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# **BASELINE REPORT ON THE INTEGRATION OF BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN THE NETHERLANDS**



## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Monitoring and improving integration of beneficiaries of international protection**

The present report examines the implementation of various areas of integration policy towards beneficiaries of international protection (BIPs)<sup>1</sup> in the Netherlands. This report is the result of the evaluation of domestic integration policies in various EU Member States, implemented as part of the project “The National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM)”.<sup>2</sup>

NIEM is a six-year long transnational project which aims to prepare key actors in the integration field in 16 EU Member States to better face the current challenges and improve the integration outcomes of BIPs. Representatives of academic centers, non-governmental organizations and think-tanks were invited to participate in the project.

The main aim of the project is to provide evidence concerning the gaps in integration standards, identify promising practices and shortcomings in different Member States, as well as evaluating the effects of legislative and policy changes which may provide a basis for further developing an efficient integration policy.

This first baseline report is the result of the first of three planned evaluation rounds, which consist of more than 150 indicators aimed at reviewing the existing situation. The subsequent evaluations will be carried out periodically every two years. After each round respective national reports will be issued, as well as a common European report comparing the examined dimensions of integration policies of all the participating Member States in the NIEM project.

### **1.2 Approach**

This report has been carried out primarily through desk research. More than 150 indicators<sup>3</sup> on BIPs integration in the Netherlands covering the major policy areas have

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘beneficiary of international protection’ refers to a person who has been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status as defined in Article 2(e) and (g) within the meaning of recast Qualification Directive 2011/95/EU. In addition, the term ‘newcomers’ refers to BIPs and other migrants who are required to follow the civic integration programme in the Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.forintegration.eu>

<sup>3</sup> The integration indicators are developed by the Migration Policy Group in Brussels.

been researched. From January to August 2017, several structured interviews have been held with stakeholders and BIPs.<sup>4</sup> In addition, questionnaires have been sent to the European Migration Network Netherlands and the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). Lastly, it is important to note that this report does not focus on the integration of family migrants in the Netherlands. Furthermore, this research does not address developments occurred after December 2018.

## **2. State of Play**

### **2.1 Asylum applications in the Netherlands**

Like many other Member States, the Netherlands experienced a higher influx of asylum seekers in recent years. In 2015, during the so-called refugee crisis, the number of asylum seekers applying for international protection in the Netherlands reached a peak of 43095. In 2016 and 2017, these numbers dropped to 19370 and 16145 respectively. The number of asylum applications slightly increased again in 2018.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, it is important to note that in the Netherlands both holders of refugee status and subsidiary protection status are granted a temporary residence permit of five years and entitled to the same rights and benefits. Statistics Netherlands (CBS)<sup>6</sup> shows that in 2017, 25815 persons received a protection status of which 10565 were granted refugee status/subsidiary protection status and 15250 persons received protection on the basis of humanitarian grounds.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> We are grateful to all organisations that have commented on the indicators and provided us with valuable information.

<sup>5</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), Asielverzoeken en nareizigers; nationaliteit, geslacht en leeftijd. Available at: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/83102NED/table?ts=1518185236564> (last visited 30 October 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), Verblijfsvergunningen voor bepaalde tijd; verblijfsground en nationaliteit. Available at: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/82027NED/table?ts=1527760481010> (last visited 30 October 2018).

<sup>7</sup> Humanitarian grounds include for instance where the expulsion of a person would breach Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights or where the person is a victim of human trafficking.

## 2.2 Policy developments during the refugee crisis

The increased number of arrivals of asylum seekers to the EU in recent years has also created challenges for the Dutch asylum and integration process. A major policy development has been the adoption of an agreement between the national government, provinces, municipalities, and stakeholders to deal with the challenges in the field of asylum (*Bestuursakkoord Verhoogde Asielinstroom*).<sup>8</sup> One of the objectives of the Dutch government was to strengthen the integration and participation of BIPs in Dutch society. Basically, this agreement introduced three broad measures. The first aspect of this agreement emphasized the extension of reception capabilities for asylum seekers, such as the establishment of additional emergency reception locations in different regions of the country and the objective to accommodate unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in small-scale reception facilities.

The second aspect of this agreement addressed the importance of an efficient flow of BIPs from the reception centres to regular housing. Therefore, the aim of the national government and municipalities, together with housing corporations was to complete an additional 14.000 homes for BIPs. Furthermore, municipalities had the possibility to accommodate BIPs in temporary housing until permanent housing was available again (*Gemeentelijk versnellingsarrangement*).

The third aspect of this agreement concerned the additional financial investment by the Dutch government in the civic guidance of BIPs by municipalities, and also to require BIPs to sign a participation statement as part of their civic integration process.

## 2.3 The Dutch policy framework on integration

The Netherlands has for more than two decades implemented integration policies.<sup>9</sup> The concept of integration in the Netherlands is often referred to as the civic integration policy (*inburgeringsbeleid*) and the Dutch civic integration process (*inburgering*) is considered an important first step for BIPs to participate in the Dutch society. The

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<sup>8</sup> Bestuursakkoord Verhoogde Asielinstroom, 27 November 2015: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2015/11/27/bestuursakkoord-verhoogde-asielinstroom> (last visited 1 November 2018).

<sup>9</sup> TK, 2003-2004, 28 689, nrs. 8-9, Onderzoek Integratiebeleid.

current regime on integration is based on the 2013 Civic Integration Act (*Wet inburgering 2013*) and two generally binding regulations.<sup>10</sup>

As of 1 January 2013 all newcomers between 16 and retirement age and who are granted international protection, or third-country nationals who are granted a residence permit for a non-temporary purpose, or persons who are admitted as a religious servant should pass a civic integration exam within 3 years. The objective of the mandatory civic integration exam is to ensure that newcomers acquire language skills at A2 level.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, since 2017, as part of the civic integration trajectory, newcomers are required to participate in the ‘participatieverklaringstraject’ in which they will get acquainted with Dutch core values. In addition, they have to sign a participation statement<sup>12</sup> (*participatieverklaring*) as part of their civic integration exam.

The Dutch policy on integration is based on three principles: first, self-reliance is an important aspect of the Dutch integration policy. BIPs are themselves responsible for successfully complete their integration trajectory. Second, the Dutch integration policy is (partly) privatised. The assumption is that BIPs are competent to buy their own language courses that are offered by organisations in the private sector. Before 2013, municipalities were required to offer BIPs and religious servants language courses. Since the introduction of the Civic Integration Act in 2013 municipalities no longer have a key role in the integration process. Currently, their role is to provide civic counselling to BIPs. The government offers a loan to pay for the language courses (max. €10.000). The loan becomes a gift when BIPs have passed the civic integration exam on time. Third, the Dutch integration trajectory is mandatory to all newcomers.<sup>13</sup> Where BIPs fail to pass the civic integration exam within a 3-year period, this may lead to a fine of a maximum of € 1250 or it may have consequences for their permanent residence permit.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Besluit inburgering and Regeling inburgering.

<sup>11</sup> Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

<sup>12</sup> The Participation Statement enshrines core values of Dutch society: freedom, equality and solidarity. The newcomer declares to respect these values.

<sup>13</sup> See for a more detailed analysis: Algemene Rekenkamer, *Inburgering – Eerste resultaten van de Wet inburgering 2013*, 23 January 2017, pp. 5-44.

<sup>14</sup> De Lange T. et al., *Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen*, 2017, pp. 85-89.

## 2.4 Challenges

Based on existing literature this study identified several challenges for BIPs concerning different aspects of integration. This report does not intend to repeat the findings of previous studies. Nevertheless, two challenges are addressed. First, many BIPs have difficulties to find their way into the complex integration system. The integration approach of the Dutch government, which heavily relies on the own responsibility and self-reliance of BIPs, does not seem to be working in practice.<sup>15</sup>

Second, another major issue that has been identified by various studies is the great distance to the labour market for BIPs. From the group of BIPs who received their protection status in 2014, only 11% had found a job after 2,5 years.<sup>16</sup> BIPs face a number of barriers such as language, missing diplomas or certificates, different cultural expectations, traumas and other health issues, and a lack of social network to facilitate their job hunt. Furthermore, Dutch employers are reluctant to hire BIPs with foreign qualifications. They rather prefer BIPs that graduated from a Dutch (higher) education institution. Requirements of the integration process may also impede the economic integration of BIPs. As part of the integration BIPs must follow language classes that mostly take place during the day and therefore makes them less flexible and limits their availability for work.<sup>17</sup>

## 3. Evaluation NIEM indicators

This section of the report provides the outcomes of the situation for BIPs in the Netherlands, according to the NIEM indicators. The following policy areas are included:

- 1) General conditions
  - a. Impact of reception on integration
  - b. Mainstreaming and integration governance

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<sup>15</sup> See Blom M. et al., *Inburgering: systeemwereld versus leefwereld – Evaluatie Wet inburgering 2013*, Significant, 13 June 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), 11 procent van statushouders heeft werk, 17 April 2018. Available at: <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2018/16/11-procent-van-statushouders-heeft-werk> (last visited 30 October 2018).

<sup>17</sup> De Lange T. et al., *Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen*, 2017, pp. 57-60.

## 2) Legal integration

- a. Residency
- b. Family unity and reunification
- c. Access to effective nationality

## 3) Socio-economic integration

- a. Housing
- b. Employment
- c. Vocational training
- d. Health
- e. Social security

## 4) Socio-cultural integration

- a. Education
- b. Language learning and social orientation
- c. Building bridges and fostering participation

### **3.1 General conditions: the impact of reception on integration and mainstreaming and integration governance**

#### **1. Population of BIPs**

- How many BIPs were there in the Netherlands as of 1 January 2017?
- No data is available.

#### **2. Number of asylum seekers in last calendar year identified as having special reception needs**

- How many asylum seekers in the last calendar year were identified in an individual evaluation as an applicant with special reception needs?
- There is no data available on the number of identified asylum seekers with special reception needs. The number of registered unaccompanied minors (UAMs) in 2017 was 1.180.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), Alleenstaande minderjarige vreemdeling; nationaliteit, geslacht en leeftijd, 23 April 2018. Available at: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/82045NED/table?ts=1541079392383> (last visited 30 October 2018).

