



Vlaamse  
overheid

# Plan Living Together

#local  
#foreveryone  
#minimalplanburden

# Plan for the session

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1. Introductory presentation by ABB
2. Agency for integration and Civic integration on their service to the municipalities
3. City of Lier - Plan Living Together in practice
4. City of Turnhout - Plan Living Together in practice
5. Reflections, Questions and Answers



# Content

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1. Background
2. Legislative context
3. Demographic context
4. Why did we need a plan?
5. Principles of Plan Living Together
6. For whom?
7. Objectives and actions
8. Substantive support
9. Results so far

# 1. Background

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- Minister Bart Somers (Mayor of Mechelen) → Minister Gwendolyn Rutten (Mayor of Aarschot)
- Administration: Agency for Home Affairs – department of equal opportunities, Integration and civic integration
- Horizontal policy plan for equal opportunities and integration



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# Legislative context

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*Art. 3 'Decree on integration and civic integration'*

- **Flemish government** responsible for policy regarding the dynamics and effects of migration with the goal of:
- the independent and proportional participation;
  - the accessibility of all facilities to all, and more specifically to the people with foreign origins,
  - an active and shared citizenship of all;
  - the strengthening of social cohesion

*Art. 12 'Decree on integration and civic integration'*

- **Local government** is the director of local integration policy

Since 2016

- 57 municipalities receive a share of a yearly grant
- Grant = 130Mil. euros for 6 policy sectors (local integration policy is one of them)

- Wildly differing degrees of local integration policy

# Nationality and origin, Flanders, 2023

	Amount	Share of total population
Foreign nationality	715.000	10,5%
Born in a foreign country	549.000	8,1%
Parents born in a foreign country	518.000	7,6%
<b>Total amount with foreign roots</b>	<b>1.782.000</b>	<b>26,3%</b>

	Share of population
LGBTQI+	5-10%
Adults with a handicap	16-24%

# Why did we need a plan?

Plan  
Samenleven

- ! Offer a more coherent policy framework
  - ! Prevent fragmented project calls
  - ! Capacity building
  - ! Combat new societal challenges
    - Integration of newcomers
    - Unequal opportunities for persons with a handicap, newcomers, ...
    - Livability
    - Discrimination
    - Segregation
- Make living together in diversity a success!





# Principles of Plan Living Together

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- 7 goals, 24 actions
  - **#Localgovernment** in the driver's seat
  - **#Minimalplanburden** to focus on the 'doing' not the 'planning'
  - **#Foreveryone**
  - Embeddedness through co-financing
  - Honour local expertise
- 
- Budget:
    - Year 1: 14mil.
    - Year 2: 17mil. (Ongoing)
    - Year 3: 17mil.



# For whom?

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- Applicants with >7.500 non-EU14 residents
- Cooperations between municipalities
- 3 project years (2022-2025)

# Objectives



# Objectives

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- Target group: people with higher distance to the labor market:
  - Lack of professional qualifications
  - Lack of knowledge of Dutch
  - Psychosocial issues or background of poverty
  - Disabilities

KPI = Min. 4 sessions with a member of the target group

KPI = 1 mentor guides 1 participant to work

Plan  
Living  
Together

**Guiding to the  
labour market**

Guidance to labour market  
Guidance to entrepreneurship  
Mentoring to work

## AGENTSCHAP INTEGRATIE & INBURGERING



## Substantive support

- Boots on the ground: AGII
- Free or paid support by expert organizations:
  - **Inter** (Agency for accessibility)
- Mentoring the mentors: Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG)
- Civil society
- Inspiring examples by local government
- Stimulus





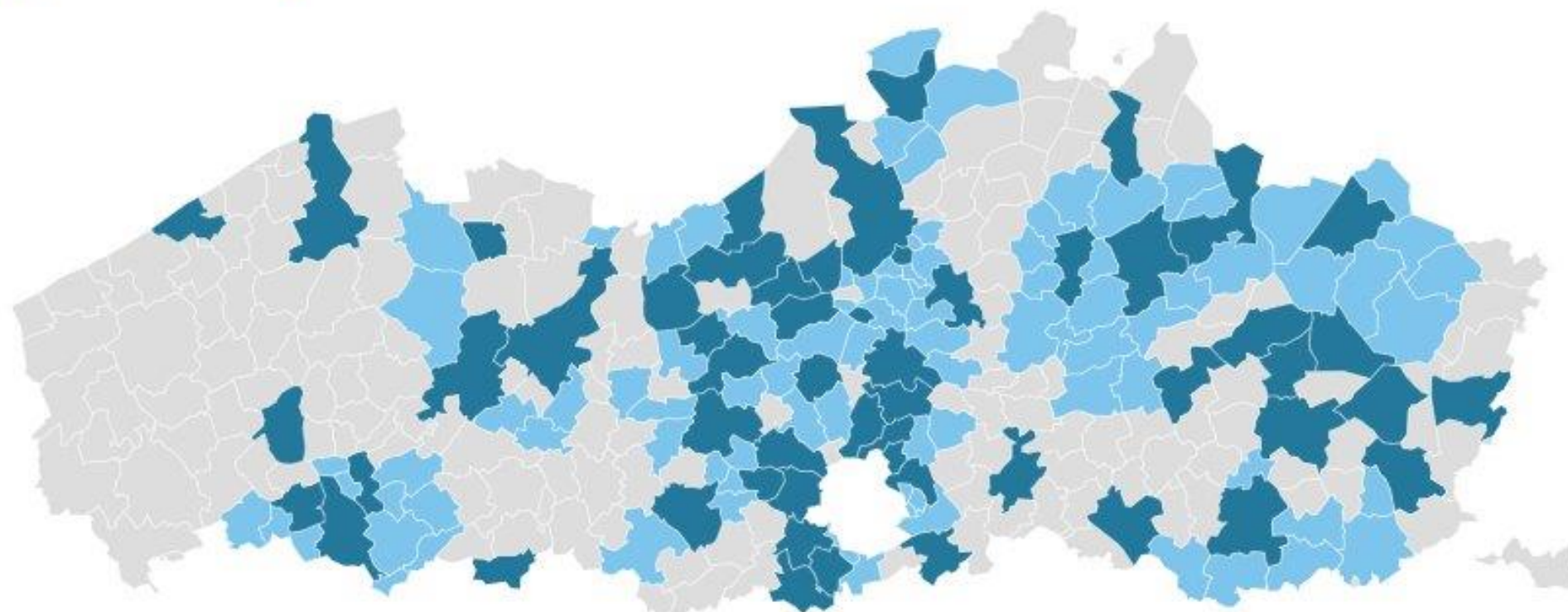
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# Results

