation over direct state control and intervention” (Richardson, 2004, p. 393). This statement has the same scope as the statements about a changing society that have been discussed in subparagraph 2.1.1. According to Richardson, the neoliberalist ideas could be related to the concept of normalization: “[c]entral to neoliberal modes of governance is normalization, the means by which norms of behaviour are identified, encouraged and (re)produced within populations” (Ibid.). This normalization could, thus, also be related to current LGBT-policy ideas in the Netherlands. Richardson identifies a

(...) changing policy discourse on homosexuality that can be regarded as mainstreaming (some) lesbians and gay men through extending certain rights of citizenship, which, although not necessarily ‘equal rights’, are grounded in notions of ‘equality’ and ‘normality’ defined in terms of sameness with heteronormative mainstream values and practices. (p. 407)

For example, Claes (2013) states that “[t]he possibility of inclusion and thus of ‘belonging’ –in other words, of sexual citizenship – has a cost in many cases: that of responsabilization. In most cases this means a disciplining to the model of heteronormativity, sometimes even transformed to homonormativity” (Freely translated from Dutch; p. 14), thus meaning that a certain part of the ‘group’ of LGBTs sees heteronormative norms, such as marriage, also as the norms for LGBT people. Claes argues that sexual citizenship functions as a normative and evaluative criterion in this way (p. 15). Mepschen, Duyvendak and Tonkens (2010) also see influences of hetero- and homonormativity as indicative for a process of ‘normalization’ in the Dutch context. They argue that

(...) Dutch gay identity and politics have undergone a far-reaching process of ‘normalization’
(...) The Dutch gay community has been deeply affected by the emergence of what Lisa Duggan refers to as a ‘new homonormativity’ (2002): articulations of lesbian and gay identity that no longer threaten but replicate and underscore heteronormative assumptions and structures. (p. 971)

Although it is not focusing on the Dutch context, an example of Lewis (2012) could be seen as illustrative for the way in which heteronormativity can affect certain parts of the LGBT- group. Lewis has looked at the case of gay men in ‘government town’ Ottawa, Canada, and has investigated the role of ‘governmentality’ for the position of these men. He defines governmentality as “(...) disciplinary power and regulatory mechanisms” (p. 292). He argues that “(...) the government town is a powerful attractor for gay men in terms of economic opportunity and official prescriptions of non-

discrimination and acceptance, but is also a site where gay men and gay communities are regulated into certain modes of conduct" (p. 291). He comes to the conclusion that on the one hand, the development of governmentality in Ottawa has led to a non-discriminatory and acceptant environment for gay men to live in, while on the other hand it "(...) created a city in which the gay community remains less visible and in many ways closeted compared with those in Canada's other large cities" (p. 306). Thus, in this case, it has been argued that power and regulations which aimed to increase the non-discrimination and acceptance of gay men has led to the opposite result of the invisibility of the gayness of these men. This, then, could be compared to the Dutch context, wherein certain disciplinary powers and regulatory mechanisms are also seen as playing a role in 'normalization' of LGBT people, which could also be seen as a way of making LGBT people invisible.

Based on Valentine (2003), the alleged tendency of normalization that is 'caused' by heteronormativity and homonormativity could be opposed to so-called queer politics:

In contrast to the sexual politics of equality practiced by those who want to achieve full citizenship rights for lesbians and gay men within the existing social and political framework, queer represents a more radical form of sexual politics. Whereas equal-rights activists stress the sameness of lesbian and gay men to heterosexuals, queer activists highlight the differences. Whereas equal-rights activists seek assimilation or incorporation into the center, queer activists aim to disrupt, destabilize, and subvert the mainstream. (p. 416).

Thus, Valentine sketches a distinction between different 'kinds' of LGBT people, namely people who are seeking assimilation or incorporation into the center versus people who do not want to 'adapt' to the mainstream.

Based on the previous line of argumentation, it could be argued that LGBT-rights (in the Netherlands) seem to have been developed against a background of heteronormativity, by focusing very much on the importance of acceptance and having the same legal rights. It could be said that the heteronormative aspects of Dutch society, and other societies, are dominantly perpetuated, for example by tendencies of homonormativity, instead of discussed. This, then, could lead to the invisibility of a part of the 'group' of LGBTs and could be disadvantageous for 'queer' LGBTs.

2.2.2 Dutch LGBT-policy vs. 'other groups'?

A couple of authors has paid more focused attention to alleged drawbacks of Dutch LGBT-policy that strongly focuses on visibility, acceptance and emancipation. For example, Hekma and Duyvendak (2011) link such policy to a growing aversion to the previously popular notion of 'multiculturalism' in the Netherlands. In light of a growing attention being paid to violence against and discrimination of LGBT people by the media and a strengthening debate about the 'failure' of multiculturalism and the, for some unwished and growing influence of Islam, right-wing and populist politicians started to focus on the position of gay people as a way to argue against aspects of the Islam (pp. 625-626). Hekma and Duyvendak touch upon different events which, according to them and other authors (cf. Jivraj and De Jong, 2011; Mepschen, Duyvendak and Tonkens, 2010), have contributed to this strengthening debate. Successively, anti-gay statements of Imam El Moumni in 2001, the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11th 2001, the rise and murder of Pim Fortuyn in 2002, the murder of film maker Theo van Gogh in 2004, "(...) a series of homophobic attacks of Moroccan youth (...)" (Jivraj and De Jong, 2011, p. 148) and the influence of the right-wing politicians Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Rita Verdonk and Geert Wilders thereafter (Hekma and Duyvendak, 2011, p. 626) caused that the

'contradiction' between homosexuality and the Islam was magnified. This, then, being advantageous for many LGBTs, also meant that other people were potentially discriminated against: "(...) a discourse on gay and feminist rights is now being used to discriminate against Muslims" (Hekma and Duyvendak, 2011, p. 627). Mepschen, Duyvendak and Tonkens (2010) come to a similar conclusion: "[g]ay rights discourses have (...) offered a language for the critique of Islam and multiculturalism (...)" (p. 970).

In addition, Jivraj and De Jong (2011) argue that the focus of Dutch homo-emancipation policy on 'speakability' (or openness for discussion) has a negative effect for some, especially for people from certain ethnic minority 'groups'. They state that "(...) the 'speakability' imperative in the Dutch homo-emancipation policy reproduces a paradigmatic, 'homonormative' model of an 'out' and 'visible' queer sexuality that has also come to be embedded in an anti-immigrant and specifically anti-Muslim discourse in the Netherlands" (p. 143). Thus, here the term homonormativity is linked to a 'homo-positive' discourse which has negative implications for other groups in Dutch society. Thus, this interpretation of the concept of homonormativity is different from the interpretation in the previous subparagraph. Jivraj and De Jong refer to a research of Puar (2007) who has called this way of looking at homosexuality in the Netherlands 'homonationalism', which, according to Jivraj and De Jong, "(...) is apparent in the ways the Dutch nation is associated with sexual freedom whilst Muslims are viewed as oppressive and intolerant of (queer) sexualities" (p. 145).

However, these developments clearly are not so black and white as these are presented here, as these could also be seen as problematic for the way in which the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs should be fought for:

[the] (...) instrumentalization of gay rights puts progressives, anti-racists, and lesbian and gay activists in an impossible position: taking up the defence of lesbian and gay rights and public gayness comes to be associated with Islamophobia, while solidarity with Muslims against Islamophobia is represented, especially by the populist right, as trivializing or even supporting 'Muslim' homophobia. (Mepschen, Duyvendak & Tonkens, 2010, p. 965)

Related to this, Hekma and Duyvendak (2011) state that

[w]e therefore encourage strategies that explicitly repudiate all forms of Islamophobia but do not silence those who fight for the sexual citizenship rights of all, and therefore have to fight against those Muslim and Christian groups that reject homosexuality and sexual autonomy of women. (p. 627)

Based on these arguments, it could thus be stated that the developments in attitudes towards the Islam and, partly related to that, the developments in ideas about LGBT-emancipation from 2000 onwards could be seen as being detrimental for 'other groups' in society, mainly Muslim people, but have also created a difficult situation for people striving for LGBT-emancipation.

2.2.3 Positioning in the debate

In the previous subparagraphs, different lines of contextualization of and critique on (Dutch) LGBT-policy have been looked at. Most importantly, it is striking that there is clearly articulated critique on developments of LGBT-emancipation (policy) (in the Netherlands) that are seen as very positive by many people. First, different authors have argued that LGBT-policy adapts too much to the

heteronormativity of society, which might also lead to homonormativity, thus having an assimilating and 'mainstreaming' effect for LGBTs. It could be argued that it is indeed true that there are different 'heteronormative powers' in issue in Dutch society that could hinder LGBTs. Second, there are some scholars who discuss LGBT-policy as having a negative effect for other minority 'groups', mainly Muslim people, in Dutch society. However, the critique does not seem to be very constructive, as it does not seem to lead to very practical ideas about how the situation of a large 'group' of people could be improved in another way than is being done now.

So, although the critiques are well-taken, the choice has been made to initially look at the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities from a less critical viewpoint. Thus, the focus will first be on how these ambassadors contribute to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs and how this could have a positive influence on the position of this 'group' of people, instead of directly criticizing the goals of these ambassadors per se. However, of course critiques in relation to the practice of the gay-ambassadors will be taken into account, as these are important to come to a well-founded conclusion about the contribution of the gay-ambassadors and recommendations about the way(s) they should be deployed.

Chapter 3 Methodological framework: designing and conducting a case study

In the previous chapter, possibilities and constraints for the appointment and contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities specifically and Dutch LGBT-policy more generally have been talked about in both theoretical and contextualizing terms. In order to come to a connection between theory, context and this specific policy practice, empirical research on the appointment and contribution of the ambassadors is needed. In this chapter, first it will be explained that a qualitative case study research as a research strategy fits best to fulfill the empirical part of this research (paragraph 3.1). Second, in paragraph 3.2, attention will be paid to the research methods and materials that have been used to form a good basis for the description, analysis and interpretation of the cases. Finally, in paragraph 3.3, it will be explained how the empirical data have been analyzed and interpreted.

3.1 Research design and strategy

A research design of good quality is important for any scientific research. Without a good design, research lacks direction and consistency. Here, it will be shown why and how a multiple case study as a research design fits best to this specific research. In this paragraph, attention will be paid to the main characteristics of and requirements for qualitative research in general and case study research more specifically.

3.1.1 Choosing for a qualitative research design

Creswell (2007, pp. 37-39) identifies different characteristics of qualitative research. First, important data need to be collected in a natural setting, meaning that the researcher has to 'go out' to gather information "(...) in the field at the site where participants' experience the issue or problem under study. (...) This up close information gathered by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their context is a major characteristic of qualitative research" (p. 37). Second, the researcher uses himself/herself as the most important instrument for research, using different tools, such as interview guides, to collect data. Third, qualitative research strategies mainly combine the gathering of different sources of data, such as documents, observations and interviews, to gain a multi-informed insight in the topic of research. Fourth, qualitative researchers make use of an inductive way of data analysis, meaning that they work back and forth between the topic of research and data collection. Fifth, the meaning of the issue under study should be derived from the participants and not from the researcher, meaning that "(...) the researcher keeps a focus on learning the meaning that participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researchers bring to the research or writes from the literature" (p. 39). Sixth, a qualitative research has an emergent character, which means that the research aspects might change during conducting the research. Seventh, qualitative research has an interpretative character, meaning that the researcher, participants and readers of the research jointly come to an interpretation which is based on the different backgrounds, histories, contexts and understandings of these research 'parties'. Eighth, a qualitative research often uses a specific theoretical, social, political and/or historical lens that gives a certain direction to the research. Finally, qualitative researchers have as their main goal "(...) to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under study" (p. 39), based on multiple

perspectives, looking at different involved factors and aiming at reaching an understanding of the larger picture.

This summary of characteristics of qualitative research clearly applies to the type of research that has been carried out. First, the researcher 'went out' to gather information, mainly by conducting interviews with important actors who are involved in the deployment of gay-ambassadors and the gay-ambassadors themselves. The internship at Movisie helped to come closer to the topic of research and helped to 'go out' for conducting interviews, because Movisie maintains useful contacts with different actors that are involved in the deployment of gay-ambassadors. Furthermore, different kinds of data, namely documents, interviews and observations, have been gathered. Next to that, this research clearly is characterized by an inductive way of data analysis, an emergent design and an interpretative way of doing, as new information and insights about theoretical and practical aspects of the research came up during the internship that influenced the initial ideas. For example, it was decided during the research process that it would be good to also pay attention to the case of Schiedam. Furthermore, choices have been made about who should (not) be approached for an interview. Clearly, different theoretical, social, political and historical contexts have been taken into account while writing this research report. Finally, qualitative research fits the topic of research, because it has as its purpose to gain a clear picture of the contribution of gay-ambassadors. In order to reach this, multiple perspectives of the involved alderwoman in Rotterdam, policy makers in the different case municipalities, the (former) ambassadors themselves and organizations that are involved in their deployment have been taken into account.

3.1.2 Case study research as a strategy

Qualitative research can be conducted in several ways. Creswell (2007) pays thorough attention to choosing a specific qualitative research design. He compares five designs, namely narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study research. For each of these designs, he extensively describes and explains the main characteristics. Based on a comparison of the focuses of these approaches (see pp. 78-80 for an overview), it can be stated that a case study is the most appropriate research design. According to Creswell, a case study has "[d]eveloping an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases as its main focus" (p. 78). Flick (2009) even takes this a step further by stating that "[t]he aim of case studies is the precise description or reconstruction of a case" (p. 134). Clearly, this is not an easy and straightforward process: "(...) [the] main problem (...) will be to identify a case that would be significant for (...) [the] research question and to clarify what else belongs to the case and what methodological approaches its reconstruction requires" (Ibid.). Thus, a clear demarcation of the case(s) and a clarification of the methodology are important for a good case study research. Furthermore, a case also serves as an example on the basis of which a broader problem is looked at, so it is also important to "(...) select the case[s] under study in a way that permits more general conclusions to be drawn from analyzing it" (Ibid.).

Importantly, this research does not aim for a precise description or reconstruction of the cases. However, this research clearly aims to come to an in-depth description and analysis based on a multi-site case study design. Attention will be paid to the most important aspects of multiple cases in relation to the earlier presented practical and theoretical ideas about enhancing the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. The cases serve to illustrate a broader issue, because the analysis and interpretation of the cases can offer ideas for the possible appointment of gay-ambassadors in other (Dutch) municipalities than the case municipalities.

The demarcation of the cases has been considered carefully. Different people and organizations can be seen as part of these cases. On the basis of the knowledge that was gained during the preparation process of the research and during the empirical phase, it was decided to get in touch with policy makers/advisors from the municipalities who are responsible for developing and monitoring the appointment and contribution of the gay-ambassadors, with organizations involved in the contribution of the ambassadors, with the (former) ambassadors themselves and with the responsible alderwoman in Rotterdam. In appendix A, one can find an overview of the interviewees, their position, and the interview dates. In chapter 4, the research considerations will be discussed per case.

It was decided to limit the research to the 'organizing side' of the ambassadorship. This for example means that organizations that have been approached by the ambassadors for conversations and activities concerning LGBT-issues, such as schools and retirement homes, have not been approached to give their opinion on the contribution of the ambassadors. This was mainly due to time limits, as it turned out to be very time consuming to find out who should be contacted and how. Approaching all the contacts of the ambassadors would also mean that many more interviews should have been conducted. This would not have been feasible either.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the interviewees were interviewed in October and November 2013, except for the responsible alderwomen in Rotterdam, who was interviewed on January 8th, 2014. Basically, this means that only developments that took place before the interviews were held, have been taken into account and that very recent developments might not have been paid attention to. However, the involved policy advisors in Alkmaar and Schiedam were asked for additional information by e-mail, because the interviews, documents and observations did not provide sufficient clarity about parts of the cases.

3.1.3 Requirements for case study research

Good qualitative research should meet different quality criteria. Yin (2009), who has written an extensive handbook about conducting case study research, identifies four different criteria that a good research design should meet. For example, Creswell (2007) and Flick (2009) have discussed quite similar criteria. Here, the terminology of Yin will be used, as he has formulated the criteria specifically in relation to case study research.

First, Yin (2009) points at the importance of construct validity. This means that the concepts that are used in the study should be thoroughly defined and operationalized (p. 40). In the first chapters of this report, different ideas and concepts have been extensively discussed and elaborated in relation to the research topic. In figure 1 (see page 24), the relationships between the different concepts have been shown in order to further position the different concepts.

Second, internal validity is important for an explanatory case study. This is, according to Yin (2009) "(...) seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships" (p. 40). The goal of this research is to gain knowledge about the contribution of gay-ambassadors. This also means that it is intended to identify possible causes for their (lack of) contribution. However, it has not been totally possible to identify all causes, as the cases are very complex and, as has been said in the project framework, it has not been possible to do ex ante and ex post research. Furthermore, as has been stated in the previous subparagraph, only the 'organizing side' of the ambassadorship has been paid attention to. Therefore, this case study research also has a very descriptive and explanatory character, meaning

that the 'causal logic' cannot totally be followed (p. 43). This also means that the choice has been made to talk about the *contribution* of the gay-ambassadors instead of about their *effectiveness*.

Third, external validity is important. This "(...) deals with the problem of knowing whether a study's findings are generalizable beyond the immediate case study" (Yin, 2009, p. 43). It is important to keep in mind that, in the case of qualitative research, when talking about the criterion of generalization, analytic generalization is meant. This means that "(...) the investigator is striving to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory" (p. 43). During the research process, the idea was to generalize the knowledge about the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam to broader ideas about the contribution of gay-ambassadors.

Finally, reliability is an important requirement for good qualitative research. This means that "(...) the operations of a study – such as the data collection procedures – can be repeated, with the same results" (Yin, 2009, p. 40). Of course, qualitative research can never be totally replicated, but there certainly are possibilities to enhance the replicability. "The general way of approaching the reliability problem is to make as many steps as operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone were always looking over your shoulder" (p. 45). Both Yin (p. 119-120) and Creswell (2007, pp. 142-143) emphasize the importance of data storing, in the form of a database, to ensure the reliability of the research. During the research process, a research database was kept, meaning that the data gained were archived. This database consists of audiotapes, interview transcripts, notes and documents and is available after consultation of the researcher.

3.2 Research methods and materials

Clearly, a case study is not a research method but a research design. This design has to be 'filled' with different sources of data collection and different methods to deal with these different forms of data. Creswell (2007) states that "(...) case study data collection involves a wide array of procedures as the researcher builds an in-depth picture of the case" (p. 132). Yin (2009) pays attention to the collection of different forms of case study evidence. He mentions documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations and physical artifacts as the six most commonly used sources in doing case study research (p. 101). However, he also states that the use of these sources is not fixed and that different combinations and additions could be useful in different studies (Ibid.).

Although it is possible to base a case study research in one method of data collection, this is not the best way to conduct research. "On the contrary, a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence" (Yin, 2009, pp. 114-115). The use of different kinds of data and methods is called triangulation (Patton, in Yin, 2009, p. 116; Denzin, in Flick, 2009, p. 405), which is important because it is "(...) used as a strategy for improving the quality of qualitative research by extending the approach to the issue under study" (Flick, 2009, p. 405).

Here, the ways of data collection which have been used in this case study research will be highlighted. First, documents turned out to be a useful source to get to know more about the cases and their contexts. For example, policy documents, newspaper articles and articles from the Internet have been used. According to Yin (2009), "[f]or case studies, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 103). They are both useful to consult before starting field work and to enlarge and confirm the knowledge gained during the field work (Ibid.). Yin states that it is important to keep in mind that documents have been written with a

certain goal, which means that it is important “(...) to be correctly critical in interpreting the contents of such evidence” (p. 105).

Furthermore, interviewing has formed an important part of the data-collection. Depending on who the interviewees were and what information they had to provide, different interview strategies were used. In-depth interviews, semi-standardized interviews and expert interviews, which are a more specific variant of semi-standardized interviews (Flick, 2009, p. 165), turned out to be most useful forms of interviewing in this respect. The distinction between the different forms of interviews is not so strict and different features may be used in combination. In-depth interviews are useful to, as the name implies, gather in-depth information about the topic of research. The possible range of questions is very broad (Yin, 2009, p. 107). Some interviewees can figure as key-informants, meaning that they “(...) provide the case study investigator with insights into a matter and also can initiate access to corroboratory or contrary sources of evidence” (Ibid.). In this research, the gay-ambassadors, but also people from the municipalities who are responsible for the local LGBT-policy interventions and people of Movisie figured as such key-informants. Shaping the interviews in a semi-standardized way helped to both leave certain directions open and to give shape to the structure of the interview by developing an interview guide in which different kinds of questions are listed. According to Flick (2009), interviewing an expert, who is someone who can, very broadly, be seen as a person who knows very much about the topic of research, might mean that a more focused interview guide is needed, because of possible time pressure and the need for a narrow focus on the expertise of the interviewee (p. 167). The different interviewees could all be seen as experts in a certain kind of way, but it was decided to adapt the interview guide to the possibilities and the agreements made, instead of beforehand ‘categorizing’ interviewees as expert. In practice, this meant that, more or less, the same interview guide was used for every interview.

Taking these considerations into account, an e-mail to potential interviewees (see appendix B) and different interview guides (the (basic) topic lists are presented in appendix C) were developed. A basic textbook about interviewing written by Baarda, De Goede and Van der Meer-Middelburg (2007) turned out to be very useful to learn more about different steps that should be taken into account while preparing for the interviews, conducting the interviews and processing these. First, they take important aspects of reliability and validity into account that are specifically related to conducting interviews. Their ideas about reliability are closely related to the aforementioned ideas of Creswell (2007) and Yin (2009). Aspects of the specific focus on the reliability of interviews that turned out to be useful to keep in mind during this research, are the use of recording equipment, to be able to verify what has happened during the interview, and making explicit own opinions beforehand, in order to make sure that one is aware of the way own opinions could influence the content of the interviews (Baarda, De Goede and Van der Meer-Middelburg, 2007, p. 22). The ideas of Baarda, De Goede and Van der Meer-Middelburg about validity also partly focus on the same aspects as the ideas of Creswell and Yin. However, they add that it could be helpful to interview people who look from different perspectives at the topic of research in order to enhance the validity of the content of the interviews (p. 23). In case of this research, people with different functions were interviewed in order to cover different perspectives, although these are only perspectives that belong to the ‘organizing side’ of the ambassadorship.