3. **Average length of reception phase**

- How long did it take on average to reach a final decision for asylum cases delivered in 2017?
- No data is available.

4. **Procedure to identify applicants with special reception needs**

- Is there an individual assessment established by law to identify applicants with special reception needs?
- According to Article 18a of the Regulation benefits to asylum seekers and other categories of aliens (Regeling verstrekkingen asielzoekers en andere categorieën vreemdelingen 2005) the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) should assess whether an asylum seeker requires special reception needs.

5. **National strategy for the integration of BIPs**

- Has a specific government policy been adopted on the integration of BIPs?
- There is a policy on linguistic and civic integration courses, and once BIPs have their residence permit they are treated like any other member of society. There is an emphasis on own responsibility and self-reliance, and differential local implementation because municipalities have some leeway in how they spend their budgets.

6. **Commitments in the national strategy for the integration of BIPs**

- Does the national strategy include specific responsibilities/commitments (e.g. policy, strategy or funding) for:
  - a) All relevant ministries in addition to the ministry with prime responsibility for integration;
  - b) All relevant local and regional authorities;
  - c) All relevant social partners (trade unions, professional associations)?
- Integration policy is diffused. Hence, all relevant ministries are involved in their specific area (e.g. health, education, housing).



**7. Monitoring and review of policies for the integration of BIPs**

- Does the ministry responsible for the integration of BIPs have:
  - a) A regular mechanism to monitor integration outcomes for BIPs?
  - b) A regular mechanism to review the implementation of the integration strategy in coordination with all relevant partners (government ministries, trade unions, research institutions, professional associations, NGOs)?
  - c) A duty to respond to the advice and recommendations of regional and local authorities and expert NGOs concerning the integration of BIPs?
- There is some monitoring of integration outcomes (e.g. labour market outcomes), but this is carried out by research institutes or NGOs, and is not carried out in a regular basis.

**3.2 Legal integration: residency, family unity and reunification and access to effective nationality**

**8. Type and duration of residence permit upon recognition**

- What type of residence permit does the State provide to recognised BIPs?
- Protection in the Netherlands can be granted on two grounds: (1) to persons who qualify for refugee status<sup>19</sup> in the sense of the Refugee Convention and to whom the persecution reasons are applicable; or (2) on the basis of subsidiary protection.<sup>20</sup> An asylum seeker whose application for international protection has been rejected may still be entitled to a regular residence permit on the basis of humanitarian grounds. Humanitarian grounds include for instance where the expulsion of a person would breach Article 8 of the ECHR or where the person is a victim of human trafficking.<sup>21</sup> Both holders of refugee status and subsidiary protection status are granted a temporary residence permit of five years and entitled to the same rights and benefits.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Article 29(1)(a) Aliens Act. See also C2/3.2. Aliens Circular.

<sup>20</sup> Article 29(1)(b) Aliens Act.

<sup>21</sup> Article 3.6a Aliens Decree.

<sup>22</sup> Article 28(2) Aliens Act in conjunction with Article 3.105 Aliens Decree.

9. **Renewal of residence permit**
- How is the residence permit renewed?
  - The permit is renewed upon application if additional requirements are met.<sup>23</sup>
10. **Residency requirements for granting permanent/long-term residence**
- Is time waiting for an asylum decision counted for the acquisition of permanent/long-term residence?
  - In the Netherlands time waiting for the decision on asylum is counted for the acquisition of permanent/long-term residence.<sup>24</sup>
11. **Facilitated conditions for permanent/long-term residence**
- Are the normal conditions for acquiring permanent/long-term residence waived or reduced for BIPs? Or are they the same as for ordinary third-country nationals?
  - To acquire the Dutch permanent residency, BIPS should hold a temporary asylum residence permit of 5 years and inter alia have passed the civic integration programme. As regards the EU long-term residence permit, the same conditions apply to BIPs as for other third-country nationals.
12. **Facilitated conditions for vulnerable persons applying for permanent/long-term residence**
- Do vulnerable groups of BIPs benefit from facilitated conditions for acquiring permanent/long-term residence, compared to ordinary BIPs?
  - The Dutch policy does not differentiate between vulnerable groups and others in relation to conditions for acquiring permanent/long-term residency.

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<sup>23</sup>Article 32 Aliens Act. See also: Integration and Naturalisation Service (IND), Extension residence permit asylum. Available at: <https://ind.nl/en/asylum/pages/extension-residence-permit-asylum.aspx> (last visited 15 October 2018).

<sup>24</sup> Article 44 Aliens Act.

13. **Administrative barriers to permanent/long-term residence**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for obtaining permanent/long-term residence for persons benefiting from international protection?
- No data is available.

14. **Fees and costs of the residency procedures**

- What are the average fees and costs per person to obtain and renew the residence permit or to become permanent/long-term resident?
- The Netherlands does not charge for the first application and extension of the temporary asylum permit. The fees for the first application for the permanent asylum residence permit or the permit for the EU long-term residency are set on €161.<sup>25</sup>

15. **Legal assistance and support budgets**

- What was the size of the public budget tagged as legal assistance and legal support for BIPs actually spent in the last calendar year?
- The right to legal aid in the Netherlands depends on income, not residency type (same as for other Dutch citizens). Therefore this data is not available because there is no separate budget for legal support for BIPs.

16. **Acceptance rate for permanent/long-term residence**

- How many BIPs who applied for permanent/long-term residency were accepted in the last calendar year?
- No data is available.

17. **Reasons for rejection of permanent/long-term residence**

- How many unsuccessful applications for permanent/long-term residence from BIPs were rejected in the last year?
- No data is available.

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<sup>25</sup> Integration and Naturalisation Service (IND), Costs. Available at: <https://ind.nl/en/Pages/Costs.aspx> (last visited 15 October 2018).

**18. Family unity and legal status of family members<sup>26</sup>**

- If family members are with BIPs but do not individually qualify for protection, who can receive a comparable legal status and benefits (derivative status), under the principle of family unity?
  - a) A spouse or partner (where partnership recognized in national law)
  - b) Minor children
  - c) Close relatives who are wholly or mainly dependent on the beneficiary
- Family members may be granted a derived asylum residence permit or submit an independent asylum application.<sup>27</sup> Only spouses/partners, minor children and young adult children up to 25 years old that belongs to the family qualify for derivative status. As regards young adult children up to 25 years old, the family bond with its family member should not have been broken.<sup>28</sup>

**19. Definition of family unity for family reunification**

- If the family is separated from the beneficiary, which family members are eligible to join the sponsor under family reunification?
  - a) Minor children and spouse/partner (where partnership recognized in national law)
  - b) Dependents who are adult children or members of the ascending line (i.e. parents or grandparents)
  - c) Other categories of dependents
- In principle, only minor children, dependent adult children, and spouse/partner are eligible to join the sponsor. Furthermore, the parents of an unaccompanied minor with an international protection status are eligible for family reunification.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Indicators 18 - 40 concern family reunification for persons holding a residence permit on asylum grounds (*nareis*).

<sup>27</sup> Cleton L., Seiffert L. and Wörmann H., *Gezinshereniging van derdelanders in Nederland*, EMN, May 2017, p. 42.

<sup>28</sup> Integration and Naturalisation Service (IND), Family member of refugee. Available at: <https://ind.nl/en/asylum/Pages/Family-member-of-refugee.aspx> (last visited 15 October 2018).

<sup>29</sup> Article 29(2) Aliens Act.

20. **Residency requirement for family reunification**

- How long do BIPs need to reside in the country to be able to apply for family reunification?
- There is no waiting requirement.

21. **Economic resource requirement for family reunification**

- Is there an economic resource for this group's family reunification (i.e. income, employment)?
- There is no economic resource requirement if BIPs submit a request for family reunification within 3 months after being granted international protection. If they submit after this period, the same requirements apply as for other ordinary third-country nationals.<sup>30</sup>

22. **Housing requirement for family reunification**

- Is there a housing requirement for this group's family reunification?
- There is no housing requirement.

23. **Health insurance requirement for family reunification**

- Is there a health insurance requirement for this group's family reunification?
- There is no health insurance requirement (but all residents in the Netherlands are obliged to have health insurance).

24. **Language assessment for family reunification**

- Is there a language assessment requirement for family reunification?
- There is no language assessment requirement for family members of BIPs *before* admission to the Netherlands. Family members of ordinary third-country nationals are required to pass a language test abroad (basisexamen inburgering buitenland).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cleton L., Seiffert L. and Wörmann H., Gezinshereniging van derdelanders in Nederland, EMN, May 2017, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> Cleton L., Seiffert L. and Wörmann H., Gezinshereniging van derdelanders in Nederland, EMN, May 2017, pp. 33-34.

**25. Requirement to comply with integration measures for family reunification**

- Is there a requirement to comply with integration measures for this group's family reunification?
- There is no requirement to comply with integration measures for BIPs in order to reunify with family members before admission to the Netherlands. BIPs, just like other third-country nationals, have to pass a civic integration programme within 3 years following their recognition.

**26. Time limit for facilitated requirements for family reunification**

- From the moment of their recognition how long can BIPs enjoy facilitated requirements for family reunification, compared to third-country nationals?
- If BIPs apply for family reunification within three months following their recognition, they may benefit from less strict requirements (the *nareis* procedure).

**27. Documents from country of origin to verify family links**

- Does the law provide for:
  - a) Exemptions from the documentation requirement in defined circumstances (i.e. certain categories or country of origin);
  - b) Alternative methods where documents are not available?
- Where there are no documents, alternative methods exist to verify family links.<sup>32</sup>

**28. DNA/age tests to verify family links**

- Is there an obligatory DNA/age test requirement?
- It is not obligatory. A DNA test will be offered if the standard procedure to verify family ties is insufficient.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> See IND work-instruction 2018/20.

<sup>33</sup> See IND work-instruction 2018/20.

29. **Facilitated conditions for vulnerable persons applying for family reunification**
- Do vulnerable groups of BIPs benefit from facilitated requirements for applying to family reunification, compared to ordinary BIPs?
  - Unaccompanied minors (under 18) have the right to reunify with their parents.<sup>34</sup>
30. **Expedited length of procedure for family reunification**
- Is there a legal limit to the length of the family reunification procedure?
  - The authorities have to decide on the application within 90 days, which can be extended with another 90 days.<sup>35</sup>
31. **Average duration of family reunification procedures**
- What was the average duration of family reunification and tracing in the case of procedures finalised in 2016?
  - In 2016, the average duration of processing family reunification applications lasted 232 days. In the first four months of 2017, the average duration was 331 days.<sup>36</sup>
32. **Amount of fees and costs (in euros) for family reunification**
- What are the average fees and costs for family reunification?
  - There are no fees.
33. **Family tracing services**
- Do BIPs have access to family tracing services?
  - Yes, but these are provided and financed by the Red Cross.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Article 29(2)(c) Aliens Act.

<sup>35</sup> Cleton L., Seiffert L. and Wörmann H., Gezinshereniging van derdelanders in Nederland, EMN, May 2017, pp. 45-46.

<sup>36</sup> Antwoorden Kamervragen inzake de behandeling van verzoeken tot gezinshereniging door de IND, 31 May 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Rode Kruis, Opsporing & Ondersteuning. Available at: <https://www.rodekruis.nl/hulp-in-nederland/opsporing-ondersteuning/> (last visited 16 October 2018).

**34. Use of family tracing**

- How many BIPs who used a family tracing service in the last calendar year were able to identify family member(s)?
- Red Cross does not have figures sub-divided like this. There are approximately 600-700 requests per year from people who lost contact with relatives due to conflict, natural disaster or migration, but this includes a small number of requests from abroad to find family members in the Netherlands. Approximately 20% of requests are successful.

**35. Travel/family assistance budgets for family reunification**

- What was the size of the annual public budget actually spent in the last calendar year tagged as travel assistance and support for family reunion (e.g. providing DNA test for free)?
- No such budget exists.

**36. Status of family members**

- Does the permit for family members entitle them to the same legal status as their sponsor?
- Yes, family members are entitled to the same rights as other BIPs.

**37. Autonomous residence permit for family members**

- How long must family members wait to obtain a residence permit which is autonomous of their sponsor?
  - a) Less than 3 years
  - b) Between 3 and 5 years
  - c) More than 5 years or only upon certain conditions
- After five years of legal residence in the Netherlands and provided that family members of BIPs have, inter alia, successfully completed the civic integration programme, they can apply for a permanent residence permit which is autonomous of their sponsor.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Integration and Naturalisation Service (IND), Permanent asylum residence permit. Available at: <https://ind.nl/en/asylum/Pages/Permanent-asylum-residence-permit.aspx> (last visited 15 October 2018).



38. **Access to services for family members**

- Do family members have the same legal rights as their sponsors to access:
  - Integration programmes?
  - Language programmes?
  - Education and vocational training?
  - Employment and self-employment?
  - Social security and assistance?
  - Health care?
- Family members of BIPs obtain a derivative asylum status, which provides them the same legal rights as their sponsor.

39. **Acceptance rate for family reunification**

- How many BIPs were united with their family in the last calendar year?
- In 2017, 14.490 persons (*nareizigers*) were registered in the context of family reunification.<sup>39</sup>

40. **Reasons for rejection for family reunification**

- How many unsuccessful applications from BIPs were rejected last year?
- There is no exact indication of how many and why applications of BIPs have been rejected for family reunification.

41. **Facilitated residence requirement for naturalisation**

- Do first generation adult BIPs face the same residence requirement to be eligible for naturalisation as ordinary third-country nationals?
- Yes, residence requirement is five years (Art. 8 (1) (c) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act). However, stateless persons are facilitated: residence requirement reduced to three years (Art. 8 (4) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act)).

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<sup>39</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), Asielverzoeken en nareizigers; nationaliteit, geslacht en leeftijd. Available at: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/83102NED/table?ts=1518185236564> (last visited 30 October 2018).

42. **Period of residence requirement for naturalisation**

- Do the years counted towards the residence requirement include:
  - a. Years as a permanent/long-term resident?
  - b. Years as a recognised beneficiary of international protection in the country?
  - c. Years of legal stay awaiting an asylum decision?
- Due to the fact that a positive asylum decision has as a consequence that the residence permit will be granted with retroactivity to the moment of application for asylum the years of legal stay awaiting an asylum decision will also be counted towards the residence requirement.

43. **Economic resource requirement for naturalisation**

- Is there an economic resource requirement for this group's naturalisation (i.e. income, employment)?
- The Netherlands do not have an economic resource requirement for naturalization.

44. **Language assessment for naturalisation**

- Is there a language assessment requirement for this group's naturalisation?
- BIPs face the same language assessment for naturalization as other applicants (Art. 8 (1) (d) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act).

45. **'Integration'/citizenship assessment for naturalisation**

- Is there a language assessment requirement for this group's naturalisation?
- BIPs face the same 'integration' assessment for naturalization as other applicants (Art. 8 (1) (d) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act).

46. **Criminal record requirement for naturalisation**

- Is there a criminal record requirement for this group's naturalisation?

- BIPs face the same requirement regarding absence of a criminal record for naturalization as other applicants (Art. 9 (1) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act)).

47. **Documents from country of origin for naturalisation**

- Does the law provide for:
  - a. Exemptions from the documentation requirement in defined circumstances (i.e. certain categories of countries of origin);
  - b. Alternative methods where documents are not available?
- In principle an applicant for naturalization has to submit a recent copy of her/his birth certificate and a copy of a valid passport. However, BIPs are exempted from this requirement, because they cannot be required to contact the authorities of their country of origin (compare Art. 6 (1)(g) Regeling verkrijging en verlies Nederlanderschap).<sup>40</sup>

48. **Facilitated conditions for vulnerable persons applying for naturalisation**

- Do vulnerable BIPs benefit from facilitated requirements to naturalise compared to other beneficiaries of international protection?
- An extra facilitation of vulnerable groups of BIPs does not exist.

49. **Naturalisation by entitlement for second generation**

- Do children born in the country to BIPs (second generation) have an entitlement to naturalisation?
- The second generation born on Dutch territory has an option right to Dutch nationality, meaning the right to acquire Dutch nationality by confirmation of a declaration. This option right can be exercised after having reached the age of majority (18 years). See Art. 6 (1) (a) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act). If the person involved was born stateless, the option right can be exercised after having reached the age of three years. See Art. 6 (1) (b) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act).

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<sup>40</sup> See also Article 7, para. 3.5.1. Handleiding Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap 2003.

50. **Expedited length of procedure**

- Is there a legal limit to the length of the naturalisation procedure?
- In principle the authorities have to decide on the application within one year, but they can extend this period two times with six months. See Art. 9 (4) Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap (Netherlands Nationality Act).

51. **Average duration of naturalisation procedures**

- What was the average duration of naturalisation procedures finalised in 2017 for the first generation of adult BIPs?
- Data from IND does not allow for such a detailed breakdown. IND must decide on naturalisation requests within 1 year (<https://ind.nl/Paginas/Beslistermijnen.aspx>), and if citizenship is granted then the person must attend a ceremony within 1 year after that (<https://ind.nl/nederlander-worden/Paginas/Naturalisatie.aspx>) i.e. max 2 years in total by law.

52. **Amount of fees and costs for naturalisation**

- What are the average fees and costs for naturalisation?
- A single application for naturalization costs €644 for BIPs. A dual request (together with the spouse/partner) costs €884. There is no data available on other average other costs, but possible costs could include translation of documents, completion of integration course, renouncing current citizenship etc.

53. **Acceptance rate for naturalisation and access to nationality**

- How many BIPs were naturalised in the last calendar year?
- In 2016, 5740 applications for naturalisations were submitted by holders of an asylum residence permit. Of these applications, 2350 were approved in 2016 and 2620 in 2017 (data from IND Research and Analysis Service).

**54. Reasons for rejection for access to nationality**

- How many unsuccessful applications from BIPs were rejected last year for the following reasons?
  - a. Residence period requirement
  - b. Economic resource requirement
  - c. Language assessment
  - d. Integration assessment
  - e. Documentation
  - f. Other requirements
  - g. Unknown reasons
- The reason for rejection is specified on the individual document, but collective data on this is not available.

**3.3 Socio-economic integration: housing, employment, vocational training, health and social security**

**55. Free movement and choice of residence within the country**

- Can BIPs freely choose the housing, city and region where they want to live?
- BIPs are in principle free to house themselves, but in practice most depend on the offer of social housing – which is a take-it-or-leave-it offer.

**56. Access to housing and housing benefits**

- Do BIPs have the legal right to equal treatment in housing and housing benefits?
- BIPs have the same rights as other Dutch citizens e.g. to housing benefit based on income levels. In a sense there is even positive discrimination as BIPs are offered social housing, which is often scarce.

**57. Access to housing for vulnerable persons**

- To what extent is it required by law that housing policy and services take into account the specific situation of vulnerable groups of BIPs?

- Government housing policy does not identify vulnerable groups of BIPs, apart from unaccompanied minors who are in care.

**58. Access to property rights**

- Do these groups have the legal right to equal treatment in property rights?
- Legally BIPs have the same property rights as Dutch nationals, although in practice the length of the asylum residence permit and the income requirements for a mortgage form a barrier.

**59. Administrative barriers to accessing public housing**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for accessing public housing for BIPs?
- On paper there are no barriers for accessing public housing, however in practice there are sometimes longer waiting periods than foreseen and the procedure can be intransparent and subject to discretionary decisions.

**60. Awareness raising about the specific challenges of BIPs on the housing market**

- Which measures are taken to raise awareness for the specific challenges of BIPs on the housing market?
- Public housing bodies are regularly sent information on the entitlements and specific limitations of BIPs.

**61. Targeted housing advice, counselling, representation**

- Is targeted housing advice, counselling and representation available for BIPs by housing experts?
- Legal advice is not provided to BIPs. COA informs residents of asylum seekers' centres what their rights are.