Second, and most importantly, the book of Baarda, De Goede and Van der Meer-Middelburg (2007) helped to develop the different interview guides step by step. In case of partly-structured interviews, they recommend the use of a so-called topic list, which should be based on the central

question of the research (p. 26). In this case, the 'fieldwork question' (research question 3) was taken as a starting point:

How do the gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam and Alkmaar contribute to the acceptance and the visibility of LGBT people?

However, the other research questions have, naturally, also been taken into account while developing the topic lists. Furthermore, the topic lists are based on all the information that was gathered about the topic of research (p. 27). Based on this information, slightly different interview guides were developed in order to make these fit to the specific actors, respectively the gay-ambassadors, the involved alderwoman in Rotterdam, involved policy advisors and involved organizations. Different ideas and advices of Baarda, De Goede and Van der Meer-Middelburg (2007) about formulating an introducing the topic(s), the formulation of (opening) questions, the sequence of the topics and sub topics, and conducting the interview were taken into account. The topic lists were tested by submitting these to the thesis supervisors at Movisie and at university and to a fellow student. With the latter, a pilot interview was conducted, which was recorded and listened to in order to become aware of points of attention. Furthermore, when it turned out to be necessary, the topic lists were, based on the experiences with other interviews, adjusted to the specific role of the interviewed actor and/or to the specific context of the case he/she was interviewed about.

Third, during the internship at Movisie, attending several meetings (team meetings, meetings with (local) performers of LGBT-policies and a lecture, organized by the George Mosse Foundation (Stichting George Mosse Fonds) for the promotion of LGBT-studies, about these policies by Jet Bussemaker, the Dutch minister of Education, Culture and Science) helped to form a better understanding of the broader (policy) field.

Finally, observation turned out to be a useful method of data collection as this helped to assess what the best steps to be taken during the empirical phase of the interview would be. The observations mostly were of informal and unsystematic nature, taking place during the activities that were undertaken or attended, such as interviews and meetings (Yin, 2009, p. 109; Flick, 2009, p. 222). These observations helped to gain a further understanding of important contexts, relationships and nuances. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to, for example, join the activities and meetings of the ambassadors.

3.3 Analysis and interpretation of the collected data

3.3.1 Strategies for analysis

After doing empirical research, a phase of analysis and interpretation is needed to organize and interpret the collected data. Yin (2009) has devoted a chapter of his book on case study research to different ways and the importance of good data-analysis. He recommends to start with (a) clear analysis strateg(y)(ies) (pp. 129-130). He discusses four general analysis strategies: relying on theoretical propositions, developing a case description, using both qualitative and quantitative data and examining rival explanations (pp. 130-135). The third option, combining qualitative and quantitative data, is excluded in case of this research because the main topics of this research are hardly quantifiable.

First, it is very useful to (partly) rely on the theoretical ideas that are presented in the theoretical framework: "[c]learly, the proposition[s] help (...) to focus attention on certain data and

to ignore other data. (...) The proposition[s] help (...) to organize the entire case study and to define alternative explanations to be examined” (Yin, 2009, pp. 130-131). A good example of such a theoretical proposition that has helped to guide a part of the analysis and interpretation and to examine alternative explanations in this research, is the contact hypothesis. Furthermore, although Yin (2009) does not seem to advocate this primarily, developing a case description might be useful (and, according to Creswell (2007), even central) to come to a good analysis. Case description could be seen as an analysis strategy because, according to Yin (2009), it “(...) may help to identify the appropriate causal links to be analyzed (...)” (p. 131). This might help to get more grip on the complexity of the cases. This, then, forms a good basis for further analysis. Yin argues that this is mainly useful when there are no theoretical propositions formulated to rely on, but here it is assumed that the two strategies complement each other. Thus, for the analytical part of the thesis, both case description and more theoretically founded analyses and interpretations have been developed. Finally, also looking at rival explanations is useful, because “[i]nitial theoretical propositions (...) might have included rival hypotheses and (...) the contrasting perspectives of participant and stakeholders may produce rival descriptive frameworks” (Yin, 2009, p. 134). Thus, it was necessary to be aware of this while analyzing and interpreting the data and writing the research report.

Concluding the discussion about different strategies for analysis, Yin (2009) lists four principles for high-quality analysis, which are closely related to the analysis strategies discussed above. First, based on the analysis, it should become clear that all the evidence was attended to. This means that “(...) [the] analysis should show how it sought to use as much evidence as was available, and (...) [the] interpretations should account for all of this evidence and leave no loose ends” (p. 160). In this case, a selection was made based on an inventory of the available evidence and possible interviewees. An explanation of the choices at case level can be found in the case analyses. Second, major rival interpretations should be taken into account. Different questions could be asked: “[i]s there evidence to address this rival? If so, what are the results? If not, should the rival be restated as a loose end to be investigated in future studies?” (pp. 160-161). In the final chapters of this report, it will become clear how different viewpoints have been dealt with. Third, it is important to focus on the most important issues, as “[b]y avoiding a detour to a lesser issue, (...) [the] analysis will be less vulnerable to the possibility that the main issue was being avoided because of possibly negative findings” (p. 161). Finally, it is, according to Yin, of importance to use the own “(...) prior, expert knowledge (...)” (Ibid.) about the case study. “The strong preference here is (...) to demonstrate awareness of current thinking and discourse about the case study topic” (Ibid.). In case of this research, this knowledge has been demonstrated in the previous chapters.

Taking all these considerations into account, it has been decided to take the steps of data analysis and representation that Creswell (2007) has identified for case study research as a starting point. These steps resemble the different ideas that have been presented so far:

- Data managing: create and organize files for data;
- Reading, memoing: read through text, make margin notes, form initial codes;
- Describing: describe the case and its context;
- Classifying: use categorical aggregation to establish themes or patterns;
- Interpreting: use direct interpretation/ develop naturalistic generalizations;
- Representing/visualizing: present in-depth picture of the case (or cases) using narrative, tables and figures. (Pp. 156-157)

Categorical aggregation means, according to Creswell, that “(...) the researcher seeks a collection of instances from the data, hoping that issue relevant meanings will emerge” (p. 163). With direct interpretation, “(...) a process of pulling the data apart and putting them back together in more meaningful ways” is meant (Ibid.). Naturalistic generalizations are, as defined by Creswell, “(...) generalizations that people can learn from the case either for themselves or to apply to a population of cases” (Ibid.). Importantly, the different steps have been applied in an iterative way, meaning that the researcher went back and forth between the different steps of analysis. In this way, a further tightening of the case analysis and interpretation was created. In paragraph 4.1, the analysis process will be described in order to provide a better insight into the process that was gone through.

3.3.2 Reporting about the cases

In the following chapters, the results of the case study research will be presented. Yin (2009) has raised different ideas about structuring the report of case studies. Here, a fairly common structure has been chosen in which the cases will first be discussed separately (in chapter 4) and important aspects of these cases will be discussed in a cross-case way thereafter (in chapter 5). This structure will be explained further in the following chapters.

Next to choosing a structure, it is important to know whom the report is addressed to (p. 167). This research has both fellow academics and policy makers and practitioners as its target. As it turned out to be useful to approach these groups separately, it was decided to write different publications: first, this extensive report, which is written from a more theoretical perspective and which is primarily meant for academics, and second, an article (in Dutch) was published on the website of Movisie, which is focusing mainly on practice and which is primarily meant for policy makers and practitioners. The difference is also made clear by Yin: “(...) for *academic colleagues*, the relationship among the case study, its findings, and previous theory and research are likely to be most important (...). For *nonspecialists*, the descriptive elements in portraying some real-life situation, as well as the implications for action, are likely to be more important” (p. 167). Of course, this does not mean that implications for practice will not be paid attention to in this extensive report, as these are also very relevant here.

Importantly, different draft versions of this research report were submitted to the thesis supervisors at Movisie and at university for feedback. Next to that, parts of the report were peer-reviewed by a fellow student. To make sure that the interviewees would agree with the presented information that was derived from the interviews, the final version was sent to them and they were given the opportunity to comment on it before it became accessible for those interested.

Chapter 4 Case study: gay-ambassadors in different municipalities

In this chapter, attention will be paid to the deployment of gay-ambassadors in the case municipalities separately. First, the steps that were taken during the analysis process will be explained (in paragraph 4.1). Thereafter, the three cases in which the ambassadors have already been active will be discussed in paragraphs 4.2 (Rotterdam), 4.3 (Alkmaar) and 4.4 (Capelle aan den IJssel). In the next chapter, this discussion will be expanded with a cross-case analysis and interpretation in which case study information will be linked to aspects of the project framework and, most importantly, the theoretical framework. In paragraph 4.5, this will be explained further.

4.1 Explanation of the analysis and interpretation process

Different steps have been taken to analyze and interpret the data that were gathered during the research process. Those are loosely based on the earlier presented steps that have been identified by Creswell (2007) (see subparagraph 3.3.1). The transcripts of the conducted interviews have been taken as the main basis for analysis. In addition, different (policy) documents about the cases have been consulted, mainly to substantiate and verify the information that has been derived from the interviews. Because the documents mainly served as background information, these have not been analyzed as systematically as the main data sources.

The process of memoing and reading the transcripts was partly conducted with the help of ATLAS.ti (version 5.5), which is analysis software that can support a structured analysis process. This tool was mainly used for a first ‘summarizing round’ of coding, which helped to encourage further thinking about the cases and about the topics that should be highlighted. Furthermore, the codes were useful to make it easier to consult important parts of the texts again in later stages of the analysis process. The codes were created by the researcher in both an ‘in vivo’ and an ‘open’ coding way, respectively meaning that part of the codes was directly linked to words or phrases in the texts and another part was formulated by the researcher in close relation to parts of the texts. This turned out to be a fairly ‘loose’ process in which the research questions, the central concepts and ideas and the interview guides were constantly kept in mind. No list of codes was prepared in advance, but the transcripts were approached with a very open view. An example of this way of initial coding can be found in figure 2, in which a part of the interview with the involved policy advisor in Capelle aan den IJssel is shown. This shows that codes such as *aanjager* (booster), *netwerk* (network) and *visitekaartje* (business card) were coupled to the text in an ‘in vivo’ way to highlight the specific role of the ambassadors and that a code such as *voorbeeld Rotterdam* (example Rotterdam) was formulated in a ‘open’ way to highlight the connection between the different cases.

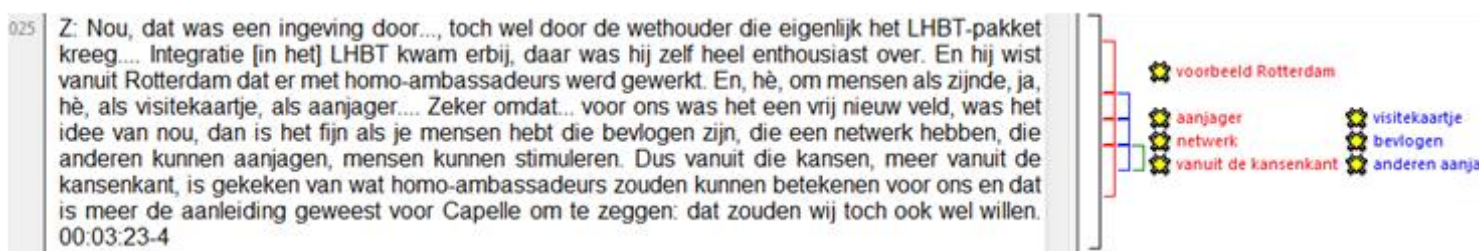


Figure 2 Example of the ‘summarizing way’ of coding in ATLAS.ti (in Dutch)

Next to this process of initial coding, files were created in which useful quotes and considerations were collected for each case. These files helped, in combination with the summarizing coding process, to order thoughts about the information and to discover similarities and differences between the different interviews and cases. Next to this, less structured files were created in which details and mental steps were written down in order to not forget those.

After this round of memoing and reading, the codes, memos and relevant quotes were consulted again. During this consultation, it was attempted to come to a categorical aggregation of different aspects of the data. This semi-structured way of analyzing helped to come to a structure and content for the case paragraphs and the cross-case chapter. First, three broad central topics were identified that will be discussed in the following subparagraphs for each case:

- Role and position of the ambassadors
- Focus and activities of the ambassadors
- Ideas about the contribution of the ambassadors

The ideas about the contribution of the ambassadors will be discussed in combination with the first two topics. The central topics have been discussed in a slightly different way for each case, depending on the emphasis that was put on different aspects of the ambassadorships by the interviewees. However, in all cases, the role and position of the ambassadors will be discussed on the basis of the most important characteristics of the ambassadorship, such as the reasons to appoint ambassadors, the assignments of the ambassadors and the ways they (should) act. The activities of the ambassadors will mainly be discussed per focus, in line with the fields of attention that have been highlighted in local Dutch LGBT-policy.

These broad topics have turned out to be important, because these could help to take the first step in answering the third and the fourth research question:

How do the gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam contribute to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people in the municipality?

and

What are the implications of the findings of this case study research for the possible appointment of gay-ambassadors in different municipalities in the Netherlands?

A first answer to these questions will be given in the concluding subparagraphs for each case. Mainly, by gaining a better insight into the role and position of the ambassadors and their goals and activities in more descriptive and observational terms first, the cases can be looked at in a comparative and interpretative way thereafter. How this will be done, will be explained in paragraph 4.5. This process will provide a further basis for answering the third and fourth research question.

While reading the following paragraphs on the cases, one should be aware of the fact that a selection of statements has been used to illustrate the broad lines of thought that have been identified based on the careful reading and coding of the interviews. Importantly, it was not the goal to fully reconstruct and describe the cases. In order to stay focused on answering the research questions, the choice has been made to not fully reconstruct all (process-oriented) developments and details.

It is also important to notice again that the appointment of gay-ambassadors in all case municipalities is part of a broader local and national LGBT-policy context. Where relevant, it has been attempted to pay attention to this broader context. However, it has not been possible to sketch the whole framework, because this would make the analysis too extensive. This, then, might mean that not all possibly relevant quotes from the interviews and other information sources have been used.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that all statements from the interviews have been freely translated from Dutch. This means that small changes have been made to enhance the readability of the quotes, without changing the meanings that have been expressed. Also, all interviews and relevant e-mail contacts have only been referred to by mentioning the names and functions of the interviewees in the text where necessary. The dates of the interviews and e-mail contacts can be found in appendix A.

4.2 Rotterdam: 'high-level approach' in different domains

4.2.1 Research considerations

Eleven people were interviewed on the gay-ambassadorship in Rotterdam, namely seven gay-ambassadors, the involved policy advisor, a former involved policy advisor, the involved alderwoman and the director of *RotterdamV* (previously: *Rotterdam Verkeert*), which is the knowledge centre for gay-emancipation in Rotterdam (www.rotterdamverkeert.nl).

The fact that the ambassadors have already been active for a couple of years turned out to have consequences for the demarcation of the case. During this period, both the function of the involved alderman and the involved policy advisor has been fulfilled by different people. It was not easy to find out who would have to be approached to get a clear picture of the case. After the first interview, which was conducted with the current policy advisor, it turned out that it would be good to also approach her predecessor, because she had only been in office for a couple of months. During the interview with the former involved policy advisor, it appeared that she did not know everything about the first period of the deployment of the gay-ambassadors, because she had not been involved back then either. In order to fill this gap, the involved alderwoman was approached and asked more focused questions about the initial period and the 'results' of this. The choice has not been made to approach all the former policy advisors and the former involved alderman, since this would be too time-consuming in relation to the expected extra information this would provide. Furthermore, two of the ambassadors stopped their involvement. One of them has not been approached, because it turned out to be sufficient to focus on the ambassadors who are still active. The other ambassador was already interviewed before he had quit, and where relevant, his ideas will be taken into account.

Although the limitation of this research to the 'organizing side' of the ambassadorship seems to be a clear demarcation, it was hard to reveal who/which organizations have been involved in the deployment of the gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam and in which way. The interviews did not provide complete clarity about this, because various interviewees suggested slightly different people and organizations. Therefore, it was decided to approach the actors of which it was most obvious that these are or were directly involved. For example, this means that the gay-interest organizations in Rotterdam, *COC Rotterdam* and *Apollo* (for youth), were not consulted. Furthermore, *RADAR*, the antidiscrimination bureau for the Rotterdam region, and other knowledge centres in Rotterdam that were mentioned by some interviewees were not approached.

4.2.2 Role and position of the ambassadors

The gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam have been appointed in 2010 in order to make different aspects of sexual diversity more negotiable and more visible in the city of Rotterdam, mainly at the level of boards and managements of different organizations. They were introduced during the yearly *Pink Breakfast* in the City Hall (e.g. Herman Meijer, gay-ambassador; Mark Harbers, gay-ambassador). Importantly, the ambassadors operate on the basis of a formal task which is mandated by the Board of Mayor and Alderman (Different interviews). They receive a volunteers fee, which used to be 1500 Euros a year (Sana el Fizazi, former policy advisor) and is 500 Euros a year now for each ambassador (Corrie Wolfs, policy advisor). Joke Ellenkamp (gay-ambassador) sees the appointment of ambassadors as “(...) a very simple way to make use of the potential and quality of citizens in the city (...)” as the municipality “(...) actually has a kind of free advisors (...)”.

- **Characteristics of the ambassadorship**

The appointment of ambassadors can be seen as a new instrument to take the municipal LGBT-policy a step further. Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) states that it could be seen as an addition to a ‘traditional subsidy policy’ in which a couple of organizations in Rotterdam receive funding for paying attention to LGBT-issues. This policy turned out to be insufficient in itself to reach everything the municipality wanted (Ibid.). Mark Harbers (gay-ambassador) sees the involvement of the ambassadors as a way to complement ‘standard emancipation policy’, which he summarizes as: “(...) there is pressure of the town council, nice goals are formulated, there is an emancipation plan and the Board [of Mayor and Aldermen] fixes this and thereafter the officer has to implement it”. Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) tells how the role of the ambassadors differs from this:

[t]he Board [of Mayor and Aldermen] thought it was necessary to have a function which was directly related to them and which made it possible to enter societal groups more easily (...). And it was also clear from the beginning that (...) [the ambassadors] should be gays or lesbians themselves. (...) [T]hey also had to be able to act with some authority, because otherwise it would not help. (...) It was about a small group of people that could open doors to allow access for the professional organisations, the COC, Rotterdam Verkeert, Apollo (...). These had to be able to enter with their programs and possibilities.

Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) tells that the former involved alderman Rik Grashoff, who came up with the idea to appoint gay-ambassadors, said: “(...) I want you to act as ambassadors of the municipality and to try to enter in all kinds of circles where the municipality cannot just enter”. The expectation that ambassadors could more easily enter different societal domains than officers of the municipality is shared by other interviewees (e.g. Sana el Fizazi, former policy advisor; Mark Harbers, gay-ambassador; Korrie Louwes, alderwoman). The alderwoman explains: “(...) because they are all people who have a specific societal position, they enter differently. (...) They are not (...) of the municipality, but they get there with the mandate of the municipality, so that gives them authority”. Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) explains how this role has multiple sides:

(...) there are sectors in society of which we know that homosexuality is a point for discussion [there] (...) and it is the purpose that (...) we just go there, that we assess [what is happening there]. We actually have a double role. At the one hand, we assess (...) for the alderwoman how it is in those sectors. We have discussions. [B]ut we also advise [those sectors] where necessary.

Although the ambassadors have been appointed by the municipality

(...) [they] are totally free in what they write down, what they think. [They are] also totally free in which questions they ask. So (...) they are not the implementers of the municipality of Rotterdam. (...) [B]ased on the expertise and the network they have in the city and the position they have, they do their job. Well, that is in the interplay between feeling (...) [the municipal board] and of course (...) going into the field to demand attention, because that, of course, is literally what an ambassador does. (...) [He is] [a] kind of diplomat between those worlds. (Korrie Louwes, alderwoman)

So, actually, the ambassadors in Rotterdam seem to have a threefold role of informing the municipal council about what is happening in different societal fields with regard to LGBT, creating openings for implementing organizations to enter these societal fields with their supply and informing these fields about ways to deal with sexual diversity.

Also other interviewees emphasize the importance of taking the appointment as ambassador very literally. For example, Kees Vrijdag (gay-ambassador) states:

(...) an ambassador is someone with a mission, who is sent by someone. And that message has to be clear and fixed, that has to be formalized. So you are not just going to run through the city at random, no, you get a mission and, with that, a certain status (...).

Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) makes clear what this means:

[w]e want an official appointment and we want a letter which proves this. And (...) a letter has to be sent to institutions that they can expect us. (...) If you talk about ambassadors, then you need a sending entity, because you are always ambassador on behalf of a higher authority. So it has to be clear that we come on behalf of the municipality. And it has to be clear what the goal is, so it is about creating openness for discussion about matters that have to do with homosexuality.

Thus, the ambassadors have a very official and independent role at the same time.

Related to this, various interviewees indicate that being visible is not one of the main tasks of the ambassadors. Kees Vrijdag (gay-ambassador) states: “[w]e are not a brand. (...) We do not have to go out there, or something. You have a certain kind of task. (...) [I]n that sphere of ambassadors and diplomats, they often work in silence”. Ercan Yilmaz (former gay-ambassador) adds: “[b]ut it is not, and the gay-ambassadors have not been appointed for that, to at any given opening ceremony or event...stand there as figureheads or something”. However, some interviewees plea for a more visible ambassadorship, which means that the ambassadors could pay more attention to their gay-ambassadorship and LGBT-issues in other contexts they are active in. For example, the director of *RotterdamV* states that “[t]he gay-ambassadors all have a specific position in the city, so they regularly find a podium to tell their story...[but] that it is not automatically linked to their gay-ambassadorship. (...) So (...) the ambassadors could be more visible in the city”. The former involved policy-advisor states that

[y]ou are looking for an ambassador because he has a network. (...) And (...) [they] could just already mention it (...) [in] these roles. For example that, during a speech, you say 'Rotterdam also has this and this' or 'a report has been published showing that...'

Different interviewees emphasize that the appointment of gay-ambassadors should be seen as an instrument next to other policy instruments and next to other forms of paying attention to LGBT-issues. The former policy advisor explains how she sees the appointment of gay-ambassadors as being part of the local LGBT-policy, which is part of the broader citizenship policy of the city of Rotterdam: “(...) I see gay-ambassadorship as a policy instrument that we [the municipality,] use, next to for example the subsidization of knowledge centres or realising education at schools”. Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) clarifies:

[w]hat we [, as gay-ambassadors,] expect of the municipality, is that they deploy the gay-ambassadors strategically on that part we are good at, namely (...) consciousness expansion, (...) horizon expansion of important people in education, in religion, in sports. We are a manner of the municipality, one of the instruments that the municipality has to implement gay-emancipation policy.

In addition, inter alia Kees Vrijdag (gay-ambassador) sees an important difference between the role of gay-ambassadors and the role of educators of for example the COC:

[y]ou should always make a distinction with the people who (...) give lessons about tolerance and integration and diversity and homosexuality. (...) [W]e do not go to schools or all kinds of clubs to stand in front of the class and explain how nice homosexuality is, there are all kinds of other clubs to do that.

This, then, can be linked back to the abovementioned arguments that the ambassadors do not have being visible themselves as one of their main goals. Thus, both acting as educators of students and as visible key-individuals does not seem to be central to the role of the ambassadors in Rotterdam. They operate mainly on a ‘higher level’ of boards and managements of organizations in a connecting way that very much resembles the role ambassadors in other contexts play.

- **Backgrounds of the ambassadors**

The gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam have been chosen because they have a certain position in the city. Most of them were found via the networks of the then alderman and each other’s networks back in 2010. Most ambassadors are persons

(...) who are very familiar with the municipal, management culture. They had [or have] functions themselves within politics or (...) at the management level of organizations in Rotterdam. So they know Rotterdam well [and] have a broad network, which of course is very useful to get in somewhere. (Corrie Wolfs, policy-advisor)

Amongst them are a director of a large welfare organization in Rotterdam, a member of the Dutch House of Representatives, a former alderman and former member of the Dutch Senate, a former employee of the Chamber of Commerce in Rotterdam and someone who knows the art scene in

Rotterdam very well and who used to be, among other functions, secretary of the *Rotterdamse Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (RRKC; board for art and culture in Rotterdam). In addition, different ambassadors have been active in promoting LGBT-rights for a very long time. The original group of five ambassadors consisted of four men and only one woman (e.g. Herman Meijer, gay-ambassador). Therefore, another woman was asked to also become a gay-ambassador. She had a quite different background, because, according to the former policy advisor, she “(...) was a young Moroccan woman, lesbian, who also worked at the police”. Unfortunately, she had to stop her involvement.

In 2013, again, two relatively young ambassadors were appointed who have a quite different position than the ambassadors who have been active from the beginning, as they are less familiar with operating at the management level and are not such ‘heavyweights’. Respectively, these ambassadors have a background in sports and a multicultural background. Although the latter stopped his involvement recently because of personal reasons, among others, the policy-advisor points at the importance of a “(...) representation from the younger generation and from the diversity of the city”. “And that really still is something to pay attention to” (Korrie Louwes, alderwoman). Yari-Annick Kuipers (gay-ambassador) endorses that it is important to also have younger ambassadors who “(...) are maybe closer to the society (...)” and who are “(...) a little more visible”. Ercan Yilmaz (former gay-ambassador) states: “I meet totally different, younger people than for example the other ambassadors. (...) [And they] can tell me how certain things work in the municipality”. Thus, various interviewees see that it might be good to also think about a group of ambassadors who can complement each other at different levels and who could fulfil slightly different roles, which could also have a character of being a role model for certain groups in society (e.g. Corrie Wolfs, policy advisor). This, then, might also mean that the aforementioned ideas about the own visibility of the ambassadors could change in the future.

- **Assignments and organizational structure**

Different assignments were formulated in name of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and in consultation with the ambassadors. First, during the years 2010 and 2011, the ambassadors had to focus on the field of education. Primarily, the ambassadors visited schools in the city to talk with directions and boards. The schools were approached by sending them a letter on behalf of the municipality and were thereafter visited by pairs of ambassadors (Various interviews; Ibid.). *RotterdamV* supported and facilitated the contacts between the gay-ambassadors and the schools by making appointments and, in some cases, the director was present during the talks. The director states that the ambassadors were not supported substantively and that they did not use the role of *RotterdamV* as knowledge centre.

After finishing the assignment to visit schools, it remained quite silent for a while. In mid-2012, it was noted by members of the city council that they heard little about the gay-ambassadors (Burgemeester en Wethouders van Rotterdam, 2012). This, then, shows that the ambassadors were not forgotten, but also that not so much was happening due to different reasons. Many ambassadors were critical about the administrative support of the municipality, which was thought to be insufficient (Different interviews; Team van homo-ambassadeurs Rotterdam, 2011). This seems to be, at least partly, due to replacements of the involved policy advisor every once in a while, which sometimes affected the continuity of and the support for the project (Different interviews). Furthermore, different interviewees tell that *RotterdamV* was no longer involved in facilitating the activities of the gay-ambassadors, but the exact reasons for this remain unclear.

About a year and a half after finishing the assignment in the field of education, a new assignment was formulated for the year 2013 (Burgemeester en Wethouders van Rotterdam, n.d.). Part of this assignment focused on approaching “(...) organizations in Rotterdam in the field of sports, welfare and leisure time”, with “(...) priority (...) given to organizations in the field of sports” (Burgemeester en Wethouders van Rotterdam, n.d.). It was the idea that the ambassadors would have contact with the knowledge centres in Rotterdam to come to an idea about which organizations should be approached (Ibid.). With these knowledge centres, four organizations with focuses on antidiscrimination (*RADAR*), diversity (*Kenniscentrum Diversiteit*), emancipation (*Dona Daria*) and LGBT (*RotterdamV*) are meant (Ibid.). The former policy advisor explains how this differed from the first assignment:

(...) there was a kind of evaluation about (...) [the] deployment [of the ambassadors] and actually it was concluded that we would have to extend it. (...) There has to be an accent, like education is an accent, but they could operate a bit more within...Because we have our citizenship policy via a couple of pillars, knowledge centres, and we thought administratively that the gay-ambassadors should actually be deployed via the knowledge centres on (...) knowledge expansion, signalling, advising around LGBT (...). (...) [T]hey (...) could operate in the spirit of the knowledge centres, so (...) that the signals of the gay-ambassadors could also be shared with what the knowledge centres see and notice. And the other way around, that the knowledge centres also could say like, well, sports, well, really...

In the beginning of the new period, the knowledge centres were consulted about where the gay-ambassadors could be deployed best (Ibid.). Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) states that the ambassadors have these knowledge centres “(...) on the background, we can rely on those”. Thus, some interviewees see connections between the ambassadors and the knowledge centres, but it seems that the connection did not really get off the ground (yet), as this is hardly mentioned by other interviewees. The former policy-advisor states that a connection with the knowledge centres in terms of securing and follow-up has not worked out in practice and that the connections have remained very loose.

Finally, the ambassadors were involved in judging plans for a pink event in Rotterdam in the fall of 2013. This was also part of the assignment that was given to the ambassadors for the year 2013 (Burgemeester en Wethouders van Rotterdam, n.d.).

4.2.3 Focus and activities

Here, the deployment of the gay-ambassadors and ideas about their contribution will be discussed per focus. Attention will be paid to their deployment and contribution in the fields of education and sports and to their role in enhancing the visibility of LGBT in the city at large.

- **Education**

In the course of their first assignment of the municipal council, between mid-2010 and mid-2011 the ambassadors visited twenty schools or boards of (clusters of) schools in Rotterdam (Team van homo-ambassadeurs Rotterdam, 2011). The ambassadors started with visiting a school that was known for its good approach of creating openness for discussion about homosexuality and thereafter other schools were approached that might be more difficult to enter (Various interviews; Ibid.). One school refused a talk with the gay-ambassadors, but the exact reason for this is unclear. All other schools

were open to have a conversation (Ibid.). Joke Ellenkamp (gay-ambassador) notes that the ambassadors were

(...) a kind of 'antennae' (...) at those schools in the field of diversity and homosexuality and actually also (...) [in the field of] safety, because, of course, it is not only about homosexuality. (...) It is about, how much space is there to be different at school? And homosexuality is an example of that. (...) [W]e helped to put it on the agenda again. (...) You know, you have to repeat such topics every once in a while.

Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) confirms that it was mainly about creating openness for discussion and about assessing what is happening in the field of education. Next to that, he states that the ambassadors had a role in advising schools: "(...) you can do this, you can do that. (...) Once we had talked to a couple of educators, we could also tell the others how it happens elsewhere. And that was a kind of passing on information and that worked very well". The ambassadors for example mentioned the theatre productions of the *Rotterdams Centrum voor Theater* ('Rotterdam Centre for Theatre'), which produces theatre productions about various themes, including sexual diversity (see www.rcth.nl; example given by e.g. Herman Meijer, Hugo Bongers, Joke Ellenkamp, Kees Vrijdag, gay-ambassadors).

Various interviewees indicate that no measurable results can be expected of the deployment of the ambassadors. For example, Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) states: "(...) for 95 percent, it is raising awareness. (...) And you cannot measure that". However, some things happened after the ambassadors visited the schools. Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) tells that the municipal council let the ambassadors know that the schools were generally grateful for the visit of the gay-ambassadors and that doors have been opened. The contribution of the gay-ambassadors has not been evaluated systematically, but the ambassadors have written an evaluative and advisory report for the municipality about their visits. In this report, it is stated that "(...) some things happen in the field of homosexuality [at schools], but it certainly is not all well. There still remains much to be done in this area and that requires clear guidance in continuing with scheduling this topic" (Freely translated from Dutch; Team van homo-ambassadeurs Rotterdam, 2011).

Based on the talks, the ambassadors formulated a couple of recommendations. They first recommended that attention for homosexuality should be included in the core objectives of schools by setting a minimum standard (Team van homo-ambassadeurs Rotterdam, 2011). It does not become clear from the advice how this should be done and what this should mean exactly. However, this first aspect has been reached at the national policy level by the earlier mentioned instruction of the state that should ensure that all schools pay attention to sexual diversity in some way or another (see subparagraph 1.2.2). This instruction will be paid more attention to in the other case analyses and in the cross-case chapter.

Second, the ambassadors recommended that their involvement should be followed up by the municipality. The alderwoman states that "(...) we subsequently implemented those recommendations [from the report], so those have caused that, in the agreements we make with schools, we got to work with that". Furthermore, according to for example Hugo Bongers and Mark Harbers (gay-ambassadors), professional organizations, such as *RotterdamV*, should take care of a further follow-up. The alderwoman gives an example of such a follow-up that was not initiated by the municipality. She refers to the educational manifesto *De Rotterdamse School. Een veilige haven voor iedereen* ('The Rotterdam School. A safe haven for everyone') that was launched by seven

organizations in Rotterdam, namely *RotterdamV*, *RADAR*, *Apollo*, *COC Rotterdam*, the *Rotterdams Centrum voor Theater*, *Veilige School Rotterdam* ('Safe School Rotterdam') and *De Geweldige School* ('The Great School') in the spring of 2013 "(...) to ask attention for the situation of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders at schools in Rotterdam and its surroundings" (Freely translated from Dutch; Gay & School, 2013; see also www.onderwijsmanifest.nl). The alderwoman states that "(...) this is a private initiative. It comes from the group itself. (...) But by making it important and supporting it permanently [as municipality], you ensure that the topic enters the schools in other ways". The manifesto was also signed by the gay-ambassadors.

Finally, it was recommended to also approach other domains, such as "(...) sports – churches and other religious groups" (Freely translated from Dutch; Team van homo-ambassadeurs Rotterdam, 2011). The recommendation to start approaching the field of sports has been realized. Next to that, there have been an exploratory talk with a pastor, a meeting with the umbrella organization for Islamic organizations in the Rotterdam region (*SPIOR*) and a meeting with Moroccan women (*Ibid.*). However, these contacts have not led to a more structural approach of religious and ethnic organizations (yet), although for example Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) states this would be a good idea.

The director of *RotterdamV* is not so optimistic about the contribution of the gay-ambassadors at schools. She had expected that "(...) they then prepared the way in educational institutions for other parties that are busy with providing training to professionals and providing education to students, that these would be let in". However, the schools have not contacted *RotterdamV* after the talks with the gay-ambassadors: "I helped the gay-ambassadors, made appointments with schools, facilitated, a report was published. That has been a closed process and (...) we make appointments with schools ourselves, have a talk, look at what is needed. So that remained separate processes (...)". She thinks that this could be because the gay-ambassadors approached the schools at a higher level (of managements and boards) and that there has been no communication between this level and the lower level (of lower managements and teachers) *RotterdamV* mainly approaches. So, according to her, the involvement of gay-ambassadors has not created more space for her organization that is busy with LGBT-emancipation at a practical level. However, she is not so sure about the results for the educational field at large: "[a]nd maybe there (...) a greater awareness has emerged about how you can advance safety for gay people, but that has not been returned to us" (*Ibid.*). Thus, there clearly are quite rival ideas about the results of the deployment of the ambassadors at schools and the follow-up that is and should be given to that by different stakeholders.

- **Sports**

Part of the second assignment of the gay-ambassadors is approaching sport clubs. After exploratory talks, the ambassadors decided that they would more specifically focus on soccer clubs. The policy advisor explains what the deployment would be like:

[a]t the one hand [the assignment is] to approach sport clubs and soccer clubs in particular. To, so to speak, create awareness in these clubs, to talk about the problems that are going on (...). And also to impart knowledge and experience, like, how do you deal with this as a club? So it is a bit of [creating] awareness, transfer of knowledge and that these clubs also know where they can ask their questions if something is going on.

This is quite similar to the way the ambassadors approached the field of education:

[a]lso, a letter has been sent to the sport clubs (...) to announce this contact (...) to make sure that sport clubs are not taken unawares and also see that (...) [the ambassadors] are covered by the municipal council. (...) [W]e have also discussed with the gay-ambassadors that that [contact] does not have to be so specifically targeted to the discrimination of homosexuals. You can also extend that (...). (Ibid.)

Thus, again a broader embedding of LGBT-issues is focused on.

Although the assignment to visit sport clubs is quite similar to the assignment to visit schools, it has turned out to be more difficult to enter there. According to Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) the most difficult focus has been chosen, namely men's soccer. He states that "(...) it is still completely unclear (...) whether we will even get somewhere in that whole soccer world and whether it is going to lead somewhere". Up till the interviews were held, only a couple of larger organizations in the field of sports and one small soccer club were talked to. Ercan Yilmaz (former gay-ambassador) tells that he and Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) had a positive talk with one of the small clubs. The alderwoman refers to a positive experience with Sparta, one of the big soccer clubs in Rotterdam. However, overall, the interviewees are not so positive about what has been reached so far. Different interviewees point at possible reasons for the difficulties with approaching the clubs. The policy advisor states:

[w]ell, then it turned out that it was not so easy to make appointments with sport clubs. There are all kinds of reasons, also practical reasons, for that. (...) Look, it is voluntary work. People have to give priority to that in their own time (...). That is one thing. But subsequently they also have to enter (...) and, yes, of course that is quite difficult sometimes. Yes, I also get that back, that it all is not that easy. And that it costs more time than you think.

Kees Vrijdag (gay-ambassador) thinks that the difficulties could have two reasons: "[o]ne is a technical-administrative. (...) And the other one is that (...) [the clubs think], (...), we do not have time for that". The first reason indicates the frequently mentioned criticism of the ambassadors that they feel that they are supported too little by the municipality in approaching the field. Next to that, different interviewees think that the nonresponse could be a sign of unwillingness to pay attention to the topic. For example, Hugo Bongers (gay-ambassador) states: "[n]ow we run into a sector which is totally not willing to talk about it. (...) And I am not dissatisfied about what we have done so far. I am very unsatisfied about the factual situation in the soccer world". However, he does not see this as a reason to stop approaching the clubs: "(...) we have to continue with sports anyway. Because the fact that we do not enter is a sign to hold on. Not a sign to say like, oooh, it fails". Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador) emphasizes the importance of goodwill within the clubs to be able to change something there: "[I]ook, the KNVB [, the Dutch soccer association] wants a gay-friendly climate...is the official goal. (...) [T]hey can want a lot, but without others, so those involved, who commit to it, not so much will come of it".

Recently, it has been decided to look at the possibilities to again involve RotterdamV in supporting the gay-ambassadors, to at least try to overcome the practical (support) problems they encounter with approaching the soccer clubs (Corrie Wolfs, policy-advisor). The director of RotterdamV indicates: "[o]ur offer is to support and facilitate those gay-ambassadors again in 2014,

but we have agreed with the municipality of Rotterdam that, then, clear agreements will be made in advance about roles and responsibilities and goals". Furthermore, the municipality wants to involve *Rotterdam Sportsupport*, which is a foundation that is working for a 'high quality sports climate' in Rotterdam (see www.rotterdamsportsupport.nl) to help the ambassadors (Corrie Wolfs, policy advisor). Thus, the assignment to approach the field of sports is likely to be extended for the year 2014 (Ibid.), but the course is not totally clear yet.

- **Creating visibility (in the city at large)**

Next to approaching schools and soccer clubs, the gay-ambassadors have been involved in some activities in the city and have been presented as the gay-ambassadors in different ways. For example, a couple of ambassadors have taken part in forums or panels in their role of gay-ambassador and the ambassadors have been presented in some local newspapers and on local television (e.g. Herman Meijer, gay-ambassador), but it has already become clear that being visible and creating broad visibility mainly are not seen as central to the ambassadorship in Rotterdam. However, in the fall of 2013, the ambassadors were part of a selection board for a pink event in Rotterdam. The policy advisor tells:

(...) recently, we organized a kind of competition for all kinds of gay-organizations, and actually also non-gay-organizations, (...) which have good ideas for an urban event, in which you bring homosexuality (...), so LGBT, to the attention of the citizen of Rotterdam to just...ensure that it normalizes. And we prefer an event (...) that recurs each year at the urban level, so with continuity.

25,000 Euros was made available to boost organizations to think about such an event that could make LGBT more visible in Rotterdam:

"(...) [Rotterdam is] [a] bigger city, so there is a lot more [than in smaller cities], all kinds of things happen, but (...) to also get that bundled in once again making very visible that you are also a fantastic, dynamic, inviting city in this field, (...) well, I do not think that people directly see that".
(Korrie Louwes, alderwoman)

The alderwoman indicates how this activity differs from the main activities of visiting schools and soccer clubs: "[t]his was not about a problem, this was about exactly tackling the other side. So, where can you increase the visibility [of] what is going well in the city".

The presentation of the plans for the pink event took place in the central public library and the plans consisted of various ideas to make LGBT more visible in the city. In the end, a combination of plans was chosen. It is the idea to organize a big parade, "(...) and we want to expand that parade to, say, a three-day festival, wherein all kinds of activities are organized which also focus on (...) the hetero[sexual], so to speak" (Corrie Wolfs, policy advisor). Examples the policy advisor gives of possible initiatives to make LGBT visible in the city, are realizing a pink fountain, a pink tram, pink lightning of the 'Euromast' (a famous tower in Rotterdam) and organizing a tour by bike along several attractions, bars and services that have something to do with LGBT. The event will probably take place in the coming year (Ibid.). Thus, by participating in the panel for a pink event, the ambassadors have contributed to thinking about the visibility of LGBT in the city at large.

According to Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador), the attention being paid to such an event arose from talks that some of the ambassadors had with gay bars in Rotterdam:

(...) those first talks eventually have resulted in that the municipality (...) has challenged organized and commercial pink Rotterdam (...) [to think about] a yearly event that attracts many people, under the slogan 'that helps Rotterdam to reach a tolerant and gay-friendly climate'. That is the municipal interest and on the other side it helps the bars to spread their wings a little bit more.

Mark Harbers (gay-ambassador) tells:

(...) actually as corollary of gay-ambassadors (...) there of course were other activities where one or more gay-ambassadors were committed to. (...) The most important in the last four years were the Eurogames in 2011, the E[uropean] C[hampionships sports for gays, so to speak. (...) we had lots of contact with the organizing committee. (...) And a consequence of that is that the gay bars have started to come together more and to look like, shouldn't we do something together? Kees Vrijdag[gay-ambassador]] and I have had a couple of talks with those entrepreneurs, together with officers of (...) the municipality. And eventually, that has resulted in the formation of [the foundation] Prhomo [(...) in which (...) the gay bar entrepreneurs are united. (...) [G]radually we hope to develop the shared awareness that it is nice when you have a nice beer turnover in your own bar, but that you might reach more when you organize a couple of things together.

Recently, in February 2014, a working conference, initiated by the 'gay community' in Rotterdam, was organized for different kinds of actors, such as businesses and societal organizations, to discuss ways to make Rotterdam a 'Gay Destination' (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2014). On the website of the *Rotterdam Tourist Board*, a page can be found about the gay-friendliness of Rotterdam (see www.rotterdam.info/bezoekers/over-rotterdam/gayfriendly/). So, also in a broader sense, the attractiveness of Rotterdam for LGBTs and the visibility of LGBTs in the city of Rotterdam are reflected upon.

4.2.4 First conclusions

From this discussion of the deployment of gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, a number of characteristics of the ambassadorship in Rotterdam can be distilled. Regarding their role and position it can mainly be said that the ambassadors in Rotterdam:

- can be seen as a complement to existing LGBT-policy;
- have been chosen to become ambassadors in an informal way;
- operate on behalf of the Board of Mayor and Alderman and are officially appointed by this;
- are independent volunteers at the same time;
- receive a volunteers fee for their involvement;
- have mainly been chosen because they have a certain status, background and network;
- are no implementers of policy or educators, but really fulfil an ambassador's role;
- mainly do not see being visible as their main task.

Clearly, there are also ideas to create a more visible and more diverse ambassadorship. Furthermore, it has been tried to integrate the involvement of the ambassadors more with other aspects of the municipal LGBT-policy, such as the knowledge centres, but it seems that the ambassadors (still) mainly operate very independently.

Currently, the main task of the ambassadors is to discuss LGBT in different societal domains at the level of boards and managements of different societal organizations. Mainly, three aspects seem to be central to this task:

- informing the municipal council about the state of affairs regarding LGBT-issues in different societal fields;
- creating openings for implementing organizations to enter societal fields with their supply;
- informing boards and managements of organizations about ways to deal with LGBT-related topics.

First, the ambassadors were deployed to approach the field of education. They have (indirectly) contributed to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in this field by visiting twenty schools, discussing the position of LGBTs there, advising the schools about how these could pay attention to this topic by pointing at the supply of different implementing organizations and advising the municipality about further steps that could be taken. Direct and indirect follow-up has been given to this in a couple of ways. However, there is also some criticism on their contribution. Second, the ambassadors have been deployed to approach the field of sports, and mainly the domain of men's soccer. In this field, the contribution of the ambassadors has been not so large (yet), mainly due to delays in starting with approaching this field, practical problems and the nonresponse of many clubs. Third, the ambassadors have been involved in activities to make LGBT more visible in the city at large. They have mainly contributed to this by thinking along with and judging plans of organizations in the city that want to organize activities, including a big pink event, to show that Rotterdam is an attractive LGBT-city.