**62. Provision of targeted temporary housing support**

- Does this group benefit from targeted, temporary in-cash or in-kind housing support?

- BIPs receive an offer of social housing, which is dependent on an income criterion. BIPs also receive in-cash support in the form of financial support for furnishing a house, although there are differences between municipalities as to whether this amount is a loan or a gift.

**63. Provision of targeted long-term housing support**

- Does this group benefit from targeted long-term housing support?
- There is no time limit to the right to social housing. Instead, this right depends on income. Therefore, if BIPs exceed this income level then the right to social housing terminates.

**64. Period of targeted housing support**

- For how long can this group benefit from targeted housing support?
- There is no maximum period as it depends on income level.

**65. Housing quality assessment**

- Which criteria do authorities have to take into account when allocating in-kind housing assistance for this group?
- Municipalities must provide housing with secure tenure, affordable rent (maximum monthly rent of €575 for individuals and €625 for households), and basic infrastructure.<sup>41</sup> Employment is only taken into account if the BIP has already secured an employment contract.

**66. Mechanisms to mainstream the integration of BIPs into housing policies**

- Which mechanisms/strategies has the ministry responsible for housing adopted?
- In 2015 there was a substantial shift in policy in response to increased asylum flows. Several initiatives were adopted which include all relevant

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<sup>41</sup> VluchtelingenWerk, Huisvesting van Vluchtelingen. Available at: <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/feiten-cijfers/procedures-wetten-beleid/huisvesting> (last visited 23 October 2018).

partners, such as national and provincial committees,<sup>42</sup> the Platform Opnieuw Thuis,<sup>43</sup> and the OTAV support team.<sup>44</sup>

**67. Coordination with regional and local authorities on housing for BIPs**

- Does the national government coordinate with regional and local authorities to support them that BIPs live in areas with integration perspectives and provide means to adequately address housing needs of BIPs?
- The Platform Opnieuw Thuis supported municipalities in finding housing for BIPs, and the government provides financial means to municipalities (according to the number of BIPs they taken in) in order to foster integration and participation.

**68. Partnership on housing with expert NGOs**

- Does the State provide means for expert NGOs to assist BIPs to find accommodation?
- No, the government does not directly fund independent organisations such as Vluchtelingenwerk (the Dutch Refugee Council).

**69. Budget for the housing market integration of BIPs**

- What was the size of the public budget specifically tagged for the public (targeted or mainstream) housing of BIPs actually spent in the last calendar year?
- No data is available. In 2016, municipalities received €2.500 per BIP they took in, but this amount is not primarily intended to be spent on housing.

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<sup>42</sup> Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers (COA), Landelijke en provinciale regietafels. Available at: <https://www.coa.nl/nl/voor-gemeenten/landelijke-en-provinciale-regietafels> (last visited 23 October 2018).

<sup>43</sup> The Platform Opnieuw Thuis, which supported municipalities with housing of BIPs, was dissolved in July 2017. See also: Platform Opnieuw Thuis, Eindrapportage Platform Opnieuw Thuis, 10 July 2017. Available at: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2017/08/28/tk-bijlage-eindrapport-pot>.

<sup>44</sup> OTAV provides general support and a helpdesk function for practical questions from municipalities regarding BIPs. See also: Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten (VNG), Het OndersteuningsTeam Asielzoekers en Vergunninghouders (OTAV), OTAV-Factsheet, January 2017. Available at: <https://vng.nl/files/vng/20170130-otav-factsheet.pdf>.



It is not known how much rental subsidy BIPs receive because this amount is not counted separately from others who receive the subsidy.

**70. Share of BIPs living in the area of their choice**

- How many BIPs last year were living in the locality/region where they want to live in the country?
- No accurate data is available. Approximately 30-40% of BIPs find accommodation themselves, and there are substantial differences between countries of origin as to how internally mobile they are in the Netherlands.

**71. Number of BIPs using targeted public accommodation**

- How many BIPs used targeted public accommodation in the last calendar year?
- The Ministry of Interior estimates that 90-95% of BIPs live in public accommodation.

**72. Length of the use of targeted public accommodation**

- How long on average do BIPs use targeted public accommodation?
- No data is available.

**73. Targeted in-cash housing benefits after status recognition**

- What was the average amount of publicly provided, in-cash housing support per month per BIP after status recognition in the last calendar year?
- No data is available.

**74. Housing security of BIPs**

- How many BIPs were last year: homeless; living informally with family/friends; in mainstream temporary public housing; in mainstream long-term public housing; in long-term private housing with a legal contract; in housing they own themselves?

- No data is available. The Ministry of Interior estimates that the number of BIPs who own a home is small. In principle BIPs do not become homeless (unless they refuse the housing they are offered by the municipality). Asylum seekers and BIPs who are waiting for housing live in asylum seekers' centres. In the aftermath of the so-called refugee crisis, new forms of temporary accommodation were set up.<sup>45</sup>

## **75. Housing disadvantage**

- How many BIPs reported a disadvantaged housing situation in the last calendar year due to: a disproportionately high share of rental costs among all expenditures; overcrowded living conditions; substandard housing conditions/infrastructure; remote location?
- No data is available.

## **76. Legal employment and self-employment**

- How many asylum seekers and BIPs in working age were legally employed or self-employed in the last calendar year?
- Detailed data is not available. Research shows that BIPs who have been in the Netherlands longer are more likely to have work, and that men are more likely to have work than women across all demographic groups although for BIPs the gender differences are higher.<sup>46</sup> In 2013, 46% of those who applied for asylum between 2000-2010 were working, of which 66% for less than 35 hours per week and 66% with a temporary contract.<sup>47</sup> In 2016, 83 work permits were issued for asylum seekers.

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<sup>45</sup> This system, the Gemeentelijk Versnellingsarrangement, expires on 31 December 2018. See also: Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten (VNG), Het Gemeentelijk Versnellingsarrangement, Factsheet. Available at: <https://vng.nl/files/vng/publicaties/2016/factsheet-gva.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup> Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers (COA), Meedoen – Een onderzoek naar participatie, welbevinden en begeleiding van hervestigde vluchtelingen, June 2015. Available at: [https://www.coa.nl/sites/www.coa.nl/files/paginas/media/bestanden/3576.1188\\_rapport\\_evf\\_monitor\\_web\\_02.pdf](https://www.coa.nl/sites/www.coa.nl/files/paginas/media/bestanden/3576.1188_rapport_evf_monitor_web_02.pdf).

<sup>47</sup> VluchtelingenWerk, IntegratieBarometer 2014 – Een onderzoek naar de integratie van vluchtelingen in Nederland. Available at: [https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/sites/public/u2243/VluchtelingenWerk\\_IntegratieBarometer\\_2014.pdf](https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/sites/public/u2243/VluchtelingenWerk_IntegratieBarometer_2014.pdf). It should be noted that the Netherlands in general has quite a high proportion of workers on a temporary contract.

**77. Educational attainment level**

- What is the highest successfully completed level of education of asylum seekers and BIPs in working age?
- No data is available.

**78. Access to employment**

- Do asylum seekers and BIPs have the legal right to equal treatment in employment?
- BIPs legally have the same access to employment as Dutch nationals, although in practice their access to the labour market depends on their Dutch language skills. Asylum seekers are not in principle permitted to work, unless their asylum procedure takes longer than 6 months. They may, however, carry out voluntary work.

**79. Access to self-employment**

- Do asylum seekers and BIPs have the legal right to equal treatment in self-employment?
- BIPs legally have the same access to self-employment as Dutch nationals. Asylum seekers whose procedure takes longer than 6 months may work, but they require a work permit from an employer and therefore cannot take up self-employment.

**80. Access to employment for groups of special concern**

- Must employment law take into account the specific situation of vulnerable groups of BIPs?
- No, the Netherlands does not operate a target group policy.

**81. Administrative barriers to accessing employment**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for accessing employment for persons seeking or benefiting from international protection?
- There are differences between municipalities meaning that the support that a BIP receives in their search for work will depend on where they live.

In practice there are a number of barriers, such as language skills; a mismatch between BIPs' skills and Dutch labour market needs; cultural differences and workplace ethics; long commutes and high travel costs. The very fact that BIPs continue to have poorer labour market outcomes than Dutch nationals implies that there are administrative barriers.<sup>48</sup> Asylum seekers are only permitted to work if their asylum procedure takes longer than 6 months, and they face administrative burdens (employers have to request a work permit) and uncertainty regarding their actual earnings (because part of their income must be used to pay for the costs of staying at the asylum seekers' centre).<sup>49</sup>

## **82. Awareness raising about the specific labour market BIPs**

- Which measures are taken to raise awareness for the specific challenges of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection with regard to labour market integration?
- The Task Force Work and Integration Refugees sends municipalities information relating to employment and voluntary work for BIPs. The employer's organisation VNO-NCW disseminates this information to the business community.<sup>50</sup> Some municipalities have experimented with initiatives, e.g. Eindhoven organised a job fair to bring together employers and BIPs.<sup>51</sup>

## **83. Right to recognition of formal degrees and right to skills validation for BIPs**

- Is the State required by law to provide for the recognition of prior qualifications?

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<sup>48</sup> De Lange T. et al., Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen, 2017, p. 48.

<sup>49</sup> De Lange T. et al., Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen, 2017, section 2.5.

<sup>50</sup> Akerboom M. and Wörmann H., Arbeidsmarkt integratie van personen die internationale of humanitaire bescherming genieten in Nederland: Beleid en goede werkwijzen, EMN, February 2016, p. 36.

<sup>51</sup> Bolwijn M., Vluchtelingen zijn oplossing personeelstekort ict, de Volkskrant, 17 September 2015. Available at: <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/-vluchtelingen-zijn-oplossing-personeelstekort-ict-~ba78c0c0/>.

- The recognition of formal degrees is offered for free as part of the civic integration programme for BIPs. Asylum seekers and others may apply but have to pay for themselves.