Different obstacles seem to have influenced the contribution of the ambassadors. The ambassadors mainly point at a lack of support of the municipality to properly organize their deployment. In substantive terms, the attitude of organizations in the field, mainly in the domain of sports, seems to have worked against a good contribution.

4.3 Alkmaar: combining 'high-level talks' and practical effort

4.3.1 Research considerations

After Rotterdam, Alkmaar was the second municipality that appointed gay-ambassadors. Six people were interviewed about this: the involved policy advisor, the director of the antidiscrimination bureau for the region Noord-Holland Noord, *Art. 1 (Article 1)*, the former chairman of *COC Noord-Holland Noord (NHN)*, two gay-ambassadors and one former gay-ambassador.

It turned out that there are various former gay-ambassadors, but it was chosen to only interview the one who has been active the longest (in the field of education). Next to that, one of the former ambassadors for the field of sports was approached by e-mail, but he has not responded. Thereafter, it was, also based on the interviews, assumed that the different former ambassadors would not have so much to add, because they had not been active for a very long time and/or had not developed so many activities. Furthermore, the involved alderwoman was not approached, as

the other interviewees could already tell a lot and there did not seem to be any important knowledge gap that should be filled by interviewing her. Thus, based on these considerations, the most relevant (former) involved people at the 'organizing side' were interviewed.

4.3.2 Role and position of the ambassadors

After a messy start of the ambassadorship due to changes in the political field in Alkmaar and the related uncertainty about the progress of the project (according to different interviewees, including Luc Hofmans, director Art. 1), in 2011 the gay-ambassadors started to be active in Alkmaar. Following the example of Rotterdam, the ambassadors have been appointed by the Board of Mayor and Alderman (Gemeente Alkmaar, 2011), function as independent volunteers and receive a volunteers fee, which is 240 Euros per year, travel allowance and expenses (Ibid.; Gemeente Alkmaar, 2012). In 2012, the ambassadors were presented as being part of the local LGBT-emancipation policy plan for the years 2012-2014 (Ibid.). This plan was launched as starting document for participation in the Local LGBT-policy program that has been discussed in paragraph 1.2.4.

- **Added value of gay-ambassadors**

The involved policy advisor expresses clearly what the added value of gay-ambassadors could be in Alkmaar. She states that "(...) the idea was very attractive. You can just deploy a gay-ambassador between policy and activities and organizations and he can also bring up the topic at different levels". She explains that

(...) for the municipality, this was very much a tactical choice, because you can come with policy again, but at the moment you start with policy, you have to deal with all kinds of different (...) actors (...) and different interests. And (...) you have to do [it] all formal, (...) according to the rules. The advantage of gay-ambassadors is that they are able to work between all these rules. (...) And if you give such a person an assignment without officially being employed by the municipality of Alkmaar, then there is more freedom to bring up the subject. (Ibid.)

Thus, the gay-ambassadors have a specific independent position which could be seen as an addition to policy-making:

[a]nd I think it has been very important to hear from the city what the needs are. (...) [W]e [as policy advisors] work from the municipal office, we are not the people who go into practice (...). We purely do what the town council and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen say. So yes, such a gay-ambassador (...) really goes into the city (...). (Ibid.)

Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) explains quite well why it is interesting to deploy gay-ambassadors who work in name of the municipality:

(...) what I found and still find important, is that you do not only work on emancipation from the interest organization COC, but that the municipality acknowledges that a healthy society also requires a healthy coping with, in this case, homosexuals, bisexuals, and so on. (...) And that I do not have to say, 'I am coming on behalf of the COC', but that I can say, 'I am coming on behalf of the municipality'. (...) And that that also causes a different kind of legitimacy than that you are coming via (...) the own interest organization.

Thus, the ambassadors, like in Rotterdam, fulfill a role that is both independent of and coupled to the municipality.

- **Finding ambassadors**

Different interviewees (e.g. the policy advisor and the director of *Art. 1*) tell that it was not very easy to find gay-ambassadors. The director of *Art. 1* explains, referring to the situation in Rotterdam: “(...) well, look, Rotterdam has people with a very strong network, real heavyweights, directors of large organizations (...). So we looked at that, there we obtained the task description, [but] we just did not find them here”. In the end, a combination of people with different backgrounds was found via the *COC NHN*, an open recruitment procedure (with which one ambassador was found) and via networks of *Art. 1* and the municipality (e.g. Hasna Abrari, policy advisor). First, it was the idea to make a distinction between ambassadors and so-called buddies, who could help the ambassadors, but according to the policy advisor this proved to be an unnecessary distinction in practice (*Ibid.*). For the field of education, a policeman (Jan-Martijn Stout) and a former education director (Willem Laan) were found. Two other ambassadors, who work (Conny van Iersel) or worked in the field of health care, became gay-ambassadors for the field of eldercare. The treasurer of the rowing and sailing club in Alkmaar and a former professional soccer player were chosen to be gay-ambassadors for the field of sports. Finally, a youth worker became the ambassador for youth and nightlife (Gemeente Alkmaar, 2012). So, people were found who suited the domains they would approach and/or who, in case of for example Jan-Martijn Stout, fulfil a societal function which ensures having a certain network.

However, it proved to be difficult to maintain the ambassadors. Different ambassadors stopped their involvement, partly because of personal reasons and partly because “[a]n ambassadorial role is particularly voluntary, also requires quite a lot of the ambassador in terms of time. And I think that (...) a couple of them underestimated that” (Hasna Abrari, policy advisor). Currently, only two of the initial ambassadors, one for education (Jan-Martijn Stout) and one for eldercare (Conny van Iersel), are still active. Very recently, two new ambassadors have been appointed for the field of sports and for ‘diversity and tolerance’ (*Art. 1 Bureau Discriminatiezaken Noord-Holland Noord*, n.d.).

- **Assignments**

The policy advisor clarifies that formulating clear goals was not an easy task:

(...) in the beginning, they had been given an assignment, (...) go into the city and look around you. Well, I noticed that the assignment was way too broad. So the gay-ambassadors wanted to know, (...) what should we focus on? Is it at the policy level? At board level? Is it at the level of activities? Can we talk to everybody? So consequently we concretized the assignment.

In subparagraph 1.2.5, it was already made clear that the gay-ambassadors in Alkmaar have been appointed with the task to improve the openness for discussion about the LGBT-topic in the fields of secondary education, sports, healthcare and ‘non-western communities’ (Gemeente Alkmaar, 2012). According to the term plan 2012-2014, the ambassadors should choose a couple of the most important organizations in the municipality each year to learn about the ways these organizations deal with the acceptance of LGBTs. Furthermore, it is stated that the ambassadors “(...) are part of the network of pink emancipation in Alkmaar and can work together with local organizations and

make use of the regular supply to increase the social acceptance of homosexuality (LGBT) and create openness for discussion” (Freely translated from Dutch; Ibid.). Third, “[t]he ambassadors give solicited and unsolicited advices, can propose a range of activities and come with creative ideas to increase the social acceptance of homosexuality (LGBT) within the fields of educations, sports and care and to create openness for discussion [there]” (Freely translated from Dutch; Ibid.). Connecting this to statements from the interviews, it could be stated that it was expected that the ambassadors would act both at the level of management and policy and at the level of connecting and organizing activities. The policy advisor states: “[s]o with regard to policy (...) the gay-ambassadors mainly have a booster function to show where policy is needed, where it is useful” and “(...) also, one of the points in the assignment for the gay-ambassadors is, look at the needs in the city and also seek connection between the needs and the supply that is already there and also come with additional activities”.

- **Organizational structure and the importance of visibility**

The gay-ambassadors are supposed to be supported by a structure of a couple of organizations. Different interviewees explain that the municipality could be seen as the ‘director’ of the deployment of the ambassadors, the regional antidiscrimination bureau, *Art. 1*, as supervisor of the ambassadors, which is subsidized by the municipality and manages the project money, the assignment and the mission, and *COC Noord-Holland Noord* as involved local interest organization, which also deals with the provision of information to schools. It was the idea that the ambassadorship would be evaluated every six months and that someone can be active as an ambassador for a maximum of three years (Gemeente Alkmaar, 2012), to ensure both continuity and renewal of the ambassadorship (Hasna Abrari, policy advisor).

However, the communication, the division of tasks and the evaluation cycle seem to have not always worked well. For example, Conny van Iersel (gay-ambassador) tells:

[t]here are wonderful plans, but the implementation is...Look, when you start with seven [gay-ambassadors] and you end up with two [ambassadors], (...) then I just do not see anything...(...) [T]he responsibility is occasionally shifted to the COC, from the COC it is shifted to Article 1, then it is shifted to the municipality.

How and when this exactly happened, does not become clear. The former chairman of *COC NHN* indicates that *COC NHN* is an organization which is run by volunteers who are very busy and that it thus works best to leave the supervision of the ambassadors to a professional organization like *Art. 1*. He admits that this has not been communicated well to the ambassadors. Different other interviewees confirm that the implementation of the project was sometimes inadequate by for example stating that a proposed advisory board that could support the ambassadors did not function the way it was intended and that the goals were still not clear enough, although these have been described in a policy document. Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) says:

(...) you should just spend a day on that, like, (...) what are the expectations of the municipality, what are the expectations of the people who will be appointed as gay-ambassador, what are the expectations of an Article 1, what are the expectations of an interest organization [like the] COC if that is active in the municipality (...)? How are we going to do that? (...) And how do we get support for what we want?

Different interviewees also indicate that the ambassadorship has not been evaluated structurally. The policy advisor tells that this will be worked on in the future:

(...) with the start of a new round of gay-ambassadors the old agreements will be picked up, [because] we are going to make a report every three months and (...) the gay-ambassadors will have to show what they have done to Article 1 and they will write that down, etcetera.

Thus, the interviewees mainly plea for a clear organization of the ambassadorship.

However, on the other hand, some interviewees also see the downside of a formal arrangement of the ambassadorship. Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassador) tells that plans sometimes come off the ground quite slowly because of this: “(...) I have something in my head today and I want that to be done tomorrow, but first the COC wants to say something about it, then *Article 1* (...), then an officer of the municipality, the alderman (...)”. Thus, it seems that the idea of ‘working between the rules’, which the policy advisor sees as one of the advantages of the deployment of gay-ambassadors, is not fully applicable to the current ambassadorship in Alkmaar. The director of *Art. 1* pleads for balancing a certain level of formality with a positive approach of the ambassadors:

(...) volunteers want appreciation from politics and actually especially positive reinforcement and not too much administrative posturing or performance appraisals or that kind of things. And on the other hand I think you should not appoint such an ambassador endlessly, because when he does not work, then someone else is needed.

Thus, clearly there has to be some balance between the guidance and the freedom of the ambassadors. Several interviewees also indicate that it is particularly important that there is a small group of ambassadors who can support each other and who are supported by a small group of people.

Early 2013, board questions were asked about the contribution of the gay-ambassadors. The policy advisor explains:

[a]nd in the meantime also questions were asked by the VVD [a political party] in Alkmaar, (...) ‘what are the ambassadors working on?’ And that was also because they were not very visible in the city. (...) Then it also became clear that we had to become a little more visible.

For example, the director of *Art. 1* compares the importance of the visibility of the ambassadors with the situation of Rotterdam: “(...) Alkmaar is a city of a very different size than Rotterdam. I think you mainly need people who are visible here”. Also for example Conny van Iersel and Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassadors) and the former chairman of COC NHN think that visibility is important and that the ambassadorship could be more visible in Alkmaar, but that more ambassadors and more support are needed for that.

4.3.3 Focus and activities

Going back to the beginning of the involvement of the gay-ambassadors, after the struggle around their actual appointment, eventually, the ambassadors became active:

[s]o eventually they were installed during the Pink Week 2011. They were installed in May with ringing (...) the cheese bell. That started then and that is a yearly tradition now that a cheese bell is ringed at the beginning of the Pink Week and [that] the ambassadors are also there. (Luc Hofmans, director Art. 1)

The *Pink Week* in Alkmaar is a week with all kinds of 'pink activities' that is organized annually "(...) to increase the acceptance and integration of transgenders, gay- and bisexual inhabitants in Alkmaar and its surroundings" (www.rozeweekalkmaar.nl). The cheese market is one of the symbols of the city of Alkmaar and ringing the bell means that the cheese market is opened. Ringing the bell is nowadays being done by "(...) persons who are guests on the market by invitation of the municipality of Alkmaar" (VVV Alkmaar, n.d.). Thus, a tradition was coupled to the appointment of the gay-ambassadors. Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassador) tells that "(...) it is really a kind of village, Alkmaar, (...) we for example may ring the cheese bell at the cheese market (...) which is quite an honour for which usually very famous people are invited". Thus, connecting the installation of the ambassadors to ringing the cheese bell could be seen as a way to both literally and symbolically 'market' the gay-ambassadors.

Furthermore, the ambassadors and their activities have been promoted in different other ways. For example, they have a Twitter-account, they attend meetings and once in a while their activities are promoted on local news websites, in local newspapers and on the website of Article 1, but the communication is not structural (Different interviews). Various interviewees also indicate that the involved alderwoman tries to show the support of the municipality for making LGBT visible in Alkmaar by for example joining activities during the Pink Week.

• Education

Although there were difficulties with regard to the organization of the ambassadorship and the commitment of some of the ambassadors, a couple of ambassadors became active. Two ambassadors (Jan-Martijn Stout and Willem Laan) focus(ed) on education. Mainly, the ambassadors tried to enter schools and promote both the pink activities in the city and the education supply of the COC there (Hasna Abrari, policy advisor). It was the idea that they would approach schools both via students and via managements and boards, at policy level (Willem Laan, former gay-ambassador). The ambassadors have developed various activities. Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassador) for example tells that he helped secondary school students to organize a debate on *Purple Friday*, which is organized annually at various secondary schools in the Netherlands, following the example of schools in the USA. By wearing purple cloths (because purple is the color of strength and courage on the rainbow flag) and organizing activities, solidarity with LGBT-students is shown (COC Nederland, n.d.:c). Next to that, in collaboration with Willem Laan and *Art. 1*, he "(...) stood at the schoolyard of schools with a large Beetle Cabriolet [, a special car,] and a lot of rainbow flags to give publicity to the Pink Week here in Alkmaar". Finally, the ambassadors have given information to students in cooperation with volunteers of COC NHN. Thus, the roles of the ambassadors and educators of the COC are very much interwoven here. In addition to these activities at schools, Jan-Martijn Stout read out to children in the local library.

Different interviewees state that it was not easy to get in touch with boards and managements of schools. The policy advisor tells that, just like in Rotterdam, a letter was sent to the boards. However, for example, the director of *Art. 1* states that "[t]he link to school boards has been very limited". Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) expected

(...) that I was able to work with managements of schools, to look like, 'how do I suit this curriculum...how do you deal with your personnel, how do you deal with a student council (...), how do you apply that in, say, a safe school'. (...) Because I think it should also have a place within that policy. (...) Well, that totally failed. (...) [I]n the beginning, managements did not respond at all.

Thus, a high-level approach of the field of education worked not so well here. Willem Laan explains that the ambassadors mainly succeeded in entering schools by approaching students:

(...) in the end it actually went much more via the other side [of students]. And I notice that, because of that, groups of teachers became more interested and (...) some principals also became more sensitive for it. (...) But that has much more gone through (...), yes, brutally going to stand in front of (...) schools with a Cabriolet and flags and whatever during the Pink Week. (...) [W]e really had to conquer it.

The incorporation of the discussion of sexual diversity in the core goals of schools is seen as being important for entering the schools and organizing activities. Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassador) states: “[of] course, the law is currently beneficial, so that is quite a guarantee already”. The policy advisor tells that

(...) a nice development is that (...) sexual diversity is incorporated in the core goals of secondary education (...). (...) Well, it is very nice that the gay-ambassadors thereafter sent a letter to all schools to alert them to the information supply of the COC here in Alkmaar. So very connecting. (...) Then you do not really have to make special policy as municipality. It is already arranged in national policy and there already is a supply locally, (...) then you only have to boost that with the gay-ambassadors.

Although this can be seen as a good development, Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) notes: “[s]chools have the obligation to include it in the programs. (...) And the [educational] inspection has the obligation to ensure it. But well, (...) that is no guarantee of how vivid that also is within a school”.

Thus, the ambassadors clearly have been able to enter schools and organize activities, although different interviewees state that this was not an easy task, it did not always work the way they expected and a beneficial law is no guarantee. Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassador) states that

(...) we have had very nice debates and conversations and, yes, more or less also a seed is planted there in the minds of those young people, that they at least know about the existence of LGBTs and can form an opinion on that. I think that is the most important.

He mentions the specific example of the information he gives at schools: “(...) [there were] children who were very much digging their heels in at the beginning of the hour, because of course it is a little bit scary and new and weird, and who ultimately got more understanding for the position of the LGBT-youth (...)” (Ibid.). Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) adds:

(...) of course, eventually conversations have taken place with managements. Jan-Martijn has become very active in giving education himself. (...) [W]hat we have reached is that (...) we, the ambassadors, but (...) also the COC, (...) [and] an organization like the Pink Week here in Alkmaar, have open doors within education. (...) And there are still some doors to be opened, but quite a lot of doors have been opened.

The policy advisor and the director of Art.1 see a kind of snowball effect. The director of Art. 1 tells:

[s]ome schools say like, (...) 'it is good that we have done that'. The first year they only got in at the half of the schools. Last year...also this year (...) [they entered] all schools. All schools said, 'oh yes, you can come, because you were here last year as well', or, 'no, you were not here last year, but, yes we have heard of other schools..., yes, you can come'. So in that sense, it works.

Thus, there is clearly a common result for different organizations and people who are busy with improving the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs.

Importantly, Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) doubts whether providing information should be the task of an ambassador. This, then, can be linked to the idea of interviewees in the case of Rotterdam that an ambassador should not be engaged in providing information, but should stick to a higher level approach. This is not the case in Alkmaar now, as the ambassadors work(ed) very closely together with the educators of the COC and provide(d) information themselves as well. The director of Art. 1 thinks that it is especially important that people tackle it together: “(...) whether that is a gay-ambassador or that is a chairman of the COC, I think that does not matter, [but] only (...) one chairman of the COC...they are all volunteers, you need a couple of people to have support (...), to stimulate each other”.

Jan-Martijn Stout (gay-ambassador), the director of Art. 1 and Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador) see paying attention to LGBT at schools as a continuous process. Jan-Martijn Stout tells that he tries to ensure continuity by making sure that, every year, information will be provided at schools the educators have been to before. Furthermore, Jan-Martijn Stout also tries to continue the contact with the library. This continuity does not only depend on the commitment of ambassadors and the different pink organizations in Alkmaar, but also on the goodwill within the approached organizations. The director of Art. 1 states that “(...) you always need a couple of enthusiastic teachers in the schools who are present, who draw you over the line. And then something happens at a school. When there are no enthusiastic teachers, then little happens (...)”. Also the policy advisor thinks that the success of the gay-ambassadors very much depends on stakeholders in different domains who are willing to do something with LGBT:

[t]hat was decisive here. For example, a teacher who is very enthusiastic and that the school consequently turns pink, (...) or two managers in a care facility who happen to be gay. So It very important that (...) the right person is approached, either within a care facility, either [a] school, [either] a policy advisor. (...) So I think very much depends on people.

- **Seniors**

Three ambassadors started with a focus on youth care and seniors. Two ambassadors stopped their involvement and only one active ambassador is left now. The focus was narrowed down to seniors, both within and outside residential homes (Conny van Iersel, gay-ambassador). The ambassadors

started with organizing pink salons in different residential homes during the *Pink Week* (Ibid.; Hasna Abrari, policy advisor). The policy advisor tells “(...) that was a kind of (...) informal information-, tea-, coffee-, cake-activity within the residential home in which it really was examined, yes, what are pink seniors and are they also here in the residential home?” Two salons were organized. About the first salon the involved gay-ambassador tells:

[w]e got there and we said like, ‘we would love to have a pink salon for, (...) a little taboo-breaking just creating openness for discussion about homosexuality in the Pink Week’. Then we got the answer that there were surely (...) no homosexual residents (...). But they were at least willing to say, ‘well, ok, (...) we just want that pink salon (...)’.

She further explains how, during that pink salon, a woman dared to ‘out’ herself (Ibid.). During the second pink salon in another residential home, next to residents also representatives of local political parties were present. Conny van Iersel (gay-ambassador) tells that two residents dared to tell that they have homosexual children during that meeting.

(...) [P]eople start conversations and some things start to happen then. (...) [T]hat is purely at the individual level, but (...) everybody is just busy with it. And if someone of course can tell very proudly, ‘(...) my daughter is lesbian and she comes by with her girlfriend on a regular basis and I am very proud that those girls are married, that they just have a lot of fun together’, yes, I think, that’s it. (...) [And] maybe that helps, so to speak, to persuade the neighbor, who maybe also has a grandson [who is gay].

“[S]o (...) people are busy with it and maybe it dwindles, but, yes, at that moment you just bring it to the attention” (Ibid.).

Next to organizing pink salons in residential homes, the ambassador who is still active talked about the so-called *Roze Loper* with a couple of residential homes. This is a kind of ‘label’ for residential homes that pay attention to homosexuality, which could be obtained after filling in a ‘tolerance scan’ that measures the gay-friendliness of an institution (see www.rozezorg.nl). It appeared that the residential homes mostly had ‘cold feet’ and did not go for a *Roze Loper* (Conny van Iersel, gay-ambassador). Currently, one residential home in Alkmaar has the label. In this case, the ambassador clearly had a boosting function, as she pointed at the possibility to apply for the *Roze Loper* and in this way triggered residential homes to start thinking about this option. She also sees this as her role more generally: “(...) you start things (...), and then, at a certain point, when it is (...) in the right direction, (...) people further arrange that themselves” (Ibid.). She does not know yet whether the *Roze Loper* really has an effect in practice for the residential home in Alkmaar, but she is curious about that and has the idea to approach the institution to ask for the results (Ibid.).