**84. Assessment of skills**

- How are the skills of BIPs assessed?
- Asylum seekers and BIPs may apply for skills assessment (Evaluatie van Competenties - EVC) but this is not facilitated by the government and costs between €1.000-1.500.<sup>52</sup>

**85. Recognition of foreign diplomas, certificates, and other evidence of formal qualifications**

- Do asylum seekers and BIPs group go through the same procedures as nationals to have non-EU diplomas or other qualifications recognised in the country?
- Yes. Applications are submitted to SBB (vocational education) or EP-Nuffic (academic education) through an online application form.<sup>53</sup>

**86. Support in the recognition of foreign diplomas, certificates, and other formal qualifications**

- Does the procedure take into account the special needs of BIPs?
- If documents from the country of origin are unavailable, recognition can still be granted although a note is made that written evidence for the attained level could not be shown.<sup>54</sup> However, there is no appeal possible if the BIP objects to the evaluation made of his/her credentials.<sup>55</sup> BIPs are entitled to a free credentials evaluation as part of the civic integration programme. Translation costs are included in the procedure.

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<sup>52</sup> Nationaal Kenniscentrum EVC, Wat is een ervaringscertificaat?. Available at: <http://www.nationaal-kenniscentrum-evc.nl/werknemers/ervaringscertificaat/wat-is-een-ervaringscertificaat> (last visited 29 October 2018).

<sup>53</sup> See <https://www.idw.nl/> (last visited 29 October 2018).

<sup>54</sup> Akerboom M. and Wörmann H., Arbeidsmarkt integratie van personen die internationale of humanitaire bescherming genieten in Nederland: Beleid en goede werkwijzen, EMN, February 2016, p. 27.

<sup>55</sup> De Lange T. et al., Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen, 2017, p. 81.

**87. Job-seeking counseling and positive action**

- Do job-seekers from this group have access to publically funded targeted support in addition to mainstream services for the population?
- BIPs receive social counselling which involves advice about employment.<sup>56</sup> Since 2016 COA carries out an employment screening as soon as the asylum request is granted, and then tries to place BIPs in a province where they have a good chance of finding work.<sup>57</sup> In addition, Vluchtelingenwerk runs projects which link BIPs to a job coach.<sup>58</sup>

**88. Targeted support for entrepreneurs**

- How does the State or public bodies support entrepreneurs who are BIPs?
  - a. Criteria exist to identify eligible and capable candidates to entrepreneurship;
  - b. Targeted support/assistance is provided for the preparation of a business plan;
  - c. Financial/logistical support is provided for start-up and running the business.
- There is no targeted assistance available for BIPs beyond that available for native Dutch.

**89. Mechanisms to mainstream the integration of BIPs into employment policies**

- Has the ministry responsible for employment:
  - a. Adopted a formal strategy involving all relevant partners (government ministries, trade unions and other employee organisations, chambers and other employer organisations, regional and local authorities, NGOs) to facilitate the integration of BIPs through employment?

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<sup>56</sup> Akerboom M. and Wörmann H., Arbeidsmarkt integratie van personen die internationale of humanitaire bescherming genieten in Nederland: Beleid en goede werkwijzen, EMN, February 2016, p. 31.

<sup>57</sup> Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers (COA), Screening en matching op arbeid en opleiding, December 2016. Available at: [https://www.coa.nl/sites/www.coa.nl/files/paginas/media/bestanden/screening\\_en\\_matching\\_op\\_arbeid\\_en\\_opleiding-december2016.pdf](https://www.coa.nl/sites/www.coa.nl/files/paginas/media/bestanden/screening_en_matching_op_arbeid_en_opleiding-december2016.pdf).

<sup>58</sup> VluchtelingenWerk, Wat wij doen – Begeleiding naar werk. Available at: <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/wat-wij-doen/begeleiding-naar-werk> (last visited 29 October 2018).

b. A mechanism to monitor employment policies and services and the employment outcomes for BIPs?

c. A mechanism to review employment legislation, practices, services and outcomes for BIPs in coordination with all relevant partners (government ministries, trade unions and other employee organisations, chambers and other employer organisations, regional and local authorities, NGOs)?

- In 2015 a ‘Taskforce Werk en Integratie Vluchtelingen’ (work and integration of refugees) was established after the increase in asylum inflows. Relevant partners participating in the Taskforce: Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice and Security, Employee Insurance Agency, Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, the Economic and Social Council and NGOs.

90. **Coordination with regional and local authorities on employment for BIPs**

- Does the national government coordinate with regional and local authorities and employment bodies to:
  - a. Support them in assisting BIPs to find employment (i.e. staff trainings, guidelines)?
  - b. Provide means for programmes adequately addressing specific needs of BIPs on the labour market (i.e. partnership with local employers, funding for additional expert staff, local qualification assessment programmes)?
- Municipalities receive government funding to help unemployed persons back into employment, but this is a lump sum and municipalities decide how/on which target groups to spend this. In 2016 the project ‘screening and matching for beneficiaries of international protection’ was launched in order to accelerate the labour market integration of BIPs.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Divosa, Inventarisatie sectorprojecten arbeidsmarktregio’s Zuid-Holland, 31 August 2017. Available at: [https://www.divosa.nl/sites/default/files/onderwerp\\_bestanden/screening-matching-sectorprojecten-arbeidsmarktregios-zuid-holland.pdf](https://www.divosa.nl/sites/default/files/onderwerp_bestanden/screening-matching-sectorprojecten-arbeidsmarktregios-zuid-holland.pdf) (last visited 2 November 2018).

91. **Partnership on employment with expert NGOs or non-profit employment support organisations**
- Does the state provide means for expert NGOs or non-profit employment support organisations to assist BIPs to find employment?
  - The Foundation for Refugee Students (UAF) receives subsidy from the Ministry of Education to support and counsel highly skilled refugees during their studies and in finding employment in the Netherlands.
92. **Budget for the labour market integration of BIPs**
- What was the size of the public budget specifically tagged for the labour market integration of BIPs actually spent in the last calendar?
  - It is not possible to discern this because labour market instruments are not specifically targeted at BIPs.
93. **Acceptance rate for recognition of skills/qualifications**
- How many BIPs had their skills/qualifications recognised in the last calendar year?
  - All applications for recognition of qualifications will receive an evaluation (unless e.g. the application is found to be based on forged documents). The document produced by SBB/EP-Nuffic is an advice. In 2016 there were 3600 evaluations (700 by SBB for mbo/vmbo and 2.900 for EP-Nuffic for higher education). A breakdown by type of residence is not possible. These 3.600 evaluations came via the ONA component of the integration course, so the applicants all held residence permits (i.e. none were asylum seekers).
94. **Overqualification**
- Considering their educational level, experience and skills, how many BIPS are over-qualified for their current main job? With over-qualified is meant that the qualifications and skills of the person would allow more demanding tasks than the current job.
  - No data is available.



95. **Enrolment in vocational training or employment-related education**
- How many asylum seekers and BIPs were enrolled in or completed mainstream or targeted vocational training or employment-related education in the last calendar year?
  - No data is available.
96. **Access to mainstream vocational training and employment-related education**
- Which groups have the legal right to equal treatment in vocational training and/or employment-related education?
  - BIPs are entitled to the same access to senior secondary vocational and higher education as Dutch nationals.<sup>60</sup>
97. **Access to vocational training and employment-related education for groups of special concern**
- Must relevant law take into account the specific situation of vulnerable BIPs?
  - There are no groups identified who require special attention in the mainstream vocational and employment training and education system. In addition, there is no specifically targeted vocational and employment related programmes for BIPs.
98. **Administrative barriers to accessing vocational training**
- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for accessing
    - a. Required documentation is very hard to obtain
    - b. Excessive administrative delays and waiting periods
    - c. The procedure is subject to discretionary decisions with uncertain outcome
  - None of the options apply.

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<sup>60</sup> Akerboom M. and Wörmann H., Arbeidsmarkt integratie van personen die internationale of humanitaire bescherming genieten in Nederland: Beleid en goede werkwijzen, EMN, February 2016, p. 23.

99. **Raising awareness about the specific situation of BIPs regarding vocational training**
- Which measures are taken to raise awareness for the specific challenges of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection regarding vocational training?
    - a. Public employment services are regularly sent information on the vocational training entitlements and specific limitations of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection;
    - b. Public employment services are obliged to regularly inform their staff on the entitlements and specific limitations of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection regarding vocational training;
    - c. Publicly financed campaigns sensitize private training providers across the country about the situation of BIPs and target prejudices and perceptions among them.
  - None of the options apply.
100. **Accessibility of vocational training and other employment-related education measures**
- Does the State provide for the following measures?
    - a. Measures targeted to increase the participation of BIPs in vocational training and employment related education (i.e. scholarships, campaigns, orientation, support);
    - b. Measures (i.e. campaigns, guidance, support) to encourage employers to provide and increase the number of vocational training and employment-related courses for BIPs.
  - None of the options apply.
101. **Length of targeted vocational training and employment education**
- For how long can these groups (BIPs, resettled refugees, persons under humanitarian protection) benefit from publicly funded support for targeted vocational training and employment-related education?
  - No data is available.

102. **Mechanisms to mainstream the integration of BIPs into vocational training and employment-related education policies**
- Has the ministry responsible for vocational training and employment-related education:
    - a. Adopted a formal strategy involving all relevant partners (government ministries, trade unions, research institutions, professional associations, NGOs) to facilitate the integration of BIPs through vocational training?
    - b. A mechanism to monitor vocational training policies and outcomes for BIPs?
    - c. A mechanism to review vocational training legislation, programmes, practices and outcomes for BIPs with all relevant partners (government ministries, trade unions, research institutions, professional associations, NGOs)?
  - None of the options apply.
103. **Coordination with regional and local employment authorities on vocational training and employment-related education**
- Does the national government coordinate with regional and local employment authorities to:
    - a. Support them in providing orientation to BIPs to enrol in and complete vocational training/employment related education?
    - b. Provide additional means to build partnership with and encourage local employers to invest in the training of BIPs?
  - None of the options apply.
104. **Partnership on vocational training and employment-related education with expert NGOs and non-profit adult education organisations**
- Does the State provide means for expert NGOs and non-profit adult education organisations which help BIPs to receive adequate support for vocational education?
  - UAF supports and counsels refugee students during their vocational and higher education (partly funded by the Ministry of Education).