Although the ambassador succeeded in entering a couple of residential homes and triggering one to apply for a *Roze Loper* she states that “(...) [o]ther homes are still very careful”. In order to reach more understanding and openness, the directors of different homes were invited to join the *Pink Breakfast* in the City Hall on the last *Coming Out Day* in October 2013. The policy advisor tells that

(...) we (...) invited all the institutions to talk about pink seniors, (...) also the gay-ambassador was present, (...) all aldermen were there and also the institution that has the Roze Loper. I organized that with Conny. So that is on (...) the level of boards and managements.

The policy advisor is positive about the meeting, as “[y]ou also saw care institutions that were inspired and that did not see the severity of the problem of the pink seniors [before]. (...) I think that the gay-ambassador (...) helped very much to explain the issue every time” (Ibid.). Conny van Iersel (gay-ambassador) states:

[w]e recently had a Pink Breakfast. A number of homes were invited [and] came, so (...) the intention is there. But what it is really going to mean, I just do not know yet. (...) it is just a bit like archeological research. You drill something, but you do not know what you are going to find yet.

She compares the situation in the field of senior care to the situation in the field of education:

(...) education is very clear. Education says like, we just think that students should at least have one or two teaching hours in the curriculum, homosexuality, hop, on the agenda. But I cannot go to the retirement homes and say like, ‘listen, (...) I am going to sit here for three, four, evenings’. (Ibid.)

The policy advisor explains that the municipality is busy with looking at ways to safeguard the attention for pink seniors in local policy:

[i]f you are talking about seniors, then there is not so much policy for them at the national level. And now it is looked at, well, what is the relationship between the municipality and for example care institutions or welfare centers that organize day activities and how can you secure the attention for pink seniors in your policy as municipality, that there is at least attention being paid to it? Then, policy (...) has an added value. So that really depends on the domain.

Next to focusing on residential homes, the ambassador wanted to do something for ‘younger LGBT-seniors’ who live on their own outside residential homes. In the last *Pink Week*, a meeting was organized for them by the ambassador in cooperation with volunteers of the COC (Luc Hofmans, director Art. 1). It is the idea that this meeting, called *Pink Society*, will be organized regularly (Conny van Iersel, gay ambassador). Also in this case, the involved ambassador sees herself as a booster: “[a]nd that is also something (...) that I start and that should just go get its own way. (...) But it would just be really nice if people just know (...) ‘that is a place where I just can go to’” (Ibid.).

Finally, the ambassador has plans to collect life stories of older LGBTs in Alkmaar, but this plan is not very developed yet (Ibid.). Answering the question what she thinks she has reached as gay-ambassador in general, Conny van Iersel (gay-ambassador) states:

[w]ell, most important is that of the small [achievements] (...). [L]ook, of course it is the nicest if you can measure the effects and sometimes that is not possible. And sometimes those are (...) very personal (...). I think that it is the most important and that there is also simply attention being paid to it.

- **Sports and non-western communities**

Finally, it was planned to also deploy ambassadors to create openness for discussion about LGBT in the domain of sports and within non-western communities. However, according to different interviewees little was done in these fields. Two ambassadors were appointed for the domain of sports, but they both stopped their involvement. In the first year of the ambassadorship, there have been some exploratory talks about how the field of sports should be approached. First, one of the ambassadors held a speech during a meeting of the Sports Council in Alkmaar (Hasna Abrari, policy advisor; Art. 1, 2012). Next to that, a foundation for Moroccan youth in Alkmaar (*Stichting MaJo*) was talked to. Subsequently, one of the ambassadors and an employee of Art. 1 gave information to and had a discussion with a group of boys in the age of 10-15 years of *MaJo*, using a movie (*Color me bad*) about a Moroccan boy who falls in love with his karate teacher (Art. 1, 2012). Thus, in this case, a connection has been made between the domains of sports and non-western communities. It was tried to also organize a football game between a team of *MaJo* and a team of gays, but this failed because of different reasons (Ibid.). Unfortunately, thereafter no activities have been organized by the ambassadors in relation to sports and non-western communities anymore.

Although the attention being paid to these fields got stuck, just like in Rotterdam, different interviewees indicate the importance of paying attention to these domains. In the case of sports, also here, the interviewees mainly focus on men's soccer. The policy advisor tells how, in a broader sense, the municipality tries to address this issue:

[d]uring two years of gay-ambassadors in the field of sports we concluded that the taboo on homosexuality prevails strongest within soccer clubs. We concluded that during national Coming Out Day (...) [2012], when the theme homosexuality in the domain of sports was discussed (...) [during the Pink Breakfast]. Consequently, we adjusted the covenant between the KNVB [, the Dutch soccer association,] and the municipality of Alkmaar. (...) One of the agreements within the covenant (...) is 'safe sports' and we now have added discrimination and homosexuality to the covenant. So that means that there will be structural focus on discrimination, and mainly discrimination on being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, now.

However, others are less optimistic about this. For example, the former chairman of *COC NHN* states: "[t]here still is a lot of initial hesitation, especially in case of larger clubs". He therefore states that it might be good to start approaching smaller clubs. However, the case of Rotterdam shows that this is not necessarily an easy route either. It has not become clear how the topic of sports will be taken up further in the context of the gay-ambassadorship in Alkmaar. Recently, a new ambassador has been appointed for this field, but she has not been active yet.

It is the plan to also pay more attention to non-western communities under the broader header of 'diversity and tolerance' in the future. According to the policy advisor, the new ambassador for this 'field' will focus on churches in Alkmaar and on "(...) non-western religions from the perspective of diversity". Concrete examples of scheduled actions and activities are asking

churches and mosques to raise the rainbow flag during the *Pink Week* and organizing panel discussions about sexuality (Ibid.).

4.3.4 First conclusions

Just like for the case of Rotterdam, different characteristics of the ambassadorship can be distinguished for the case of Alkmaar. Clearly, the example of Rotterdam has been followed. Regarding the role and position of the ambassadors, a couple of central features can be highlighted. The ambassadors in Alkmaar:

- have been appointed by the Board of Mayor and Alderman;
- are at the same time independent volunteers who receive a volunteers fee;
- could be seen as an addition to policy-making;
- generally are not real heavyweights, but do have a connection with the field they are deployed for;
- are supposed to be supported by the municipality, COC NHN, Art.1 and an advisory board;
- have been visible in different kinds of ways, ranging from by ringing the cheese bell at the beginning of the *Pink Week* to by standing at the schoolyard of schools to promote 'pink activities'.

The ambassadors have been appointed to improve the openness for discussion about the LGBT-topic in the fields of secondary education, sports, healthcare and 'non-western communities'. Their task is formulated in terms of possibilities to approach organizations in different fields, to work together with existing organizations in Alkmaar, to give solicited and unsolicited advice to the municipality, to propose activities and to come with creative ideas. It seems that the involvement of the ambassadors has been a combination of high-level talks and practical effort, with an emphasis on the latter. Mainly, it seems to be very much about creating connections and organizing activities.

Two ambassadors have focused on the field of education. They (indirectly) have contributed to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs there by organizing activities, such as a debate on Purple Friday, making LGBT(-organizations and activities) visible at schoolyards, giving information in classes and having conversations with managements. Doors have been opened for the information supply of the COC and activities during the Pink Week have been promoted. Second, the group of seniors has mainly been approached by talking with retirement homes about for example the *Roze Loper*, organizing pink salons in retirement homes during the Pink Week and organizing meetings for seniors outside care homes. Also here, doors have been opened. Furthermore, the activities have contributed to creating visibility and openness for discussion at a personal level. Finally, in the fields of sports and non-western-communities the contribution of the ambassadors has been small. However, there have been some talks and discussions.

Also in this case, different obstacles seem to have influenced the contribution of the ambassadors. Main obstacles on the 'organizing side' that have been mentioned are difficulties with finding appropriate persons to fulfil the role of ambassador, a not so well functioning guidance of the ambassadors, lack of commitment of a part of the ambassadors and a mission that was not always clear enough. Furthermore, the goodwill of people in the different societal fields is also deemed to be important here.

4.4 Capelle aan den IJssel: turning to a ‘hands-on ambassadorship’?

4.4.1 Research considerations

To gain a better insight into the contribution of the gay-ambassadors in Capelle aan den IJssel, four people were interviewed: the involved policy advisor of the municipality and the three involved gay-ambassadors. The choice has been made to not approach the involved alderman, because the gay-ambassadors have not been active very long yet and because it was thought that the interviews that were held give a fairly complete view of what has been happening in Capelle over the past year and a half. Furthermore, the case of Capelle turned out to be relatively clear, because there have been no significant changes in the involvement of gay-ambassadors and people of the municipality so far.

4.4.2 Role and position of the ambassadors

In Capelle aan den IJssel, shaping specific LGBT-policy started in 2012 with joining the Local LGBT-policy program (Zilla van der Stap, policy advisor). The example of the gay-ambassadorship in Rotterdam has served as the starting point for the ambassadorship in Capelle aan den IJssel. In the local action plan that has been written in light of the Local LGBT-policy program, it can be read that:

[i]n Rotterdam, the last couple of years gay-ambassadors have been deployed with great success to create openness for discussion about gay-emancipation. Following the good example of Rotterdam, we also want to deploy ambassadors. Via board/management they focus on creating openness for discussion within the sectors primary- and secondary education and eldercare. If the ambassadors signal that education or advice somewhere else in the social field is deemed necessary, this can be anticipated to. We expect own initiative and commitment of them.

We expect our ambassadors to be involved in the city and to have a large network. They must ensure that schools and care institutions anchor the acceptance of homosexuality and the approach against gay-intolerance in their policy. It is intended that the ambassadors have an independent position. We thus believe that it is important that there is a good connection between the ambassadors and practice. The ambassadors receive expenses for their services. (Freely translated from Dutch; Gemeente Capelle aan den IJssel, n.d.)

These expenses amount 2500 Euros per year for all ambassadors together (Ibid.).

Importantly, the policy advisor indicates that the ambassadors should figure as ‘business card’ and as ‘driver’

[e]specially since...for us, it was quite a new field...it was the idea that (...) it is nice when you have people who are enthusiastic, who have a network, who can boost others, can stimulate people. So (...) more from the side of chances, it has been looked at what gay-ambassadors could mean for us (...).

The ambassadors have been chosen in a pretty informal way by the involved alderman (Ibid.). The three ambassadors are, respectively, a politician, a dance school owner and a physiotherapist. Clearly, just like in the case of Alkmaar, they are not real 'heavyweights'. Before they really became active, the ambassadors were trained by *RotterdamV* (e.g. Marijke Gerritsma, director *RotterdamV*). The policy advisor tells that she has tried to look for a link between policy on the one hand and the deployment of the gay-ambassadors on the other hand. This means that the ambassadors have been asked to commit to one of the goals the municipality has formulated in its policy:

(...) we have [a focus on] (...) youth, seniors and children. And (...) [the ambassadors] have expressed a preference. So they have made a subdivision that they support that piece of the policy, (...) mainly focusing on when there are questions, or [when we go to] institutions or [when] there should be discussions, that they also come along or [go] themselves...And coupled to that, that they also make use of their own network (...), that they have that boosting function. When they are somewhere in the municipality, that they also bring up the gay-policy, the importance of it. (Ibid.)

However, the policy advisor struggles with the question how the involvement of the gay-ambassadors should be combined with the necessary progress of policy developments:

[s]o, (...) bluntly...I think, well, (...) I facilitate, support, give information and phone numbers, I say where the networks are and they are going to do it. Well, it does not work like that. (...) You gradually learn that you cannot leave that all to the ambassadors, that part. And they also want to develop initiatives themselves and see what their powers and qualities are. (...) [S]o that is still like, well, (...) [how] do you separate that a little bit? At the one hand you want to involve them and on the other hand I also continue with those talks at those schools, [with] organizing and arranging it.

Thus, the policy advisor more and more seems to focus on a role in which the ambassadors are busy with

(...) really boosting new ideas and initiatives, (...) because that is of course what you want, I think, (...) with your gay-ambassadors. Because you also say, we want LGBT [to be] more visible, openness for discussion, social acceptance and that visibility. You know, ambassadors of course make it actually visible. You have three people who in Capelle, actively stir, move, make it discussable, put it wherever they are, propagate [it]. And you also do that by [organizing] activities and initiatives. And I think it is more in that, the added value of the ambassadors, than in merely shaping policy.

Thus, the gay-ambassadorship in Capelle is also very much based on the own strength and commitment of the ambassadors to think about new initiatives and to also really implement those. However, the policy advisor also indicates that this is not always easy. Finding a balance between the efforts of the municipality on the one hand and the involvement of the ambassadors on the other remains an important issue. Next to that, the policy advisor thinks that

[t]here should also [be] people from within those organizations...(…). You can want a lot, also as municipality, you can boost it (...) as ambassador (...). And eventually you also need people in those organizations who say like, ‘yes, but we think this is important, I am just going to commit to that’. Whether it is at a school, or in (...) eldercare. And if you have a couple of those people and if you get that done, if we are going to talk about support and about embedding policy, if you can find those people, I think you have already taken a step. And of course the gay-ambassadors have a role there, because they are (...) the bo[osters] for us, they of course can communicate that passion and enthusiasm for this topic.

4.4.3 Focus and activities

The first year of the involvement of the gay-ambassadors, which officially started with raising the rainbow flag on *Coming Out Day* 2012, mainly served as a ‘start-up phase’, in which the ambassadors had to get to know the fields they would approach. Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) tells that, during the first period, the ambassadors have mainly been busy with building a network. Noes Fiolet (gay-ambassador) explains:

[y]ou actually hear pretty little about it, there is no problem on the surface, there is nothing to worry about. I thought, (...) how do I communicate with citizens, how am I going to do that? Because I want feedback. I can think what I think, but it is not about what I think, it is about what happens (...) in society. So we agreed with the three of us that we would use the first year to discover, to feel, and to look around.

The policy advisor indicates that different steps have to be taken to ensure a focus on LGBT. These are dependent on the local situation:

(...) we do not have interest groups or centres of expertise on LGBT that can (...) adopt and implement this (...). So (...) the regular institutions (...) have to start feeling and experiencing the importance, how can you carry that out within your own organization, and [how can you ensure] that it becomes something that is self-evident?

The first year was not only about scanning the fields. Different initiatives have been developed or thought of in relation to children, youth and seniors. Importantly, the policy advisor emphasises that it is no target group policy, but that emphases have been chosen to give the ambassadors a certain direction and that the question to also pay attention to LGBTs within policy is also raised in other areas than those which the ambassadors are involved in. Next to focusing on various societal domains, one of the ambassadors has been busy with developing and broadcasting a radio program and the ambassadors participated in organizing a *Pink Week*.

- **Children and youth**

One ambassador (Christel Gevers) has mainly been busy with focusing on children and another ambassador (Ben Groos) has mainly focused on youth. An important part of this focus is approaching primary and secondary education. The policy advisor explains:

[w]e want to reach primary education, that they pay attention to sexual diversity, that LGBT is put on the agenda, safety, well, that kind of items. (...) And then you have secondary education, (...) also there you want to have conversations with those schools, like, what do they already do with sexual diversity, (...) are they busy with it at all, why or why not? Well, of course [we] tried to have (...) that kind of exploratory talks with education.

Thus, also here, a broader incorporation of the LGBT-topic has been chosen for. Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) tells that she thinks it is the goal that all children “(...) know that it is ok who they are”. “So I actually want to embed that, that you can meet each other as human being. That, accidentally, orientation is linked to that, yes, that is the way it is, you should not complicate that” (Ibid.).

The policy advisor explains how the ambassadors have helped in hooking up with the obligation for schools to pay attention to sexual diversity:

(...) that (...) was a nice point to hook up, like, well, we [the municipality] are also active now in the field of sexual diversity and we can support you when it comes to (...) educational programs. So (...) [the municipality] purchased (...) lessons for primary education, and the gay-ambassadors can tell about that, or they can talk at schools. (...) [W]e for example wrote a letter, the gay-ambassador who aims at children in primary education wrote a letter to tell something.

Just like in Alkmaar, a higher-level approach of managements and boards has been combined with a lower-level approach of teachers and students by giving education:

(...) you start with the management or the school board. (...) [Y]ou have a couple of conversations with them and then you indicate (...) ‘what are we going to do, what can they expect of us, who are we?’ And (...) thereafter we (...) actually start with the students already. So yes, [that] simply is a classroom full of students and then we just give information (...) [a]nd involve them very closely in it. (Ben Groos, gay-ambassador)

Different interviewees make clear that this process has not been very easy in all cases. Ben Groos tells that gaining access to schools “(...) was quite an issue. (...) [Y]ou cannot just enter there, because they find it all just a bit scary and [on] the other side they are like, well, so be it, you know. (...) And that works quite well now. Finally”. He explains that the ease to enter schools also depends on the signature of schools: “[a]nd then of course you have the pretty heavily Reformed schools in Capelle...there it surely is more difficult. (...) They just keep the door closed” . The policy advisor tells that she

(...) really receive[s] e-mails from schools (...) ‘Homosexuality is a sensitive issue for us. Thanks for...’. Ok. Well, then there is lots of work to be done. (...) I have to embed policy and these people still think that we are absolutely not going to talk about it ‘because homosexuality is really sensitive to our students’.

Thus, it turns out that it is not always easy to bring the topic to the attention, but different openings are created now.

Next to contacts with schools, there has also been contact with the *Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin* (Centre for Youth and Family), which is an information centre for parents and carers who have questions about raising their children (see www.cjg.nl). The policy advisor explains

(...) that of course covers everything. (...) [W]e also see that as a partner (...) to also carry our policy, hopefully, (...) in the future. So we have also involved them. When we have conversations there about possibilities and trainings and what do you do about...Well, Christel is also involved in that.

Noes Fiolet (gay-ambassador) makes clear that it is not so easy to properly embed the topic in the activities of the Centre for Youth and Family. For example, he tells that, last year, an open week was held there, as part of which a meeting about diversity and LGBT was organized. Two of the ambassadors were there, but apart from them, only two people joined the meeting. Noes Fiolet also thinks that LGBT is still a difficult topic to talk about there more generally. The policy advisor tells that the municipality tries to respond to this by for example offering training of professionals within the centre about the LGBT-topic, which is provided by the earlier mentioned antidiscrimination bureau for the Rotterdam region, *RADAR*. This organization also provides guest lectures and training at schools in Capelle. Thus, both the ambassadors and professional organizations play a role in signalling and dealing with LGBT-issues in relation to children and youth.

Clearly, a start has been made to create awareness about the LGBT-topic at schools and in the Centre for Youth and Family in various ways. Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) states that she thinks she has “pretty well succeeded” in “(...) approaching as many large organizations as possible, (...) to do projects with these, that these will carry [the policy] along”. However, different steps still have to be taken to really integrate the attention for LGBT-issues at schools and in the Centre for Youth and Family. Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) also indicates that she thinks that it is important to assess what is happening:

[a]nd that is the question, how do you assess in the municipality what the LGBT-policy has brought? So that should be assessable (...). (...) Because I can do all kinds of things, but I have no idea what the effect is. (...) And it will undoubtedly have effect for a couple of people, but how do we know that [at] that moment it is like that and how do we know how it will be in three years?

Next to the abovementioned developments, a couple of activities for children and youth were organized during the *Pink Week*. Those will be addressed later.

- **Seniors**

Next to approaching children and youth, it was decided to focus on seniors. Noes Fiolet (gay-ambassador) has only started to talk with residential homes in the fall of 2013. The policy advisor tells that “(...) he is talking to different eldercare here and makes appointments himself and then he engages in conversations (...) about, ‘what are the views regarding this theme? Can we help each other?’”. Noes Fiolet explains that he first visited a foundation which organizes activities for pink seniors in Rotterdam to see what happens there. Furthermore, he tells:

I am talking to directors of the residential homes now and I ask them the question, (...) are there gays or lesbians or transgenders or whatever in your homes? And actually they all say very sincerely (...), 'we have to care, we have a lot of tasks and we do a lot, but it is not our first priority to think about that. But thank you for making us alert. And we are going to pay attention to it'.

Thus, he has just started with creating openings there. He explains what the next step will be: “[s]o they are going to (...) ask the staff, ‘look around you (...). Is there a need for conversations, is there a need for a pink salon (...)?’” (Ibid.). Furthermore, Noes Fiolet wants to focus on seniors outside retirement homes. Maybe he wants to organize a pink salon for seniors both inside and outside those homes in Capelle. Thus, there are ideas about ways to address the topic, but the policy advisor also makes clear that there is a long way to go: “[w]ell, before you have a *Roze Loper*, so to speak, (...) there is still something to be done”.

- **Making LGBT visible in Capelle: radio program, Twitter, rainbow pedestrian crossing**

Next to approaching children, youth and seniors, the ambassadors have proposed and developed a couple of ways to make LGBT visible and discussable in a broader context in Capelle. For example, Noes Fiolet (gay-ambassador) has invented and implemented a radio program about LGBT-issues, called *Uit de kast* ('Out of the closet'). The program is broadcasted monthly with the help of five volunteers. All kinds of LGBT-related issues are discussed in it. It is clearly meant to create broad awareness about LGBT:

(...) the program is not meant for gays among themselves or for lesbians or whatever. The program is meant for grandpa, grandma, dad, mum, factory employee, schools, migrants, (...) that whole bunch together, who can think what they think, but who at least listen to it and (...) because of that maybe (...) a little more question marks [will be] removed (...).

The policy advisor thinks

(...) that [radio program] is of course a real ambassador's initiative. (...) Look, in advance you cannot imagine as municipality, 'well, we would like to have a radio program'. No, that is of course something that is precisely so good and nice when an ambassador pitches that and says like, 'hey, I am going to commit myself to get that, because I think it is important, I know people, I have ideas for a program and we are going to broadcast every month and we just make sure that there is a medium for LGBT in Capelle'.

Although it is not totally clear what this radio program contributes to the visibility and social acceptance of LGBTs in Capelle at large, Noes Fiolet (gay ambassador) states:

(...) I think that if you constantly put out that communication, (...) that is effective. But I also notice that because of that [radio program] people get in touch with each other. (...) Because of that radio program, you have a sort of magnetic force, you meet people, and you couple them to other people and, yes, that works well.

Next to this, Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) started with using Twitter to communicate about LGBT-issues and

(...) collecting as much followers as possible on Twitter. Well, that does not go very fast, but there are a couple of politicians in Capelle who are joining, so in that way, yes, I actually constantly just want to put facts on Twitter, like, (...) look at this, striking. (...) and then I hope that tweeters will tweet and pass on a lot.

Finally, the ambassadors have proposed to create a pink or rainbow pedestrian crossing, but this does not turn out to be easily realizable, because there are different parties that have to agree with this plan (Ibid.; Noes Fiolet, gay-ambassador).