105. **Budgets for the vocational training of BIPs**

- What was the size of the annual public budget actually spent in the last calendar year specifically tagged for the skills improvement of BIPs?
- No data is available.

106. **Procedure to identify asylum seekers with special health-related reception needs**

- Is there an individual assessment established by law to identify asylum seekers with special reception needs regarding their health care that leads to special health care support throughout the reception phase?
- There is a procedure to identify health-related reception needs. However, it is not clear whether this assessment leads to regular monitoring and evaluation throughout the reception phase.

107. **Period for identification of asylum seekers with special reception needs regarding their health care**

- After submitting the application, within which period does asylum seekers' assessment for special health care reception needs take place?
- In principle, a medical examination has to be performed during the rest and preparation period, which starts the moment the asylum seeker lodges an application and lasts at least six days.<sup>61</sup>

108. **Inclusion in a system of health care coverage**

- Which conditions must be met by persons seeking or benefitting from international protection to be included in a system of health care coverage?
- Asylum seekers who are still in the procedure can make use of health care facilities.<sup>62</sup> With regard to BIPs the same conditions apply as for nationals.

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<sup>61</sup> VluchtelingenWerk and ECRE, Asylum Information Database, Country report: Netherlands, 2017 update, p. 15. Available at: <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/netherlands>.

<sup>62</sup> RMA Healthcare, Regeling Medische zorg Asielzoekers (RMA). Available at: [https://www.rmasielzoekers.nl/Portals/8/docs/20180605\\_RMA%202018.pdf?ver=2018-06-05-114701-780](https://www.rmasielzoekers.nl/Portals/8/docs/20180605_RMA%202018.pdf?ver=2018-06-05-114701-780).

109. **Extent of health coverage**

- What is the extent of health coverage for persons seeking or benefitting from international protection, compared to nationals?
- Comparable coverage as nationals.

110. **Access to health care for special needs groups**

- Which health care entitlements are included in the coverage for persons seeking or benefitting from international protection?
  - a. Pediatric care for minors;
  - b. Care for minors who have been victims of any form of abuse or trauma;
  - c. Care relating to pregnancy and childbirth;
  - d. Care for physically or mentally disabled persons;
  - e. Nursing care for elderly persons;
  - f. Psychiatric and psychosocial care for victims of torture, rape or other forms of trauma.
- All of these apply for persons with a recognised status, to the extent that these services are available to anyone in the Netherlands (because once BIPs have a status, they fall under the regular Dutch healthcare system).

111. **Administrative barriers to obtaining entitlement to health care**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for receiving health care for persons seeking or benefiting from international protection?
  - a. Required documentation is very hard to obtain;
  - b. Excessive administrative delays and waiting periods;
  - c. The procedure is subject to discretionary decisions with uncertain outcome.
- None of the options apply.

112. **Information for health care providers about entitlements**

- Which measures are taken to raise awareness for the specific health care needs of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection?

- a. Health care providers regularly receive information on the entitlements and specific limitations of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection;
  - b. Health care providers regularly inform their staff on the entitlements and specific limitations of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection.
- Health care providers receive information on the entitlements from Pharos.<sup>63</sup>

**113. Information concerning entitlements and use of health services**

- Are persons seeking or benefitting from international protection systematically provided with information on health care entitlements and use of services?
- COA provides asylum seekers information on healthcare entitlements. Once asylum seekers obtain a status, they move from a reception centre to regular housing. Often VluchtelingenWerk provides BIPs information on the healthcare system.

**114. Availability of free interpretation services**

- Can persons seeking or benefitting from international protection access free interpretation services in the health system?
- BIPs have no access to free interpretation services in the health system.

**115. Mechanisms to mainstream the integration of BIPs into health policies**

- Has the ministry responsible for health:
  - a. Adopted a formal strategy involving all relevant partners (government ministries, health care providers, regional and local authorities, NGOs) to facilitate the integration of BIPS through adequate health policies?
  - b. A mechanism to monitor the use of health care services and the health outcomes for BIPs?

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<sup>63</sup> Pharos, Gezondheid vluchtelingen, asielzoekers en statushouders. Available at: <https://www.pharos.nl/thema/gezondheid-vluchtelingen-asielzoekers-en-statushouders> (last visited 30 October 2018).

c. A mechanism to review health legislation, practices, services and outcomes for BIPs in coordination with all relevant partners (government ministries, regional and local authorities, NGOs)?

➤ None of them applies.

**116. Coordination with regional and local authorities and/or health bodies on health for BIPs**

- Does the national government coordinate with regional and local authorities and/or health bodies to:
  - a. Support them in dealing with the health needs of BIPs (guidelines, trainings, regular information sessions on the entitlements and limitations of BIPs)?
  - b. Provide means to adequately address the health needs of BIPs?
- The Ministry responsible for health policies funds Pharos, which provides information on the health needs of BIPs.

**117. Partnership on health care with expert NGOs**

- Does the State provide means for expert NGOs to assist BIPs to receive adequate health care?
- No data is available.

**118. Budgets for the health care services**

- What was the size of the annual public budget actually spent in the last calendar year specifically tagged for health care services for persons seeking or benefiting from international protection?
- No data is available.

**119. Unmet medical needs of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection**

- How many persons reported unmet medical needs in the last calendar year?
- No data is available.

**120. Inclusion in a system of social security**

- Which conditions must be met by BIPs to be included in a system of social security?
- As from 1 January 2016, the Dutch government introduced a language requirement in order to benefit from social assistance (this requirement applies also to Dutch nationals). Old-age pensions are linked to the number of years of residence in the Netherlands, so BIPs will qualify for a lower pension.

**121. Extent of entitlement to social benefits**

- What is the extent of social benefits entitlement/coverage for BIPs, compared to nationals?
- It is the same.

**122. Administrative barriers to obtaining entitlement to social benefits**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for BIPs to receiving social benefits?
- It has been submitted that from 1 January 2016, the Dutch government introduced a language requirement in order to benefit from social assistance (this requirement applies also to Dutch nationals).

**123. Information for social welfare offices about entitlements**

- Which measures are taken to raise awareness for the specific entitlements of BIPs?
- No measures taken on a structural basis

**124. Information concerning entitlements and use of social services**

- Are persons seeking or benefiting from international protection systematically provided with individualised face-to-face information on social security?



- BIPs have an intake conversation with the municipality. Nevertheless, research shows that there are gaps in knowledge e.g. about the subsidies available for daycare costs.<sup>64</sup>

**125. Mechanisms to mainstream the integration of BIPs into social security**

- Has the ministry responsible for social affairs:
  - a. Adopted a formal strategy covering the last calendar year and involving all relevant partners (government ministries, regional and local authorities, NGOs) to facilitate the integration of BIPs through comprehensive income support?
  - b. A mechanism to monitor the use of income support and its outcomes for BIPs?
  - c. A mechanism to review social security legislation, practices, services and outcomes for BIPs in coordination with all relevant partners (government ministries, regional and local authorities, NGOs)?
- None of them applies.

**126. Coordination with regional and local authorities and/or welfare bodies on social security for BIPs**

- Does the national government coordinate with regional and local authorities and/or welfare bodies to:
  - a. Support them in dealing with the social security needs of BIPs (guidelines, trainings, regular information sessions on the entitlements of and limitations of BIPs)?
  - b. Provide additional means to adequately address income support needs of BIPs?
- Yes, additional means were made available to municipalities after the high inflows of BIPs in 2015.

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<sup>64</sup> De Lange T. et al., Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen, 2017, p. 87.

**127. Partnership on poverty relief with expert NGOs**

- Does the State provide means for expert NGOs to assist BIPs to facilitate access to income support and to poverty relief measures?
- The State does not provide means to expert NGOs, except the funding for the Dutch Refugee Council and NGOs that help Dutch nationals in general.

**128. BIPs living in poverty**

- What share of BIPs has an income below the risk-of-poverty threshold (i.e. below 60 % of the national median equivalised disposable income)?
- No recent data is available. In 2011, 30% of refugee households were living below the poverty level.<sup>65</sup>

**129. Enrolment in education of refugee children and youth**

- How many children and youth (up to 25 years old) seeking or benefiting from international protection were enrolled in education in the last calendar year?
- Detailed data are not available. On 1 April 2016, 89.3% of asylum seeker children in compulsory schooling age were registered with education authorities. By 1 May 2017 this was 87.1%.<sup>66</sup>

**130. Average time between an asylum application and the enrolment of children in primary/secondary education/preparatory educational programmes**

- How long did it take, on average in the last calendar year, for the children of asylum seekers to be enrolled in school?
- Approximately 6 weeks. This is a reduction of the higher waiting times experienced in the aftermath of high inflows in 2015.

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<sup>65</sup>Metro, 1 op 3 vluchtelingen leeft onder armoedegrens, 11 August 2011. Available at: <https://www.metronieuws.nl/nieuws/2011/08/1-op-3-vluchtelingen-leeft-onder-armoedegrens> (last visited 2 November 2018).

<sup>66</sup>Onderwijs in Cijfers, Onderwijssituatie leerplichtige Asielzoekers. Available at: <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/themas/asielzoekerskinderen-in-het-onderwijs/onderwijssituatie-leerplichtige-asielzoekers> (last visited 2 November 2018).

**131. Access to education**

- Do children/youth of BIPs have the legal right to equal treatment in education?
- Yes, although they may need to attend language classes before they can integrate into the regular education system.

**132. Access to education for groups of special concern**

- Must education law take into account the specific situation of vulnerable BIPs?
- According to the 'Passend Onderwijs' policy (suitable education) and the Youth Law (Jeugdwet), children with psychological disorders or disabilities have the right to receive extra care from schools.<sup>67</sup>

**133. Administrative barriers to education**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for accessing education for persons seeking or benefiting from international protection?
- There are no barriers for accessing education.

**134. Raising awareness about the specific situation of BIPs regarding education**

- Which measures are taken to raise awareness for the specific challenges of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection regarding education?
- Schools and universities are regularly sent information on the education entitlements and specific limitations of persons seeking or benefiting from international protection, for example by LOWAN. Pharos produced a handbook entitled 'welkom op school' (welcome to school).

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<sup>67</sup> Buisman M. et al., Informatiedocument onderwijs aan asielzoekerskinderen, Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, May 2016, p. 22.

**135. Placement in the compulsory school system**

- How are the children of beneficiaries of international protection placed in the school system?
- The State provides guidelines for assessments where documentary evidence from the country of origin is unavailable (i.e. level of education, skills, needs). However there are no nationwide criteria in place, and the fact that children move often during the asylum procedure has been criticised as being disruptive to schooling.

**136. Length of language support**

- For how long can children of these groups benefit from state-funded support for learning the host language?
- Schools do not receive funding for interpreters. However, they receive extra funding for 'newcomers' up to a maximum of 2 years.

**137. Regularity of orientation and language programmes and targeted education measures**

- a. Are orientation and language programmes and targeted educational measures offered in a systematic manner?
- b. Do they receive systematic funding?
- Orientation lessons are provided at schools at asylum seekers' centres, but regular schools are not obliged to provide orientation lessons.

**138. Mechanisms to mainstream the integration of children and youth under international protection into education policies**

- Has the ministry responsible for education:
  - a. Adopted a formal strategy involving all relevant partners (government ministries, education bodies, research institutions, professional associations, NGOs) to facilitate the integration of BIPs through education?
  - b. A mechanism to monitor education policies and outcomes for children and youth under international protection?
  - c. A mechanism to review education legislation, programmes, practices and outcomes for children and youth under international protection in

coordination with all relevant partners (government ministries, education bodies, research institutions, professional associations, NGOs)?

- No, the only taskforce established is for BIPs in tertiary education (Taskforce Vluchtelingen Hoger Onderwijs).

**139. Coordination with regional and/or local education authorities and school boards on education for children and youth under international protection**

- Does the national government coordinate with regional education authorities and school boards to:
  - a. Support them in dealing with the education needs of children and youth under international protection (i.e. guidelines, trainings)?
  - b. Provide additional means to adequately address education needs of children and youth under international protection?
- Yes, schools receive extra funding for pupils who have been in the Netherlands for less than two years.<sup>68</sup>

**140. Partnership on education with expert NGOs**

- Does the State provide means for expert NGOs which help children and youth under international protection to receive adequate education support?
- The State continuously provides means for expert NGOs within an established framework, for example for LOWAN (assessment of educational level and support to primary and secondary schools), UAF (support to students in vocational and higher education) and Stichting Tussenspel (dealing with traumatised students).

**141. Participation in targeted education**

- How many minor asylum seekers and children and youth under international protection participated in targeted education in the last calendar year?

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<sup>68</sup> Ondersteuning onderwijs nieuwkomers (LOWAN), Voorlichting: Bekostiging van het onderwijs aan nieuwkomers in 2017. Available at: <https://www.lowan.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/OCW-Bekostiging-van-het-onderwijs-aan-nieuwkomers-in-2017.pdf> (last visited 2 November 2018).

- No data is available.

**142. Budgets for targeted educational measures for minor BIPs**

- What was the size of the public budget specifically tagged for targeted educational measures for minor beneficiaries actually spent in the last calendar year?
- The budget that schools receive depends on the number of newcomers they have. In 2016 primary schools received €9.000 per student who had been in the Netherlands for less than one year (minimum of 4 students per school) and €3.000 per student who had been in the Netherlands for between 1-2 years (no minimum number of students). A school that was requesting this funding for the first time was eligible for an extra €10.703.<sup>69</sup> Secondary schools received €11.000 per student in the first year and €4.100 for students in the second year. Schools requesting this funding for the first time were eligible for an extra €16.000.<sup>70</sup>

**143. Education staff for minor BIPs**

- What was the number of publicly funded, full-time equivalent staff in the last calendar tagged as directly working on supporting the education of minor BIPs?
- No data is available.

### **3.4 Socio-cultural integration: education, language learning and social orientation, and building bridges and fostering participation**

**144. Enrolment in publicly funded host language courses**

- How many asylum seekers and BIPs were enrolled in publicly funded, free host language courses in the last calendar year?

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<sup>69</sup> For 2018-2019 amounts see: Ondersteuning onderwijs nieuwkomers (LOWAN), Bekostiging asielzoekers. Available at: <https://www.lowan.nl/primair-onderwijs/financiering/ocwduo/bekostiging-asielzoekers/> (last visited 2 November 2018).

<sup>70</sup> Vereniging voor katholiek en christelijk onderwijs (VERUS), Maatwerkbekostiging VO 2016. Available at: <https://www.verus.nl/sites/www.verus.nl/files/documenten/ocw-informatiedocument-maatwerkbekostiging-vo-peildatum-1-april-2016.pdf>.

- This detailed breakdown is not available for the Netherlands. On 1 January 2017, 35105 BIPs were following integration courses. These persons received their residence permit between 1 January 2013 and 31 December 2016. However, the figures from DUO are possibly not complete because they are based on BIPs who have taken out loans to follow integration courses - but some people may follow the course without needing a loan. For BIPs, courses are not technically or automatically publically funded. It has been submitted that BIPs must complete the integration requirements within 3 years. They can borrow money to pay for the integration courses (regardless of their income). If they pass the integration requirements within 3 years, they don't need to repay the loan (i.e. then the course was publically funded). If BIPs do not pass the integration requirements within 3 years, they may be fined (up to €1.250). Asylum seekers cannot participate in integration courses.

145. **Average time between an asylum application and the enrolment in a host language learning programme**

- How long did it take on average for asylum seekers to be enrolled in publicly funded host language courses in the last calendar year?
- Sometimes there are waiting lists for language courses so BIPs may need to wait before they can enroll - even though the time limit of 3 years to pass the integration requirements starts ticking as soon as the asylum permit is granted.<sup>71</sup>

146. **Access to host language learning**

- To what extent are free, publicly, funded host language courses available for asylum seekers and BIPs?
- BIPs between 16 and retirement age are obliged to pass the civic integration exam within 3 years of receiving their residence permit. They can take a loan to pay for the courses (max. €10.000, if they follow courses at a certified school), and if they pass within 3 years then the loan

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<sup>71</sup> Engbersen G. et al., Geen tijd verliezen: van opvang naar integratie van asielmigranten, Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR), Policy Brief no. 4, December 2015, p. 32.

becomes a gift. Asylum seekers are offered Dutch language lessons by volunteers (not qualified teachers), but not access to integration courses because the government does not want to create the expectation of residence in case the asylum request is later rejected.<sup>72</sup> This approach did start to shift in 2016: currently, the approach is emerging that asylum seekers whose claims are likely to be granted should start language and cultural orientation as soon as possible. This means that Syrians and Eritreans can participate in the training given to BIPs in reception centres.<sup>73</sup> The programme ‘Voorbereiding op inburgering’ is offered free and on a voluntary basis to BIPs who are still living in the reception centres until they can move into a home in the municipality.<sup>74</sup>

**147. Administrative barriers to publicly funded host language learning classes**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for accessing publicly funded host language learning classes for persons seeking or benefiting from international protection?
  - a. Required documentation is very hard to obtain;
  - b. Excessive administrative delays and waiting periods;
  - c. The procedure is subject to discretionary decisions with uncertain outcome.
- There are sometimes waiting lists for BIPs to enrol in language courses.<sup>75</sup>

**148. Quality of language courses**

- Which measures are taken to ensure high quality host language tuition?
  - a. Participants are placed in courses according to their needs after an assessment of existing knowledge of the host language;
  - b. Curricula are targeted and take into account the specific communication needs of newcomers BIPs;

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<sup>72</sup> TK, 2015-2016, 19 637 en 32 824, nr. 2073, Brief van de Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie.

<sup>73</sup> De Lange T. et al., Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen, 2017, p. 17.

<sup>74</sup> TK, 2015-2016, 19 637 en 32 824, nr. 2073, Brief van de Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie.

<sup>75</sup> Engbersen G. et al., Geen tijd verliezen: van opvang naar integratie van asielmigranten, Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR), Policy Brief no. 4, December 2015, p. 32.



- c. Teaching is provided by trained and certified second-language teachers;
  - d. Targeted courses are regularly evaluated in the light of country-wide quality standards;
  - e. Different formats exist to facilitate language learning for different target groups (e.g. evening classes for employed persons, literacy courses for illiterate adults, courses with parallel childcare, on-the-job learning of professional terminology).
- Participants are not always placed in courses according to their needs, because some schools place different levels together in the same class or allow beginners to join after the class has started running. Teaching is targeted at passing the civic integration exam, but not all teachers are necessarily certified.<sup>76</sup> Blik Op Werk assesses students' satisfaction with the course and evaluates whether school as a whole meets the criteria but does not evaluate the lessons themselves. The absence of evening courses is criticised, but there are literacy courses for illiterate adults.

149. **Duration of host language learning**

- For how long can asylum seekers and BIPs benefit from publicly funded host language tuition?
- Courses are not technically or automatically publically funded. BIPs must complete the integration requirements within 3 years. They can borrow money to pay for the integration courses (regardless of their income). If they pass the integration requirements within 3 years, they do not need to repay the loan (i.e. then the course was publically funded). If BIPs do not pass the integration requirements within 3 years, they may be fined (up to €1.250). Extensions are granted to the 3-year period if: the person can demonstrate significant effort to pass; the person is illiterate; the person had a baby; or the person was sick for more than 3 months. Language training is not standard provided in reception centres because integration is assumed not to apply to persons without a residence right in the Netherlands.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> In order to obtain certification from Blik op Werk, 80% of teachers at a school have to be certified.

<sup>77</sup> Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO), U gaat inburgeren. Available at: <https://www.inburgeren.nl/u-gaat-inburgeren/index.jsp> (last visited 30 October 2018).

**150. Duration of translation and interpretation assistance**

- For how long can asylum seekers and BIPs benefit from publicly funded translation and interpretation assistance?
- There are no publicly funded services.