- **Pink Week**

As a kind of ‘climax’ of the first year of the deployment of gay-ambassadors in Capelle aan den IJssel, a *Pink Week* was organized from 5 to 12 October 2013. During this week, paying attention to specific domains and a focus on enhancing the visibility and social acceptance in the municipality at large were bundled. Different concrete activities were organized in cooperation with various organizations in Capelle. The *Pink Week* had *LGBT is okay* as its slogan and *coming out is something you do together* as its main theme (Christel Gevers, gay ambassador; Zilla van der Stap, policy advisor): “[o]f course it is not totally the same, but also as heterosexual you can come ‘out of the closet’. You do this by making clear to your surroundings that you accept homosexuality” (Gemeente Capelle aan den IJssel, 2013). A poster, a flyer and pink glasses were distributed for promotion of the week. The policy advisor tells that (...) [the ambassadors] have really thought along about what the poster should look like, the flyer, what kind of slogan, which content is important? We are going to schools, what do we want to communicate? (...) So elaborating creative ideas (...). Thus, also in this case the ambassadors had been busy with thinking about making LGBT visible and creating openness for discussion in a very practical way. As opening of the week, the aforementioned radio program was broadcasted and the involved alderman was interviewed for this. Furthermore, the gay-ambassadors handed out flyers and pink glasses at a secondary school in Capelle, the local theatre broadcasted a pink movie, the local art group organized a painting activity for children and for adults, one of the ambassadors gave guest lectures at a school, another ambassador read out a booklet about sexual diversity to children in the library, a lecture/musical performance was organized in a café in cooperation with the library, the alderman raised the rainbow flag at the town hall, pink cakes were handed out to all visitors of the town hall, a coloured ball was passed on and signed by different participating organizations in Capelle, a café served a pink menu, the art library gave ‘pink discount’ on art and an exhibition about bisexuality was organized in cooperation with the Dutch national Network for Bisexuality (*Netwerk Biseksualiteit*) in the dance school of one of the ambassadors (Gemeente Capelle aan den IJssel, 2013; different interviews). Thus, various activities were carried out to make LGBT visible and create openness for discussion about it in the municipality.

The interviewees are quite positive about the *Pink Week*. However, it is not totally clear what organizing such a week leads to. Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) states:

(...) I worked on it with a lot of pleasure, I just do not know what the effect is. Because, (...) if you have such a city in which all kinds of things happen, then...although what we do already seems quite a lot, it probably will be as nothing in comparison to all other kinds of things. So I

don't know which effect it has, but it has been noticed. People who come to the town hall have seen it. (...) And there also were more people there at raising the [rainbow] flag than last year (...). But you know, there are still some things to happen, I think.

The policy advisor notices that the involvement of different kinds of local partners is very positive: “(...) you put people in motion to think about it (...). You can ask partners very focused questions”. It also turned out that, after starting with the ‘known partners’, also other initiatives were developed as a kind of ‘spin-off’ (Ibid.). Also Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador) sees that the Pink Week has been a nice way to build a network. Thus, being busy with such an event clearly generates something, but the exact impact is unclear.

4.4.4 First conclusions

This discussion of the case of the deployment of gay-ambassadors in Capelle aan den IJssel makes clear that the appointment of gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam has been taken as an example. Summarizing the role and the position of the ambassadors in Capelle, it can be stated that they:

- have been chosen in an informal way by the alderman;
- operate in a new policy field for Capelle aan den IJssel;
- are independent volunteers who receive expenses for their involvement;
- are not real heavyweights and still had to get to know the relevant networks;
- are supposed to have a ‘boosting’ function.

First, it was thought that the ambassadors should mainly focus on boards and managements of organizations. However, looking at their involvement so far, it can be stated that the ambassadors have mainly been busy in a quite practical way. During the first year of their involvement, they have primarily been busy with scanning the fields. However, different substantive things have happened as well.

The ambassadors have been involved in some higher-level talks with organizations, such as schools and care homes, in the fields of children, youth and eldercare, but they mainly have been busy with taking practical initiatives, such as broadcasting a radio program and (helping with) organizing activities during the *Pink Week*. Thus, they have mainly combined creating openness for discussion with making LGBT visibility in very practical ways. Clearly, a start has been made with opening doors in different fields and organizations, but there are still many steps to be taken.

Important in this case is the struggle of the policy advisor with respect to the questions to what extent she should involve the ambassadors at the policy level and whether it would be better to mainly involve the ambassadors in a more hands-on way. Also here, it is stated that people from within the organizations the ambassadors approach need to commit to paying attention to LGBT-issues.

4.5 Further deepening the understanding of the deployment of gay-ambassadors

The discussions of the cases in this chapter have helped to gain a better insight into what is happening in the different case municipalities with regard to the deployment of gay-ambassadors. A first step has been taken in answering the question how the ambassadors contribute to the visibility

and the acceptance of LGBT people in their municipality and the final research question on the implications of the findings for the possible appointment of gay-ambassadors in other cities in the Netherlands. However, a next overarching step is needed to come to a more integral picture and to come to a further basis for answering these questions. This can be done by comparing and by further deepening aspects of the cases, using the ideas and concepts that have been presented in the theoretical framework and the broader context that has been sketched in the project framework. This connection leads to the following list of central issues:

- Gay-ambassadors as pullers, connectors and networkers in a network/participation society
- Being LGBT as gay-ambassador and thinking in terms of LGBT
- Influence of context
- Gay-ambassadors and other actors as 'visible key individuals' or individual 'champions'
- Influencing the meanings and materiality of space
- Thinking in terms of formal and symbolic citizenship
- Thinking in terms of the right to the city and the right to difference
- Dealing with the presence of heteronormative structures
- The position of 'other groups'
- Influence of future developments

In the final chapter, this analysis and interpretation process will culminate in a conclusion. Practical recommendations regarding the appointment of gay-ambassadors, recommendations for further research and a discussion of the research process, research methods and research results will be an important part of this.

Chapter 5 Comparing the cases

Here, the different important aspects of the role, the position and the contribution of the ambassadors that have been listed in paragraph 4.5 will be paid (further) attention to in a cross-case way, thus coming to a more integral and general view of the (possible) contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs. Clearly, the theoretical ideas that have been presented in chapter 2 will provide guidance for a further discussion of the cases.

5.1 Gay-ambassadors as pullers, connectors and networkers in a network/participation society

In all cases, cooperation between citizens, societal organizations and the local government turns out to be of importance. The ways in which the case municipalities try to cooperate with ambassadors and stakeholders in different societal fields comply with the ideas about the 'network society' and the 'participation society' that have been discussed in subparagraph 2.1.1. A contribution to the local LGBT-policy is expected of volunteering citizens, of professional organizations and LGBT-interest organizations and of various stakeholders and parties in different societal fields. However, it does not always seem to be easy to organize this cooperation. For example, in Rotterdam, creating a good link between knowledge centers and the ambassadors, so that knowledge and experiences could be exchanged, did not work out in the intended way. In Alkmaar, the municipality, *Article 1* and *COC NHN* struggle with finding a good division of labor and a good structure for supervising the ambassadors. In Capelle aan den IJssel, the policy advisor struggles with the question what she can and cannot expect of the ambassadors in relation to the policy she has to implement.

The ambassadors are volunteers of whom a lot of input is expected. Mainly, both their position which is linked to the municipality and their freedom and independent position are insisted on. Although in slightly different ways, in all cases the ambassadors are expected and stimulated to take action themselves and to function as 'boosters'. This matches the ideas the Dutch national government has about the own responsibility of citizens more generally. However, in all cases, no matter how the local field is organized, the municipality is still seen as having the final responsibility for shaping LGBT-policy and taking LGBT-emancipation forward. Thus, there is an important interplay between municipal policy on the one hand and actively engaging citizens on the other. It seems that proper guidance of the municipality remains necessary and that it is too early to say that citizens, societal organizations and governments work together as equal partners. Next to that, in all cases giving feedback to the municipality about what is happening in different societal fields is a central part of the ambassadorship. Thus, more participation is expected, but municipalities should still be seen as being in charge.

There are various ideas about the role and function of gay-ambassadors and the activities they have undertaken. In Rotterdam, the ambassadors very much cling to a, on the one hand, formal and, on the other hand, more or less independent role of 'crowbar' and 'connector'. Although the ideas about this are slightly changing, the ambassadors are still predominantly people with large networks who are mainly busy with creating openness for discussion about the LGBT-topic within different societal fields, creating openings for the supply of implementing organizations there and providing insight into what is happening in different fields to the municipality. In Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel, such a role has been taken as a starting point as well. However, in Alkmaar and Capelle, this role has become mixed with an active educating and organizing role at a lower level. Rotterdam has

mainly stuck to a high-level approach of the managements and boards of organizations in the fields of education and sports, whereas in the municipalities of Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel, the ambassadors have predominantly been able to organize and/or participate in activities at a lower level in different domains. Despite these differences, it could be stated that the role of the ambassadors in all case municipalities meets the definitions of ‘pullers’ and ‘connectors’ to a greater or lesser extent, as many of them are motivated to take the lead and to bridge gaps.

In all cases, it is stated that having and/or creating networks is an important aspect of the ambassadorship. Mainly, it is thought that it would work best to appoint ambassadors who already have large networks in their municipality. As the case of Capelle aan den IJssel for example shows, deploying ambassadors with a lack of knowledge about the relevant networks in the municipality can have a slowing effect on really starting with doing things. This might implicate that, in line with the ideas of some interviewees in the cases of Rotterdam and Alkmaar, it is important to appoint ambassadors who already have large networks and who know who and how they should approach. However, the various cases also show that finding such people is not always easy. For example, in the case of Alkmaar, an extensive recruitment process and searching via networks of the municipality, the antidiscrimination bureau and the interest organization COC did not bring a stable group of committed ambassadors with large networks. Thus, finding the ‘right’ persons can be a major issue, although the interpretation of ‘right’ also depends on the ways the ambassadors are deployed. Furthermore, as the case of Rotterdam shows, having large networks does not always seem to be a reason to actively and visibly couple the gay-ambassadorship to these. Thus, although networks are very important, it does not always seem to be easy to take advantage of those or to create those.

5.2 Linking the contact hypothesis to the importance of being LGBT and thinking in terms of LGBT

In subparagraph 2.1.2, it was stated that the contact hypothesis could be coupled to the importance of being LGBT as gay-ambassador. During the research it appeared that all gay-ambassadors are lesbian or gay themselves, except for one former ambassador in Alkmaar. Different interviewees think it is good that the ambassadors are part of the ‘group’ of LGBTs themselves and this is also seen as a basis for ‘good’ gay-ambassadorship by various interviewees. This, then, resonates with the presumption that the ambassadors should be L, G, B or T themselves in order to reach a positive influence on the attitudes towards LGBT people. For example, Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador in Rotterdam) almost literally articulates the contact hypothesis as has been discussed in the theoretical chapter. He states that

(...) being confronted with someone who stands as equal across from you and who you have to recognize as somebody with whom you can talk reasonably en who also totally is not bad or sinful or mean or weird, dirty, (...) yes, it is necessary that that is enclosed.

Also Sana el Fizazi (former policy advisor in Rotterdam) thinks this is of importance,

[be]cause (...) [the ambassadors] really speak from norms, motivation and commitment. Because they often really have experiences which obstacles and barriers (...). If you, so to speak, have someone who cannot really speak about ‘I’, but says ‘research has shown that it is all very difficult’, then that is a very different message.

Kees Vrijdag (gay-ambassador in Rotterdam) connects this to the literal meaning of the term ambassador: “[i]f you are an ambassador, [and] you are sent with a certain mission, then it also has to be (...) credible that you stand for something”. The director of *Art. 1* in Alkmaar couples his idea about LGBT gay-ambassadors to the concept of emancipation:

(...) there are enough gays, there are enough lesbians, there are enough transgenders. Let them speak for themselves (...). And I think, if you take an ambassador who is not part of the target group, (...) someone is going to talk about the other group. I think, the basis of emancipation is that people are going to say their own thing.

However, different other interviewees do not think the gay-ambassadors should necessarily be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender themselves. For example, the director of *RotterdamV* is very definite about the unimportance of being LGBT as gay-ambassador:

(...) it is not true that (...) you can only talk about this issue with others when you are gay yourself. The point is whether you can stand for a specific objective and whether you want to work hard for this. That is more important than being part of the target group yourself.

Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador in Capelle aan den IJssel) states, based on her own experiences: “(...) I do not think that is so important (...). (...) [Y]ou (...) might think, yes, you are lesbian or bisexual, [but] I really did not know anything about that. (...) I might know less than a straight man or woman who has delved into that [topic]”. Also Ben Groos (gay-ambassador in Capelle) thinks that both LGBTs and straight people could be a gay-ambassador: “[w]ell, I think it would also be nice if there would be a heterosexual, (...) because he might see it from a different perspective, so to speak (...)”. This idea of a ‘mix’ of ambassadors in terms of appointing both homosexuals and heterosexuals is also suggested by others. For example, the policy advisor in Rotterdam tells:

(...) I more and more hear the statement that the heterosexual is the best ambassador. And initially, the problem is related to the heterosexual, because he has the prejudices and he is the one who sometimes goes too far in insulting or even beating up gay people or even goes beyond that.

These examples make clear that there are different, sometimes rival, ideas about the question whether a gay-ambassador should be LGBT him- or herself or not. This also makes it hard to come to conclusions about the question whether the contact hypothesis should be taken as starting point and whether it should be assumed that it would work best if the ambassadors would be LGBT themselves. Thus, the presumption that the ambassadors should be L, G, B, or T themselves in order to reach a positive influence on the attitudes towards LGBT people cannot unanimously be endorsed. Different interviewees support it, but there are valid counterarguments as well.

Interestingly, linked to this discussion about whether the ambassadors should be LGBT themselves or not, different people seem to have difficulties with thinking in terms of ‘LGBT’. For example, the director of *Art. 1* in Alkmaar and Mark Harbers (gay-ambassador in Rotterdam) indicate that lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders cannot simply be taken together as one ‘group’, while this is being done by politicians and interest groups. It seems to be easier or more appropriate to think in terms of ‘gay and lesbian’ or in broader terms of ‘(sexual) diversity’. For example, the ways

the topic has been discussed in the field of education in Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle makes clear that the ambassadors, in their talks with boards and managements of schools and in giving information to students, mainly seem to have focused on the broader idea of '(sexual) diversity'. Coupled to this, Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador in Capelle) thinks that the name 'gay-ambassador' does not fit well to what she is doing, "(...) because that would only say something about the gays. Of course, that is not like that at all. So I think that is actually too limited. And I think that an ambassador for diversity fits much better (...)".

Thus, there are different ideas about what and who the ambassadors should actually focus on. On the one hand, different interviewees think that the ambassadors should approach diversity in an inclusive way, but calling them 'gay-ambassadors' or 'pink ambassadors' boasts certain expectations about their focus that can more easily be coupled to thinking in terms of 'gays and lesbians'. Question is whether people for example also see bisexuals and transgenders as being part of this. This idea is further strengthened by the fact that in none of the case municipalities a transgender is active as ambassador. Difficulties with also focusing on this 'group' in practice corresponds with what has been sketched in the project framework and theoretical framework about policy and research that have a stronger history and current focus with regard to gays and lesbians than to LGBTs as one 'group'. On the other hand, it is also doubted whether the umbrella term 'LGBT' works so well. So, the question remains what and who the ambassadors should focus on and what kind of 'profile' these ambassadors should have themselves. It mainly seems to be important to make choices in this respect and to communicate unambiguously about this.

Furthermore, an important remark regarding the contact hypothesis is that the role of equal status contact between LGBTs and heterosexuals can be influenced by the broader social and normative context in which this takes place. Although findings that assume that equal status contact between LGBTs and heterosexuals has a positive influence on the attitudes towards LGBTs have been taken as a starting point in this research, the case analyses make clear that different contexts and backgrounds of people could influence the receptivity of people, even for only talking about LGBT-issues. For example, there seem to be clear differences in the ease to enter in different fields and domains. The assumed differences between the receptivity of the field of education and the soccer clubs in Rotterdam could be taken as an example. Furthermore, there also appear to be differences within these domains. For example, in the case of Capelle aan den IJssel, an ambassador noted that the difference in signature between schools could influence the accessibility by giving the example of Reformed schools that keep their doors closed. Although these differences have not been underpinned substantively and investigated systematically in this research, these findings nevertheless indicate that context and background should not be lost out of sight.

5.3 Gay-ambassadors and stakeholders as individual 'champions' or 'visible key individuals'

In the theoretical framework, much emphasis has been put on making LGBTs more visible by the commitment of 'visible key individuals'. Repeatedly, it was assumed that it is important for ambassadors to act as such to improve the acceptance of LGBTs. However, interestingly, not all interviewees see this as central to the gay-ambassadorship. Different interviewees, mainly in the case of Rotterdam, see a role 'on the background' and talking to specific high-level people, such as managements and boards, as decisive for the ambassadorship and believe that acting as 'visible key individuals' should be left to, for example, educators of the COC. In the cases of Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel, the ambassadors seem to fulfill a combined role as a 'diplomat' on a higher level and

of visibly and actively engaging with lower levels as the best way to deploy ambassadors. These considerations can also be related to the question whether the ambassadors should act as role models for (parts of) the 'group' of LGBTs, as acting as such seems to imply that the ambassadors should act as 'visible key individuals' themselves.

It is important to note that the choice of a specific interpretation of how ambassadors should help to make different spaces more appropriate for LGBT-citizens clearly seems to depend on the local context. Based on the case study, two main 'kinds' of deployment can be distinguished: operating at the level of boards and managements and operating at the level of for example teachers, students and residents of care homes. In Rotterdam, a diplomatic focus has been deliberately chosen for, in which creating openness for discussion about LGBT-issues is the main focus and which could, in turn, create openings for the municipality and other organizations to work further on LGBT-emancipation in more concrete terms. In Alkmaar, such a connecting role has been combined with the idea of a more hands-on ambassadorship in which the ambassadors organize and take part in activities on a lower level. There, the ambassadors have eventually been mostly busy at this more executive level. This seems to be quite similar in Capelle aan den IJssel. This seems to be linked to the 'type' of ambassadors that has been found. In Rotterdam, mainly real 'heavyweights' have been found, whereas in Alkmaar and Capelle ambassadors have been deployed who mainly do not have so much experience with communicating at the level of managements, boards and policy and/or do not know the relevant organizations and networks in their municipality (yet) and who have much more of a hands-on mentality. In the future, the 'diplomatic role' of the (part of the) ambassadors in Rotterdam might also change, as they are also start thinking about appointing more other 'types' of ambassadors there.

The different cases show that the special position of the ambassadors that is linked to the municipality could give a certain legitimacy that could help to open doors in different societal fields. This has more or less worked this way in the various case municipalities. However, just being an ambassador on behalf of the municipality is not a guarantee for success. It remains difficult to get access to different domains. It becomes very clear in all of the cases that the preconditions, tasks and expectations of the ambassadorship should be well defined. However, also the idea that not everything can be secured by this resonates. What can be achieved is also deemed to depend on the goodwill of different people, not only of the ambassadors themselves, but also of people within the local government and within different domains and organizations. Thus, it could be stated that also there people should act as individual 'champions' or 'visible key individuals'. This, then, can be linked to the discussion of the research of Cooper et al. (2003) and Richardson and Monro (2013) that has been referred to in the theoretical framework. Clearly, notwithstanding the fact that the ambassadors have been appointed to bridge a gap between policy and practice, in this case between the municipal policy and what happens in various societal domains, the cases show that this 'implementation gap' between policy and practice, in the words of Richardson and Monro, still cannot so easily be overcome. Goodwill and good ideas alone are not enough, commitment and persistence of the ambassadors and key individuals within the local government and within different domains and organizations are necessary.

5.4 Influencing the meanings and materiality of space

In the previous chapter, various examples have been presented of ways the gay-ambassadors try to contribute to improving the visibility and acceptance of LGBT people. The ambassadors have strived for different goals and have developed, tried to develop or will develop various activities in the fields of education (Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel), seniors (Alkmaar and Capelle), sports (Rotterdam and Alkmaar) and non-western communities (Rotterdam and Alkmaar). Thus, the ambassadors have been deployed to focus on different societal fields that are central to the national Dutch policy goals for the improvement of the social acceptance of LGBTs. Based on the local contexts and goals, different emphases have been chosen. Furthermore, the ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle have developed and/or taken part in activities that are not tied to specific fields, but that more or less focus on improving visibility and social acceptance in the municipality at large, such as the panel for the pink event in Rotterdam and the radio program and the Pink week in Capelle aan den IJssel.

Clearly, beyond the various ideas about the implementation and the results of the ambassadorship in the different cases, it can be stated that the ambassadors have tried and still try to influence the meanings and materiality of spaces in their municipality. Different examples have been given of the exclusive effect of city-space that has been paid attention to in the theoretical framework and to how this could be dealt with. The ambassadors mainly seem to have focused on increasing the openness for discussion about LGBT-issues on different levels and in different societal domains, which could be translated in the idea that they have dominantly dealt with influencing the meanings of different spaces. By triggering people to think about LGBT-issues, space is created to think about ways the 'group' LGBTs should be paid attention to in different fields and groups. The examples of the deployment of the gay-ambassadors in the field of education in Rotterdam and the ideas of the gay-ambassador for seniors in Alkmaar make clear that it is assumed in different cases that implementing organizations and other people can hook up to the openings the ambassadors create by talking or organizing activities. So, indeed, it is clearly the intention that 'local affiliations', in the terms of Gilbert and Dikeç (2008), have a dominant role in taking the acceptance of LGBTs, and thus citizenship, forward.

By organizing and taking part in activities such as the assessment of a pink event in Rotterdam and the Pink Week in Alkmaar and Capelle, the ambassadors are engaged in influencing the materiality of spaces as well. The examples that were given of possible aspects of the pink event in Rotterdam, such as a pink fountain, show that the ambassadors, although they mainly do not see this as their main task, have contributed to thinking about ways to make LGBT physically visible in the city. Examples like raising the rainbow flag and thinking about a rainbow pedestrian crossing (in Capelle aan den IJssel) also show that part of the ambassadors is involved in (thinking about) making LGBT physically visible and thus (temporary) changing the materiality of city space.