**151. Host language learning budgets**

- What was the size of the public budget specifically tagged for host language learning actually spent in the last calendar year?
- Data is not available for BIPs separately. The numbers include all third-country nationals with the obligation to integrate (in particular: family migrants). For 2016, budget for the integration was €215 million. Asylum seekers are not obligated to integrate and not eligible for e.g. loans for integration courses, therefore they are not included in these numbers.<sup>78</sup>

**152. Host language learning staff**

- What was the number of publicly funded, full-time equivalent staff in the last calendar year tagged as teaching the host language to beneficiaries?
- Exact numbers are not available. For a school to receive the Blik op Werk certification, 80% of lessons must be given by a certified teacher.

**153. Completion of host language courses**

- How many asylum seekers and BIPs have successfully completed publicly funded host language courses or were successfully tested after completing a publicly funded course in the last calendar year (using the CEFR Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)?
- BIPs have 3 years (from the point that their residence permit has been issued) to comply with the integration requirements. 667 of the 2621 BIPs in the 2013 cohort completed the requirements on time (i.e. 25%). Recent data from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment indicate that

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<sup>78</sup> Algemene Rekenkamer, Inburgering – Eerste resultaten van de Wet inburgering 2013, 23 January 2017, p. 8.

from the 2013 cohort, after 5 years, 85 % has successfully completed the integration requirements or received a dispensation.<sup>79</sup>

**154. Impact of language courses**

- How many persons seeking or benefitting from international protection who participated in publicly funded language courses in the last calendar year reported that the course was very helpful to:
  - a. Learn as much of the language as they wanted to learn;
  - b. Learn the specific vocabulary/skills that they need for their job/profession;
  - c. Get involved in their local community;
  - d. Get a better job or education.
- Such detailed data is not available for the Netherlands. In 2016 participants rated integration courses with 8,04, although participants are not only BIPs.<sup>80</sup>

**155. Completion of publicly funded social orientation courses**

- How many asylum seekers and BIPs completed publicly funded social orientation courses in the last calendar year?
- Social orientation (knowledge of Dutch society and labour market orientation) are part of the civic integration course (see indicator 153).

**156. Access to social orientation**

- To what extent are free, publicly funded social orientation courses available for asylum seekers and BIPs?
- Social orientation is part of the civic integration exam (module on knowledge of Dutch society and module on orientation in the Dutch labour market).

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<sup>79</sup> Kamerbrief Evaluatie van de Wet inburgering 2013.

<sup>80</sup> Stichting Blik Op Werk, Brief over Inburgering.

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/brieven/2016/09/29/brief-stichting-blik-op-werk-over-inburgeren> (last visited 23 November 2018).

157. **Administrative barriers to publicly funded social orientation**

- Which administrative requirements can pose a barrier for accessing publicly funded social orientation for persons seeking or benefitting from international protection?
  - a. Required documentation is very hard to obtain;
  - b. Excessive administrative delays and waiting periods;
  - c. The procedure is subject to discretionary decisions with uncertain outcome.
- As indicated earlier, there are sometimes waiting lists to enrol in language courses.

158. **Quality of social orientation courses**

- Which measures are taken to ensure high quality social orientation?
  - a. Courses are taught according to a country-wide standardised curriculum;
  - b. Courses encourage interaction with the receiving society;
  - c. Courses are regularly evaluated in the light of country-wide quality standards;
  - d. Courses are complemented by additional information, e.g. publications or online guides.
- Social orientation is part of the civic integration trajectory.

159. **Provision of social orientation for groups of special concern**

- For which target groups are social orientation courses provided that are adapted to the group's specific needs and interests?
  - a. Unaccompanied minors;
  - b. Parents with children;
  - c. Women;
  - d. Elderly.
- The social orientation course (part of civic integration trajectory) is the same for everyone who has to follow it.

**160. Social orientation budgets**

- What was the size of the public budget specifically tagged for social orientation of beneficiaries actually spent in the last calendar year?
- There is no budget specifically tagged for social orientation, because this is part of the civic integration trajectory. For 2016, the budget for integration was €215 million.

**161. Social orientation staff**

- What was the number of publicly funded, full-time staff in the last calendar year tagged as directly working on social orientation programmes for beneficiaries?
- No data is available.

**162. Impact of social orientation programmes**

- How many persons seeking or benefiting from international protection who participated in publicly funded social orientation programmes in the last calendar year reported that the programme was very helpful to:
  - a. Learn as much about the country as they wanted to learn;
  - b. Access the public services they need;
  - c. Get involved in their local community;
  - d. Get a better job or education.
- No data is available.

**163. Expectations of mutual accommodation by BIPs and host society members**

- Does the national integration strategy on BIPs put an explicit expectation/obligation on the receiving society to be actively involved in the integration of BIPs?
- Integration is the responsibility of the BIP him/herself.

164. **Awareness raising on the specific situation of BIPs**
- Are there any publicly funded campaigns to sensitize the host society about the situation of BIPs and target prejudices and perceptions among them?
  - There are no publicly funded campaigns.
165. **Coordination with regional and local authorities on social cohesion**
- Does the State:
    - a. Require regional and local authorities to set up strategies referring to the interaction of the receiving society with BIPs;
    - b. Provide means to regional and local authorities for the implementation of these strategies?
  - Municipalities are responsible for civic counselling for BIPs (helping them to find their way in Dutch society). The government provides a set amount of financing per BIP for this purpose - although municipalities complain that it is not enough.<sup>81</sup>
166. **Encouragement of voluntary initiatives to complement public policies**
- Does the State support voluntary initiatives by:
    - a. Offering funding for the national, regional, local coordination of these initiatives?
    - b. Making them part of the standard integration offers for BIPs (e.g. regular social orientation classes followed by voluntary one-to-one mentorship programmes)?
    - c. Offering guidelines, training and other support to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives?
  - None of the options applies. The State puts the responsibility on municipalities, which may choose to outsource tasks (e.g. the Dutch Refugee Council provides social counselling).

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<sup>81</sup> Klaver J. et al., De integratie van statushouders op lokaal niveau: belemmeringen en oplossingen, Regioplan, December 2015, p. 28.

167. **Number of BIPs receiving one-to-one mentorship**
- How many BIPs have received one-to-one socio-cultural mentorship in publicly funded voluntary initiatives in the last calendar year?
  - No data is available.
168. **Number of legal guardians for unaccompanied minors**
- How many legal guardians support unaccompanied minors through publicly funded voluntary initiatives in the last calendar year?
  - Nidos is the legal guardian for all unaccompanied minors (under 18), both before and after they receive their asylum residence permit. In 2017, there were 4469 guardianships.<sup>82</sup>
169. **Support for involvement of BIPs in civic activities**
- Does the State support the participation of BIPs in civic activities (voluntary organisations, sports clubs, involvement in political parties, etc.):
    - a. Through targeted information campaigns on the rights and possibilities of BIPs to join such activities?
    - b. By offering means to such organisations to organise outreach to BIPs (campaigns, people-to-people events, one-to-one mentoring schemes)?
  - Government policy aims to encourage asylum seekers and BIPs to carry out volunteer work as an introduction into Dutch society and (for BIPs) a possible first step towards paid employment.<sup>83</sup>
170. **Involvement in national consultation processes**
- Does the national government have a body to consult with BIPs on issues concerning their integration?
  - There is no permanent national consultative body including an association of BIPs or an elected representative.

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<sup>82</sup> Nidos, Jaarverslag 2017, p. 8. Available at: <https://www.nidos.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Jaarverslag-2017.pdf>.

<sup>83</sup> De Lange T. et al., Van azc naar een baan – De Nederlandse regelgeving over en praktijk van arbeidsintegratie van vluchtelingen, 2017, pp. 25-31.

171. **Involvement in local consultation processes**

- Does the State support regional and local authorities to have a permanent body to consult with BIPs on issues of their regional and local integration?
  - a. The national integration strategy expects regional and local authorities to include BIPs in regional and or local consultation processes;
  - b. The State offers means (funding, guidelines, other forms of support) to establish regional and or local permanent consultative bodies, to consult with BIPs on issues of their regional and local integration.
- None of the options applies.

172. **Funding for associations working on the socio-cultural participation of beneficiaries**

- What was the amount of public funding in the last calendar year that was tagged to support associations working on the socio-cultural and civic participation of BIPs?
- No data is available.

173. **Number of BIPs in civic activities**

- How many BIPs were in the last calendar year regularly involved in political activities, socio-cultural activities, volunteering for NGOs or voluntary initiatives?
- No data is available.

174. **Number of NGOs in the country run by BIPs**

- How many NGOs were there in the last calendar that have been founded and run by BIPs?
- No data is available.



#### 4. Concluding remarks

This report has examined the legislative and policy measures with regard to the integration of BIPs in the Netherlands. The previous sections show that the Netherlands has adopted a generic approach to integration. Apart from a few measures, integration policies are not specifically targeted at BIPs. The examined indicators also show that detailed information with regard to various policy areas is often not available. Furthermore, this report briefly addressed several challenges with regard to the integration of BIPs in the Netherlands. It has been submitted that BIPs are responsible for their own integration process. However, studies have shown that BIPs have difficulties to find their way into the complex integration system.

More importantly, the Dutch government has acknowledged that there are shortcomings in the Dutch integration system, which impedes the effective integration of BIPs and other newcomers.<sup>84</sup> To increase the effectiveness, a reform proposal has been submitted which aims to abolish the special loans for financing the language courses and to reinforce the role of the municipalities in the integration process. In addition, a more individual integration plan will be introduced for all newcomers. This means a personal plan for each individual newcomer to learn the language in combination with work or study. At the same time, the government intends to increase the required language proficiency level to pass the civic integration exam from A2 to B1. The consequence for failing to comply with the integration requirements remains that the newcomer may not be entitled to a residence permit for an indefinite period or for naturalization.<sup>85</sup> The reform of the integration system is planned to enter into force in 2021.

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<sup>84</sup> Blom M. et al., *Inburgering: systeemwereld versus leefwereld – Evaluatie Wet inburgering 2013*, Significant, 13 June 2018.

<sup>85</sup> TK, 2017-2018, 32 824, nr. 223, Hoofdlijnen veranderopgave inburgering.

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