5.5 Thinking in terms of formal and symbolic citizenship: the example of the field of education

In all municipalities, there is a focus on the acceptance of being LGBT in the living environment. The exact focus varies per municipality. However, national goals are clearly reflected at the local level. In all municipalities, focus is mainly put on creating openness for discussion about (sexual) diversity. This, then, could be seen as a step being made towards the improvement of social acceptance of LGBTs, which is seen here as "(...) making sure that what the law says with regard to non-

discrimination and equal rights will also belong to the norms and values of the society and its members” (Schuyf & Van Hoof, 2011, p. 7). It has already been argued that this definition closely reflects the notions of formal and symbolic citizenship as have been discussed in subparagraph 2.1.4.

The deployment of ambassadors in the field of education can be taken as an example to further substantiate this statement. Although the ambassadors act(ed) in different ways, varying from approaching managers to giving education themselves, their involvement can generally be seen as a way to create openness for discussion about sexual diversity and, thus, to contribute to improving the social acceptance of LGBTs. In Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel, the gay-ambassadors who have been active in the field of education mention the fact that paying attention to sexual diversity at schools became obligatory in 2012. Although this is not a right such as same-sex marriage, it could be argued that obliging schools to pay attention to sexual diversity can be seen as a part of formal citizenship, as this also is a legal step to improve the position of LGBTs. In Rotterdam, the ambassadors were active in the field of education before this change in legislation and this change was one of the recommendations of the ambassadors. In Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel, the involvement of the ambassadors in the field of education and the change in legislation overlapped, and different interviewees make clear how this facilitated obtaining access to schools, because these became obliged to think about ways to embed the attention being paid to sexual diversity in their educational programs. This, then, seemed to make schools more willing to think about ways to do this. It could thus be stated that a change in legislation, which could be seen as a next step in acquiring full formal citizenship, opened doors to also think about improving aspects of symbolic citizenship that can be linked to this. Thus, taking this development as an example, it could be stated that in all the municipalities, there is an interplay between formal and symbolic aspects of citizenship, between ‘what the law says’ and ‘norms and values’: a change in the law helps to create openings to discuss the acceptance of LGBTs. The pursuit of some kind of side-by-side citizenship is thus reflected in this example.

The example also shows how thinking about citizenship takes place in an interplay between different spatial levels: at the municipal level, substance is given to jointly determined ideas at the national level about taking LGBT-emancipation forward. Thus, nationally initiated resources and national developments, such as the obligation to pay attention to sexual diversity at schools, influence, in interaction with the broader local (political) context, the ways in which LGBT-issues are dealt with at the local level and, as part of this, the ways in which gay-ambassadors are deployed.

5.6 Thinking in terms of the right to the city, the right to difference and heteronormativity

Expressing the deployment of the gay-ambassadors in terms of striving for the right to the city, it could be stated that the ambassadors exactly try to contribute to the way Gilbert and Dikeç (2008) interpret Lefebvre’s right to the city as ‘the right to participate in society through everyday practices’. Clearly, the different domains that the ambassadors approach, resonate with this idea that LGBTs should have the right to participate in all kinds of domains in which daily life takes place, such as schools, sport clubs and residential homes. This desire for the ‘right to participate’, then, can be seen as a more practical, comprehensible translation of what it means to strive for visibility and social acceptance. This research has shown that the gay-ambassadors clearly contribute to shaping this endeavor by talking to different people and organizations and by the organization of and the participation to activities.

However, striving for the right to participate might, as has been discussed in subparagraph 2.2.1, be seen as a way of 'adjusting to' the heteronormativity of society (and leading to homonormativity). In the theoretical framework, the notion of heteronormativity echoed through the different topics that were treated. In the different cases, this issue also is reflected. Although this is not always made explicit, various examples make clear that the interviewees feel that they have to deal with existing norms in different domains of society that see heterosexuality as the dominant orientation. The case study makes clear that this is the case more strongly in some domains than in others and that there are also differences within these domains. First, it can be stated that heteronormativity seems to prevail strongly in the world of men's soccer. Next to that, the example of the reactions Conny van Iersel (gay-ambassador in Alkmaar) received from the retirement homes she spoke to make clear that there are also still people who believe that there are no LGBT seniors. And the examples of the reactions of some schools in Capelle aan den IJssel on the request to have a conversation on LGBT-issues shows that, also in education, where in recent years many attempts, also by force of law, have been made to bring the topic to the attention, there remain difficulties. However, the gay-ambassadors keep trying to enter also these fields and spaces and keep bringing the topic to the attention there as well. They have definitely tried to think and talk in terms of diversity. Thus, the ambassadors are clearly busy in a norm-breaking way and in a way that can be seen as striving for Lefebvre's notion of the right to difference, 'the right to not be classified forcibly into categories which have been determined by necessarily homogenizing powers'. So, indeed, the gay-ambassadors can be seen as people who are striving for full citizenship, the right to the city and the right to difference for LGBTs.

5.7 Connecting the findings to the position of 'other groups'

In subparagraph 2.2.2, the alleged negative influence of pro rights discourses for the position of 'other groups' in Dutch society has been discussed. Although this was not a main line of discussion, one of the interviewees, Herman Meijer (gay-ambassador Rotterdam) pays attention to this development:

(...) since the Netherlands have decided that the most threatening of our national culture is coming from the Muslim angle, one has effected a kind of embracement of gays, with, of course, Rita Verdonk at the forefront, because of which (...) one also has a secret agenda to bash Muslims. That is done best by making clear that we are all so terribly pro-gay. Which is also very annoying (...), I find that really disturbing sometimes.

Thus, he exactly points at central arguments about the possibly problematic contrast between a part of the alleged pro-gay tendency in the Netherlands and the position of 'other groups', mainly Muslim people, in Dutch society. However, these findings do not structurally appear in the discussion about the deployment of gay-ambassadors. Furthermore, no specific attention has been paid to the question whether it would be disadvantageous to pay attention to these groups with a same kind of focus on creating openness for discussion as the ambassadors have applied in relation to different societal fields.

Clearly, in Alkmaar and Rotterdam attempts have been made to also pay attention to the position of LGBTs in ethnic minority groups in light of the gay-ambassadorship. In Alkmaar, there have been some information activities in cooperation with a foundation for Moroccan youth in Alkmaar, but this attention has not been given a structural follow-up yet. However, a new

ambassador will possibly pay more attention to the position of LGBTs in ethnic and religious minority groups in the future. In Rotterdam, it is more and more being thought that ethnic and religious groups should also be paid attention to in light of the gay-ambassadorship, but this is not structural (yet) there either. Clearly, ambassadors have been active there who could mean something for these groups specifically, as they have a multicultural background themselves, but unfortunately they both stopped their involvement. Thus, it remains unclear how this 'group' should and will be approached.

5.8 Influence of future developments

In the previous chapters, different examples have been given of the ways the ambassadors in the case municipalities are busy with increasing the visibility and social acceptance of LGBTs. Although all kinds of obstacles that hinder a good working ambassadorship have been discussed, almost all interviewees think that the deployment of the ambassadors, whether or not under certain conditions, should be extended. However, various interviewees are well aware of the idea that the LGBT-topic should be continuously paid attention to and that ambassadors cannot be seen as the 'crux' for solving everything. For example, Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador Alkmaar) says: "(...) legally, it is all quite well. (...) But I think that dealing with homosexuality in society is a continuous process that gets different emphases the one time than the other time".

Importantly, this research was conducted at a point in time that the different case municipalities were forced to start thinking about the future of the gay-ambassadorship in their municipalities. Besides a constant emphasis on the importance of proper operating conditions for the ambassadors that could potentially be created by the different involved actors, other factors also play an important role in thinking about the future of local LGBT-emancipation policy more generally and the deployment of the gay-ambassadors more specifically. First, different interviewees state that the result of the local elections will be crucial. For example, Joke Ellenkamp (gay-ambassador Rotterdam) states about the case of Rotterdam:

[w]ell, you know, (...) if you start with something like this, I think you have to keep investing. But we will have elections on March 19th [2014]. I have no idea who will form a Board [of Mayor and Aldermen] and whether they also want (...) [the ambassadors] to stay. So that is very questionable, because if the municipal council says, 'we are not going to do it', (...) then it will just stop, because we have committed to an assignment of the municipal council.

Also interviewees in the other cases point at the local elections (which, according to Simon Broersma, (former chairman of COC NHN) will be at the end of 2014 in Alkmaar due to municipal reorganizations) as being crucial for the extension of the ambassadorship, because, in all cases, it is a politically motivated project that, in its present form, is dependent on political backing.

Furthermore, different interviewees are aware of the fact that the Local LGBT-policy program will come to an end after 2014 and that it is not clear yet whether and how this will be followed up. Because the extra financial contribution that the municipalities receive from the national government each year to develop and implement LGBT-emancipation policy may come to an end then, various interviewees doubt how this will influence the deployment of the ambassadors. This mainly seems to be an issue for smaller municipalities like Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel. For example, Conny van Iersel (gay-ambassador Alkmaar) states: "(...) once the *Koploper*-funds will be repealed, I strongly wonder what the municipality will do further". Willem Laan (former gay-ambassador Alkmaar) states more or less the same: "[I]ook, they [the municipality] get 20,000 Euros

a year now. (...) And I think 2014 is the last year. Well, I have yet to see that it continues thereafter". Finally, the involved policy advisor in Capelle aan den IJssel also pays attention to the importance of having means to continue certain activities:

(...) so we do have 20,000 [Euros] per year now and I am sure that you can also do a lot of things without money once you have put things in motion, but some means of course remain necessary. If you want to organize a Pink Week, you need means for that (...), so the municipality will have to embrace it (...). And I hope, given all the cuts and all crisis situations, that this [will happen].

Importantly, in relation to the prevailing idea that LGBT-emancipation is an ongoing process, different interviewees come to the conclusion that the time that has been given to the municipalities to embed ideas and secure results is too short. For example, with regard to the case of Capelle aan den IJssel, Christel Gevers (gay-ambassador Capelle aan den IJssel) compares the process with development aid:

[i]n that sense you first have to determine your position, get to know the people. That has happened now. I believe there is a good basis to build on, so next year [we] have to work very hard...you should almost have a big project every season. (...) [T]hat has the most effect, I think.

She adds:

(...) but I think it is needed longer, that (...) I am actually just warming up. And that there are entrances only now to build further with people, because I sincerely believe that many people really want [to do something] and that also organizations really want [to do something]. Only there where it is not fed, there it will also fade away again...It has just not sunk in, so to speak.

The involved policy advisor in Capelle aan den IJssel couples this to the idea to the goal of the national LGBT-policy program that attention for LGBT-issues should be embedded:

[a]nd that is a beautiful endeavour and I do understand it (...), but I think you can already be very happy when you get a couple of people in your municipality and within important organizations excited, passionate, who see why this topic should remain on the map, not as an extra thing or 'it is not a problem'. If you can trigger that awareness, you have already come a long way. And I hope they will say, you are doing such a good job and it needs so much time, you get money for another three years.

Thus, apart from substantive discussions about which topics should be dealt with in the future and procedural discussions about the ways in which the ambassadors should be deployed, there is also great uncertainty about the (financial) possibilities to create appropriate framework conditions for the gay-ambassadorship for and in the future.

Such doubts also apply to the situation in the city of Schiedam, which has been presented as the fourth municipality where gay-ambassadors have been appointed. Just like Alkmaar and Capelle, this municipality has followed the example of Rotterdam. However, consultation of the involved policy advisor (Ursula Ramkisoensing) there made clear that not so much has happened in Schiedam

up till now: “[i]t really only depends on the action plan and (...) that we are really going to start with this...because we really achieved nothing for a year, or a year and a half”. The policy advisor tells that

[i]t is the intention that (...) [the ambassadors] will soon start a dialogue with the care institutions and the senior associations/ -societies. In this conversation they want to inform whether these institutions have already developed policy with regard to the issue – how to deal with pink seniors. If this is not the case, they want to cooperate to bring them in contact with institutions that have developed policy for this. Soon, agreements will be made for these talks.

Thus, the activities of the ambassadors in Schiedam have yet to be started. Therefore, the case of Schiedam has not been discussed separately in the previous chapter. However, also here, deploying ambassadors is seen as a policy intervention that could help the local LGBT-policy to move forward and it is hoped that this will be continued in the future:

(...) [s]o I hope that, when it all starts moving, also with the help of [the] pink ambassadors, (...) we [will] have promoted the issue and that the municipality thinks like, we have started with something and we want to push through. It cannot be that it finally got off the ground and that it will be demolished after 2014. (Ursula Ramkisoensing, policy advisor)

Chapter 6 Conclusion, recommendations and discussion

In this concluding chapter the most important conclusions and points of discussion will be paid attention to. In paragraph 6.1, the conclusions will be structured by connecting these to the different research questions and the research goal. Thereafter, in paragraph 6.2, the research process, research method and research results will be reflected upon.

6.1 Conclusion

The goal of this research is to gain insight into the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in order to make recommendations with regard to the appointment of such ambassadors for LGBT-emancipation in municipalities in the Netherlands. First, the different lines of thought will be brought together in subparagraph 6.1.1. Thereafter, respectively in subparagraphs 6.1.2 and 6.1.3, practical recommendations and recommendations for further research will be presented that arise from the aforementioned ideas. Of course, this conclusion cannot cover all the findings of this research. For those who want to gain a deeper understanding of the cases, the previous two chapters offer a much more extensive insight.

6.1.1 *Drawing the threads together*

Clearly, after reading this research report, one should have become aware of the extensiveness and complexity of thinking about the position of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgenders in (Dutch) society and the policy that should improve this position. Research has been done on the visibility and social acceptance of this 'group' and policy has been developed to take these aspects forward in order to improve LGBT-emancipation. This research and policy are far from unambiguous. However, this does not mean that parts of the policy cannot be investigated.

It was the main goal to gain insight into one specific policy intervention that is part of the local LGBT-emancipation policy in different municipalities in the Netherlands. The cases of Rotterdam, Alkmaar and Capelle aan den IJssel have been investigated extensively, and the case of Schiedam has been looked at in addition, in order to gain more insight into the contribution of gay-ambassadors to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in these municipalities. First, answers were formulated to the first two research question in the theoretical framework (chapter 2):

How can the (possible) contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people be theorized?

and

How can the appointment of gay-ambassadors, and (Dutch) LGBT-policy ideas more generally, be looked at in contextual and critical terms?

The theoretical concepts and the contextual considerations were kept in mind while conducting the empirical research, analysis and interpretation that has been conducted to answer the third research question:

How do the gay-ambassadors in Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Capelle aan den IJssel and Schiedam contribute to the visibility and the acceptance of LGBT people in their municipality?

The analysis and interpretation of the cases yields a multifaceted picture of the deployment and contribution of the gay-ambassadors. The ambassadors have been deployed in different ways and in various societal fields. Fields have been chosen of which it is proven that there are still problems with the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs nowadays, despite the steps LGBT-emancipation has gone through in the Netherlands from the 1970s onwards. The ambassadors have mainly focused on the fields of education/children and youth, eldercare/seniors and sports. Although also a focus on ethnic and religious minority groups is deemed to be important, not so much has been done about this yet. In the field of sports, creating openings remains difficult, but based on this research, no firm conclusions can be drawn about the reasons for this. In the fields of education and eldercare, there have also been quite a lot of obstacles, but these fields generally seem to be more accessible. In the field of education, this seems to be mainly due to the legislative changes on the national policy level that force schools to pay attention to sexual diversity in their curriculum. With regard to seniors, it can be stated that initiatives like pink salons seem to have some effect. Clearly, also in these fields, several steps still need to be taken.

It has been shown that the ambassadors are volunteers who work on behalf of the municipal council and who sometimes work closely together with other organizations. They can be seen as 'boosters' who can help to take the municipal LGBT-emancipation policy forward. The precise approach and contribution of the ambassadorship varies per municipality and seems to be very dependent on the local situation and on the people who are active there. The ambassadors have mainly focused on creating openness for discussion about LGBT-issues by talking with people on different levels, varying from a focus on managements and boards of organizations to a focus on for example students, teachers and residents of care homes. Related to that, they have contributed to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in their municipality by organizing and taking part in activities. It has been shown how these talks and activities can be seen as ways the ambassadors try to influence the meanings and materiality of city space. Furthermore, it has been shown how their deployment can be seen as a way of striving for full citizenship, the right to the city and the right to difference for LGBTs.

Clearly, the concepts of visibility and acceptance are very closely interrelated and it cannot so easily be grasped what striving for these means. By applying concepts that focus on the role, position and contribution of the ambassadors, these ideas have been further substantiated and looked at from different angles. The desire for the right to the city and thus the right to participate has been presented as a more practical, comprehensible translation of what it means to strive for visibility and social acceptance.

6.1.2 Practical recommendations

In the research goal, it was stated that this research also focuses on making practical recommendations with regard to the appointment of gay-ambassadors for increasing the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in different municipalities in the Netherlands. The following research question was formulated:

What are the implications of the findings of this case study research for the possible appointment of gay-ambassadors in other municipalities in the Netherlands?

In chapters 4 and 5, obstacles which could affect the contribution of the ambassadors and possibilities to overcome these have already been paid attention to. Generally, based on this research, it could be stated that municipalities should basically pay attention to the following aspects when these want to appoint gay-ambassadors:

- Exchange experiences with other municipalities. What is (not) working well and why (not)? However, be also very aware of the fact that it is very important to adapt the ideas to the local context and to the 'type' of ambassadors ('heavyweights' vs. 'hands-on types').
- Think about how the appointment of gay-ambassadors might fit well into a broader local LGBT-emancipation policy. What is their position? What could they contribute?
- Tune in with other parties that are involved or interested, such as antidiscrimination bureaus, knowledge centers and LGBT interest organizations.
- An ambassador is not an official, but a volunteer. Adjust the tasks and expectation to this.
- Think about a clear demarcation of the tasks and expectations and about how these should be communicated to the different involved stakeholders to avoid confusion.
- A municipality should not be reliant on gay-ambassadors for carrying the local LGBT-policy. Their involvement should, emphatically, be seen as an instrument alongside other instruments and not as 'crux' that will solve everything. LGBT-emancipation is a continuous process and the appointment of gay-ambassadors could be seen as one of the tools to contribute to this.
- Pay attention to finding a *diversity* of ambassadors, depending on the tasks one wants to give them. Should they function as 'diplomats'? Should they organize activities? Should they be role models for a certain group? Focus on 'characteristics' like types of networks, knowledge, background, etcetera.
- If 'LGBT' is taken as a starting point, do not only focus on L and G, but also focus on B and T.
- Try to find enthusiastic people who already have large networks in the municipality and/or who have network and organization power.
- Weigh the costs and benefits of deploying ambassadors, taking the local context into account: can they really contribute to what is already there?

Summarizing, it could be stated that the appointment of gay-ambassadors could be a good complement to existing LGBT-policy and to the involvement of different professional organizations and interest organizations in Dutch cities. However, the different cases make very clear that a well-working ambassadorship does not come naturally. Therefore, each municipality should consider whether and how this intervention is workable in its specific context. The examples that have been given in this research and the abovementioned recommendations could contribute to this consideration process. It is not a blueprint, but a directive.

6.1.3 Recommendations for further research

Next to the practical recommendations, recommendations for further research can be formulated. A first recommendation can be related to the fact that this research was limited to the 'organizing side' of the ambassadorship. This has resulted in a one-sided picture of the gay-ambassadorship. It would be good to do further research in which also the domains the gay-ambassadors have approached would be taken into account. Only in that way, it can be said with more certainty whether the

ambassadors have really contributed to creating openness for discussion, visibility and more social acceptance there.

Furthermore, the gay-ambassadorship has turned out to be only a small aspect of Dutch LGBT-policy, as it is only one of various interventions that have been implemented by municipalities to improve LGBT-emancipation and it has only been implemented in this form in four Dutch municipalities so far. It would be good to also do research on other aspects of the LGBT-policy in order to get a broader understanding of how different interventions could contribute to the improvement of the visibility and social acceptance of LGBTs and, thus, LGBT-emancipation. It would also be good to do more research on the interplay between different kinds of policy interventions and activities that are organized by interest groups and implementing organizations. This research has made clear that these influence each other, but due to its limitations in scope, it has not become totally clear how this works. Doing this would probably lead to a better insight into the contribution of different kinds of interventions.

It would also be good to pay further attention to the terminology which can be associated with research on ways people try to make space for certain groups of people in society. For example, in relation to the 'group' of LGBTs, an important issue that keeps emerging is the fact that a lot of research and practice is formulated in terms of 'gays and lesbians' or 'sexual diversity', whereas gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders are politically approached as one 'group' of people. This fuzziness is confusing and could also affect the understanding people have for this topic.

6.2 Discussion

In this paragraph, three important aspects of the research will be reflected on. First, the research process will be discussed in subparagraph 6.2.1. Subsequently, in subparagraphs 6.2.2 and 6.2.3, the research method and the research results will be paid attention to.

6.2.1 Research process

Throughout the text, it has already become clear that different choices had to be made during the research. Most important in relation to the empirical part of the research was that the choice was made to only interview people who are or were directly involved in the deployment of the gay-ambassadors and (former) ambassadors themselves. Within this 'group', also choices had to be made about who would (not) be interviewed. The interview process went well, and within three months, 22 interviews were held and transcribed.

Although the restriction to only interview the 'organizing' side of the ambassadorship was applied in order to keep the research manageable, it was still hard to focus the research. This was first due to the fact that it was still quite hard to find out who should (not) be approached. Furthermore, this was due to the very broad framework that has been sketched. As so many topics and ideas were pointed at in the project framework, the theoretical framework and the case analysis, it was a tough task to stick to a certain line of thought. This, then, caused difficulties for shaping the analysis and the interpretation process and this also meant that the researcher had to go through an arduous process to come a cohesive conclusion. However, in the end, the researcher managed to come to interesting ideas by structurally connecting parts of theory to the empirical findings.

6.2.2 Research methods

During the research, it was tried to meet different methodological requirements. Construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability have been presented as four important requirements that should be met in case study research and it has already been stated how these requirements would be met. Here, it will be explained how these requirements have been dealt with eventually.

In relation to construct validity, thoroughly defining and operationalizing the used concepts, it could be stated that there turned out to be some problems. Although a figure has been constructed in which the different concepts have been connected, central concepts like 'LGBT-emancipation', 'social acceptance' and 'visibility' are very broad and provide space for different interpretations. Although definitions were chosen for this research, the empirical part of the research has shown that these concepts can have various characteristics in practice. However, despite this broad scope and fuzziness, the researcher managed to come to a quite clear practical approach to the ambassadorship in different case municipalities and to point at the importance of different interpretations where necessary (for example in relation to the discussion about the focus of the ambassadors). Unfortunately, it turned out to be not possible to ask the interviewees for feedback before this research report was submitted for assessment. This means that there could be differences in interpretation that have not been noticed. However, where it was deemed really necessary, for example in relation to describing what has happened in the field of sports in Alkmaar, interviewees were asked for a supplement or clarification of the information that was gathered during the interviews.

Second, in terms of internal validity, which aims at focusing on unraveling causal relations, it has already been explained that this research is limited because an ex ante and ex post approach were not possible and only the 'organizing side' had been approached. However, the interviews helped to unravel and explain different causes for what did (not) go well in the organization of the ambassadorship and what these ambassadors could (not) contribute to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs in their municipality.

Third, in terms of external validity, making sure that the research is analytically generalizable, it could be stated that the researcher managed to come to grounded conclusions about the contribution of the gay-ambassadors in different municipalities and to a list of conditions that should be met and considerations that should be made with regard to the ambassadorship and its position in broader (LGBT-) policy at the municipal level.

Finally, the reliability of the research has been paid thorough attention to by carefully operationalizing and clarifying the different steps that were taken during the research. The data that have been used are available for verifying the research results.

Looking at the most important methods that have been used to gain more insight into the contribution of the gay-ambassadors, document research and interviews, it could be stated that the researcher proceeded carefully and systematically within limitations outlined above. The process of conducting interviews and transcribing these helped to gain a much more extensive understanding of the different cases.

6.2.3 Research results

A six-month research to gain insight into the contribution of gay-ambassadors in Dutch cities to the visibility and acceptance of LGBTs has led to various interesting considerations about the deployment of the ambassadors in four case municipalities, both in practical and in theoretical terms. It has turned out to be possible to gain a lot more insight into the roles and contributions of the gay-

ambassadors and the ideas about these aspects of the ambassadorship by conducting interviews and consulting documents.

However, it also proved to be difficult to gather all necessary information. It was remarkable that there were so many different ideas about the appointment and contribution of the ambassadors. It was sometimes even difficult to gather unambiguous basic information. The collected information has been verified as precisely as possible, but at some points, uncertainty remains. For example, in the case of Alkmaar, it was difficult to figure out what the exact process in different fields and the involvement of different ambassadors has been like.

On the other hand, the ambassadors have not been involved for such a long time that it can already be said what their deployment will mean for the long term. As their role and position has also been not so well structured, it is the question how researching this could be delimited. Next to that, they are part of a broader LGBT-policy, which also makes it hard to verify which contributions can be specifically attributed to the deployment of the gay-ambassadors. In this research, it turned out that this fuzziness made it difficult to delimit and compare the cases, because in each case, (slightly) different aspects were emphasized by the interviewees .

The researcher also had to deal with rival explanations and ideas sometimes. For example, the question whether the ambassadors should be LGBT themselves or not appeared to have different legitimate answers and no definitive answer could be given to this question based on this research. This, then, could also be seen as one of the loose ends that could be paid more attention to in future research.

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Appendix A List of interviewees

1. Rotterdam

Name	Function	Date of the interview
Korrie Louwes	Involved alderwoman	January 8th, 2014
Corrie Wolfs	Involved policy advisor	October 9 th , 2013 and January 8 th , 2014
Sana el Fizazi	Former involved policy advisor	November 1st, 2013
Marijke Gerritsma	Director RotterdamV	November 13th, 2013
Joke Ellenkamp	Gay-ambassador	October 11th, 2013
Herman Meijer	Gay-ambassador	October 28th, 2013
Kees Vrijdag	Gay-ambassador	October 30th, 2013
Ercan Yilmaz	(Former) gay-ambassador	November 6th, 2013
Hugo Bongers	Gay-ambassador	November 13th, 2013
Yari-Annick Kuipers	Gay-ambassador	November 13th, 2013
Mark Harbers	Gay-ambassador	November 20th, 2013

2. Alkmaar

Name	Function	Date of the interview
Hasna Abrari	Involved policy advisor	October 18 th , 2013, extra e-mail contact on November 19 th , 2013
Luc Hofmans	Director Art. 1 Bureau Discrimination cases Noord-Holland Noord	October 18 th , 2013
Simon Broersma	(Former) chairman COC Noord-Holland Noord	October 29th, 2013
Jan-Martijn Stout	Gay-ambassador education	October 18th, 2013
Conny van Iersel	Gay-ambassador health care	November 4th, 2013
Willem Laan	Former gay-ambassador education	November 20th, 2013

3. Capelle aan den IJssel

Name	Function	Date of the interview
Zilla van der Stap	Involved policy advisor	October 2nd, 2013
Christel Gevers	Gay-ambassador children	October 28th, 2013
Noes Fiolet	Gay-ambassador seniors	November 1st, 2013
Ben Groos	Gay-ambassador youth	November 28th, 2013

4. Schiedam

Name	Function	Date of the interview
Ursula Ramkisoensing (22S)	Involved policy advisor	November 6 th , 2013, extra e-mail contact on February 10 th , 2014

Appendix B E-mail to potential interviewees

Almost all potential interviewees were approached by sending them the following e-mail (which was slightly different in different cases). As the potential interviewees all were Dutch-speaking people, the e-mail is in Dutch. If that is wanted, you can ask the researcher for a translation.

Geachte heer/ mevrouw (...),

Zoals u wellicht weet, ondersteunt MOVISIE een aantal gemeenten. Doel van dit programma is in alle deelnemende gemeenten ambtenaren en wethouders kennis, handvatten, methodieken en goede voorbeelden aan te reiken teneinde op lokaal en regionaal niveau beleid te maken en uit te voeren, inclusief voor de LHBT-burgers. Enkele van deze gemeenten, waaronder de gemeente (...), zetten als onderdeel van dit beleid zogenaamde homo-ambassadeurs in.

Wij zijn benieuwd hoe deze ambassadeurs bijdragen aan de acceptatie en zichtbaarheid van LHBT's in deze gemeenten. We hebben Jikke van 't Hof, masterstudente Sociale Geografie aan de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, bereid gevonden om onderzoek te doen. Het onderzoek heeft als doel inzicht te verkrijgen in de bijdrage van de ambassadeurs en aanbevelingen te formuleren met betrekking tot de toekomstige inzet van homo-ambassadeurs. We hopen dat de resultaten van dit onderzoek ook bruikbaar zullen zijn voor het uitvoeren van het LHBT-beleid in de gemeente (...).

Een belangrijk aspect van het onderzoek is het afnemen van interviews bij de (oud-)ambassadeurs en bij verschillende actoren die betrokken zijn bij hun inzet. Onze vraag is nu of u, als **(beleidsadviseur/ wethouder/ ambassadeur / betrokkene)**, geïnterviewd zou willen worden in het kader van dit onderzoek. Het interview duurt naar verwachting 45 tot 60 minuten en kan plaatsvinden op een locatie die voor u handig is. Mocht het mogelijk zijn, dan zou Jikke het interview graag afnemen in week (...) (tussen (...) en (...)). Jikke is zowel telefonisch (...) als per e-mail (...) bereikbaar voor het maken van een afspraak.

Mocht u vragen of opmerkingen hebben over ons verzoek, dan horen wij dat graag.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Judith Schuyf

Senior Adviseur Emancipatie en Inclusie

Mede namens Juul van Hoof

Senior Adviseur Participatie en Emancipatie

Appendix C Interview guides

In this appendix, the interview guides that were used for the interviews are included. All interviews were conducted in Dutch. This also means that the interview guides are formulated in Dutch. In order to make the main line of the guides understandable for people who do not understand Dutch, the headings and subheadings have been translated in English. If that is wanted, you can ask the researcher for a complete translation. Furthermore, only general versions of the interview guides are included. Slightly different interview guides were used for every single interviewee, but as these are quite similar, the choice has been made to only include the general interview guides for the gay-ambassadors, the policy advisors/alderwoman and the involved organizations. As the last two versions are also very much alike, only one version has been added.

1. Interview guide gay-ambassadors (general)

1. Begin interview (Start of the interview)

- a. Uitleggen van het doel van het onderzoek (Explaining the research goal)
 - *Dit onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd voor MOVISIE door mij, een masterstudente Sociale Geografie. We willen graag inzicht verkrijgen in de bijdrage van de ambassadeurs aan de acceptatie en zichtbaarheid van LHBT's in de gemeente. We hopen dat de resultaten van dit onderzoek ook bruikbaar zullen zijn voor het uitvoeren van het LHBT-beleid in de gemeente Alkmaar.*
- b. Vragen of het goed is als het interview opgenomen wordt (opnemen testen) en aangeven wat er met de opname en de uitwerking gebeurt (Ask whether the interview may be recorded)
 - *De opname wordt door mij gebruikt voor analyse en interpretatie van de gedane uitspraken. Uitspraken kunnen zowel in letterlijke als in geparafraseerde vorm opgenomen worden in mijn scriptie. De opname wordt alleen door mij beluisterd. De opname en het transcript worden ter verificatie ingeleverd bij de scriptiebegeleider op de universiteit.*
- c. Lengte interview aangeven (Length of interview: 45-60 minutes maximum)
 - *Het interview zal ongeveer 45 tot 60 minuten duren*

2. Algemene gegevens (General details)

- a. Naam (Name)
- b. Functie(s) (Function(s))
 - *Mogen uw naam en functie genoemd worden in het verslag? Zo nee: hoe wilt u dan aangegeven worden?*
 - *Sinds wanneer bent u ambassadeur?*
 - *Andere functies (baan, vrijwilliger)?*

3. 'Randvoorwaarden' / praktische invulling ambassadeurschap (Conditions of ambassadorship)

- a. Beginperiode ambassadeurschap (Start of ambassadorship)

- *Kunt u vertellen waarom en hoe u begonnen bent als ambassadeur?*
- b. Verwachting(en) **(Expectation(s))**
 - *Kunt u wat vertellen over uw eerste verwachtingen van het ambassadeurschap?*
- c. Doelstelling(en) **(Goal(s))**
 - *Kunt u beschrijven wat de doelen zijn van uw ambassadeurschap? (Eigen doelen/gedeelde doelen)*
- d. Begeleiding **(Supervision/help of others)**
 - *Kunt u vertellen welke organisaties/mensen u helpen/ betrokken zijn bij het uitoefenen van uw taken?*
 - *Kunt u aangeven op welke manier deze organisaties/mensen helpen bij het uitoefenen van uw taken?*

4. Bijdrage als ambassadeur (Contribution of ambassador)

- a. Bijdrage van de ambassadeur **(wel/niet gedaan) (What has been done?)**
 - *Kunt u wat vertellen over uw bijdrage als ambassadeur?*
 - *Kunt u aangeven wat u de afgelopen jaren/maanden gedaan heeft? (Voorbeelden)*
- b. Resultaat inzet ambassadeurs (wel/niet bereikt) **(What has been achieved?)**
 - *Kunt u vertellen wie /wat er (nog niet) bereikt is/zijn? (Voorbeelden/onderbouwing; zelf voorbeelden noemen als geïnterviewde er niet uitkomt --> activiteiten uitzoeken etc.; focus op acceptatie en zichtbaarheid)*
 - *Kunt u vertellen wat de termen 'acceptatie' en 'zichtbaarheid' voor u betekenen? (Aanvullende vraag)*
 - *Kunt u vertellen welke 'ruimte' voor LHBT's gecreëerd wordt door middel van de inzet van ambassadeurs? (Aanvullende vraag)*
 - *Bereiken van bepaalde domeinen/beleidsvelden/organisaties? Welke en hoe?*
 - *Kunt u aangeven in hoeverre u denkt dat het van belang is dat de ambassadeurs zelf tot de doelgroep behoren?*
 - *Kunt u vertellen over de mate waarin er iets bereikt wordt voor verschillende 'groepen' L's/H's/B's/T's door de inzet van ambassadeurs?*
- c. Communicatie doelen en inzet **(Communication of goals and efforts)**
 - *Kunt u vertellen hoe er wordt gecommuniceerd over de doelen en de inzet van de ambassadeurs? Hoe denkt u daarover? (Feitelijk en mening)*
- d. Evaluatie doelen en inzet **(Evaluation goals and efforts)**
 - *Kunt u vertellen hoe de doelen en inzet van de ambassadeurs worden geëvalueerd? (Proces en uitkomst)*
- e. Uitkomen van verwachting(en) **(Expectation(s) met?)**
 - *Eerder in het gesprek hebben we het gehad over uw verwachting(en) ten aanzien van het ambassadeurschap. In hoeverre zijn deze verwachtingen uitgekomen?*

5. Waarborging bijdrage ambassadeurs en toekomstvisie (Ensuring contribution and vision of the future)

- a. Waarborging resultaten **(Ensuring contribution)**
 - *Kunt u wat vertellen over de waarborging van de bereikte resultaten?*

- *Zijn wisselingen in de bezetting van gemeente/ambassadeurs/organisaties van invloed?*
- b. Toekomstplannen **(Plans for the future)**
 - *Kunt u wat vertellen over de plannen voor/ideeën over de toekomstige inzet van ambassadeurs?*
 - *Kunt u vertellen wat er de komende jaren van de ambassadeurs wordt verwacht?*
 - *Kunt u beschrijven hoe wordt gewerkt aan deze verwachtingen?*
 - *Kunt u aangeven hoe u wilt bereiken wat nog niet bereikt is? (Afhankelijk van wat verteld wordt)*
- c. Aanbevelingen **(Recommendations)**
 - *Kunt u aanbevelingen doen voor de mogelijke inzet ambassadeurs in andere gemeenten? Waar zijn deze aanbevelingen op gebaseerd?*

6. Praktische vragen **(Practical questions)**

- a. Vragen of de geïnterviewde alles heeft verteld wat hij/zij van belang acht **(Everything told?)**
- b. Vragen naar toegang tot relevante (beleids)documenten/evaluaties/... **(Relevant documents?)**
- c. Vragen aan de geïnterviewde met wie/hoe ik nog meer in contact zou kunnen komen (andere ambassadeurs) **(Who else could be contacted?)**
- d. Vragen of de geïnterviewde nog gebeld of gemaild kan worden voor aanvullende vragen **(Could additional questions be asked?)**
 - *Eventueel vragen naar aanvullende contactgegevens*

7. Einde interview **(End of the interview)**

- a. Vragen of de geïnterviewde het transcript wil zien voor de analyse- en interpretatiefase
- b. Aangeven dat de scriptie toegestuurd kan worden (maart of april 2014)
 - *De scriptie wordt ook online toegankelijk via de scriptiedatabank van de Radboud Universiteit*
- c. Bedanken **(Thank interviewee)**

2. Interview guide policy advisors/ alderwoman and involved organizations (general)

1. Begin interview (Start of the interview)

a. Uitleggen van het doel van het onderzoek (Explaining the research goal)

- *Dit onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd voor MOVISIE door mij, een masterstudente Sociale Geografie. We willen graag inzicht verkrijgen in de bijdrage van de ambassadeurs aan de acceptatie en zichtbaarheid van LHBT's in de gemeente. We hopen dat de resultaten van dit onderzoek ook bruikbaar zullen zijn voor het uitvoeren van het LHBT-beleid in de gemeente Alkmaar.*

b. Vragen of het goed is als het interview opgenomen wordt (opnemen testen) en aangeven wat er met de opname en de uitwerking gebeurt (Ask whether the interview may be recorded)

- *De opname wordt door mij gebruikt voor analyse en interpretatie van de gedane uitspraken. Uitspraken kunnen zowel in letterlijke als in geparafraseerde vorm opgenomen worden in mijn scriptie. De opname wordt alleen door mij beluisterd. De opname en het transcript worden ter verificatie ingeleverd bij de scriptiebegeleider op de universiteit.*

c. Lengte interview aangeven (Length of interview: 45-60 minutes maximum)

- *Het interview zal ongeveer 45 tot 60 minuten duren*

2. Algemene gegevens (General details)

a. Naam (Name)

b. Functie(s) (Function(s))

- *Mogen uw naam en functie genoemd worden in het verslag? Functienaam? Zo nee: hoe wilt u dan aangegeven worden?*
- *Sinds wanneer bent u betrokken bij de inzet van de ambassadeurs?*

3. Aanstelling ambassadeurs (Appointment of ambassadors)

a. Onderbouwing voor inzet homo-ambassadeurs (specifieke aanpak) (Why ambassadors? And, in case of the involved organizations: role of the organization?)

- *Sinds wanneer zijn homo-ambassadeurs actief in ...? Wie zijn/waren de ambassadeurs?*
- *Kunt u wat vertellen over de keuze voor de inzet van homo-ambassadeurs?*
- *Kunt u aangeven op welke vooronderstellingen/ welk bewijs/ welke voorbeelden de inzet is gebaseerd?*
- *Kunt u beschrijven hoe de inzet van ambassadeurs past bij ...?*

b. Verwachting(en) (Expectation(s))

- *Kunt u aangeven wat de verwachtingen waren van de inzet van de ambassadeurs?*

c. Doelstelling(en) (Goal(s))

- *Kunt u wat vertellen over de doelen van de ambassadeurs? Variëren deze doelen per ambassadeur/periode?*

d. Inbedding inzet ambassadeurs in breder (LHBT-)beleid **(Embedment of appointment of ambassadors in broader (LGBT-)policy)**

- *Kunt u wat vertellen over de inbedding van de inzet en de doelen in bredere (nationale en lokale) (LHBT-)beleidsideeën? (burgerschap, eigen verantwoordelijkheid, decentralisatie)*
- *Kunt u aangeven in hoeverre de inzet een antwoord is op/ aanvulling is op/ combinatie is met eerdere beleidsideeën?*

e. Keuze ambassadeurs **(Choice of ambassadors)**

- *Kunt u beschrijven hoe gekomen is/wordt tot de keuze van de ambassadeurs (specifieke personen)?*
- *Kunt u aangeven in hoeverre het van belang is dat een ambassadeur zelf tot de doelgroep behoort?*
- *Kunt u wat vertellen over de achterliggende ideeën en procedure?*

f. Betrokkenen en verantwoordelijken: organisatiestructuur **(Organizational structure)**

- *Kunt u wat vertellen over de rol van de gemeente?*
- *Kunt u aangeven welke organisaties/personen betrokken zijn bij de inzet van de ambassadeurs? Op welke manier? Verhoudingen? Wisselingen?*

4. Bijdrage ambassadeurs (Contribution of ambassadors)

a. Bijdrage van de ambassadeurs (wel/niet gedaan) **(What has been done?)**

- *Kunt u wat vertellen over wat de homo-ambassadeurs de afgelopen jaren (niet) gedaan hebben? (Voorbeelden/onderbouwing)*

b. Resultaat inzet ambassadeurs (wel/niet bereikt) **(What has been achieved)**

- *Kunt u vertellen wie /wat er (nog niet) bereikt is/zijn? (Voorbeelden/onderbouwing: Roze Week, bezoek aan scholen, zorginstellingen, sportorganisaties)*
- *Kunt u vertellen wat de termen 'acceptatie' en 'zichtbaarheid' voor u(w organisatie) betekenen? (Aanvullende vraag --> o.b.v. antwoorden)*
- *Kunt u aangeven welke 'ruimte' voor LHBT's gecreëerd wordt door middel van de inzet van ambassadeurs? (Aanvullende vraag --> o.b.v. antwoorden)*
- *Kunt u vertellen welke domeinen/beleidsvelden/organisaties bereikt worden? Op welke manier? Contact met 'onbekenden'?*
- *Kunt u vertellen over de mate waarin er iets bereikt wordt voor verschillende 'groepen' L's/H's/B's/T's door de inzet van ambassadeurs?*

c. Communicatie doelen en inzet **(Communication of goals and efforts)**

- *Kunt u vertellen hoe er wordt gecommuniceerd over de doelen en de inzet van de ambassadeurs? Hoe denkt u daarover? (Feitelijk en mening; voorbeelden: internet)*

d. Evaluatie doelen en inzet **(Evaluation goals and efforts)**

- *Kunt u vertellen hoe (en hoe vaak) de doelen en inzet van de ambassadeurs worden geëvalueerd? (Proces en uitkomst)*

e. Uitkomen verwachting(en) **(Expectation(s) met?)**

- *Eerder in het gesprek hebben we het gehad over uw verwachting(en) ten aanzien van de inzet van de ambassadeurs. In hoeverre zijn deze verwachtingen uitgekomen?*

5. Waarborging bijdrage ambassadeurs en toekomstvisie (Ensuring contribution and vision of the future)

- Waarborging resultaten (**Ensuring contribution**)
 - *Kunt u wat vertellen over de waarborging van de bereikte resultaten? (Voorbeelden/onderbouwing)*
 - *Zijn wisselingen in de bezetting van gemeente/ambassadeurs/organisaties van invloed?*
- Toekomstplannen (**Plans for the future**)
 - *Kunt u wat vertellen over de plannen voor/ideeën over de toekomstige inzet van ambassadeurs?*
 - *Kunt u vertellen wat er de komende jaren van de ambassadeurs wordt verwacht?*
 - *Kunt u beschrijven hoe wordt gewerkt aan deze verwachtingen?*
 - *Kunt u aangeven hoe u wilt bereiken wat nog niet bereikt is? (Afhankelijk van wat verteld wordt)*
- Aanbevelingen (**Recommendations**)
 - *Kunt u aanbevelingen doen voor de mogelijke inzet van ambassadeurs in andere gemeenten? Waar zijn deze aanbevelingen op gebaseerd? (Voorbeelden/onderbouwing)*

6. Praktische vragen (Practical questions)

- Vragen of de geïnterviewde alles heeft verteld wat hij/zij van belang acht (**Everything told?**)
- Vragen naar toegang tot relevante (beleids)documenten/evaluaties/... (**Relevant documents?**)
- Vragen aan de geïnterviewde met wie/hoe ik nog meer in contact zou kunnen komen (andere ambassadeurs) (**Who else could be contacted?**)
- Vragen of de geïnterviewde nog gebeld of gemaïld kan worden voor aanvullende vragen (**Could additional questions be asked?**)
 - *Eventueel vragen naar aanvullende contactgegevens*

7. Einde van het interview (End of the interview)

- Vragen of de geïnterviewde het transcript wil zien vóór de analyse- en interpretatiefase
- Aangeven dat de scriptie toegestuurd kan worden (maart of april 2014)
 - *De scriptie wordt ook online toegankelijk via de scriptiedatabank van de Radboud Universiteit*
- Bedanken (**Thank interviewee**)