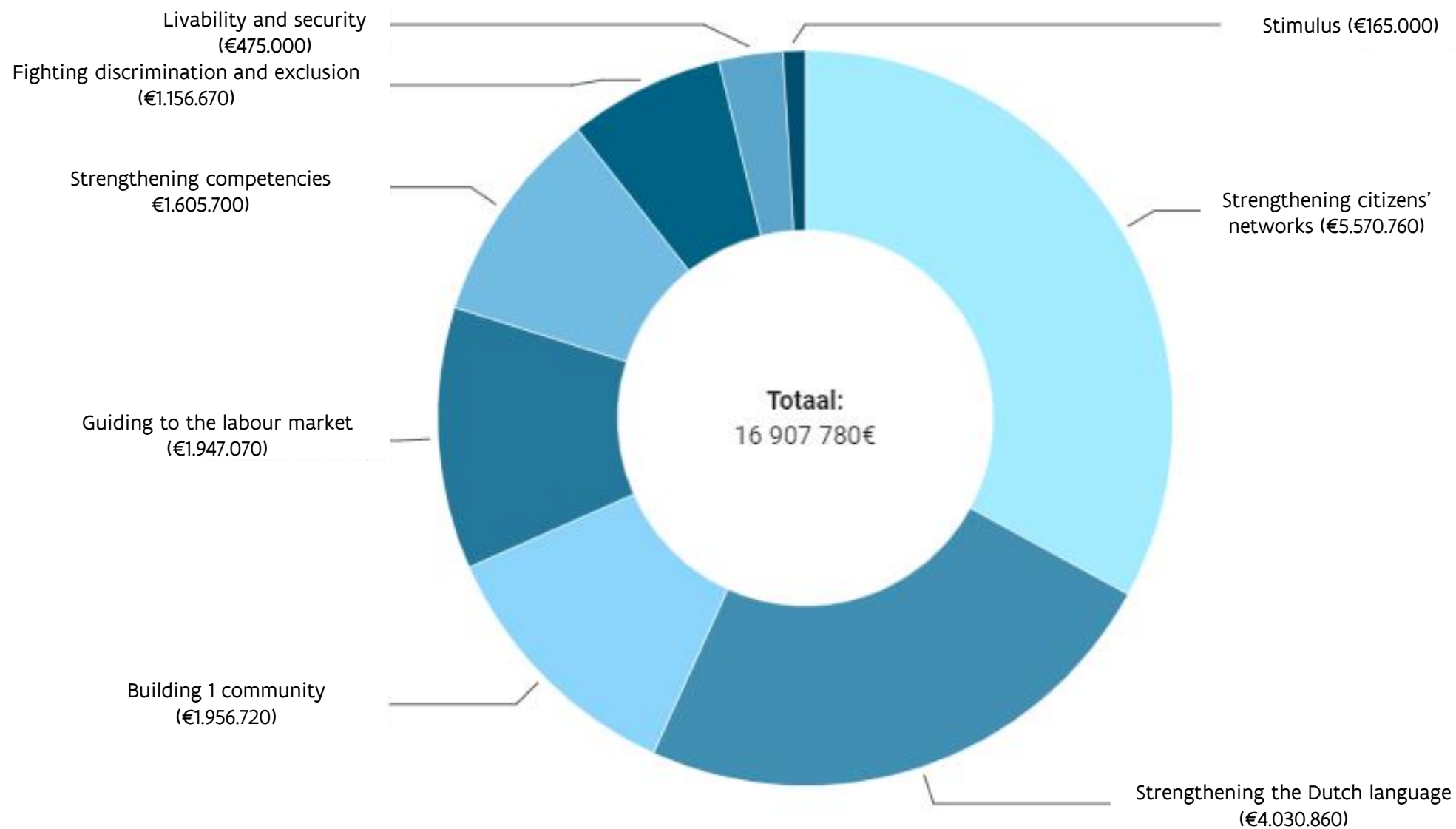
# Applicants and participants

Deelnemend bestuur    Indienend bestuur

	Year 1	Year 2
Applicants	50	59
Participants	106	149



# Distribution of funds year 2



# Most popular actions in year 2

€3.916.800

## 1. Bridging figures

136 local authorities, VGC en De Rand vzw



€4.030.860

## 2. Opportunities to practice Dutch

133 local authorities, VGC en De Rand vzw



## 3. Get in touch with sport

106 local authorities, VGC en De Rand vzw



## 4. Get in touch with culture

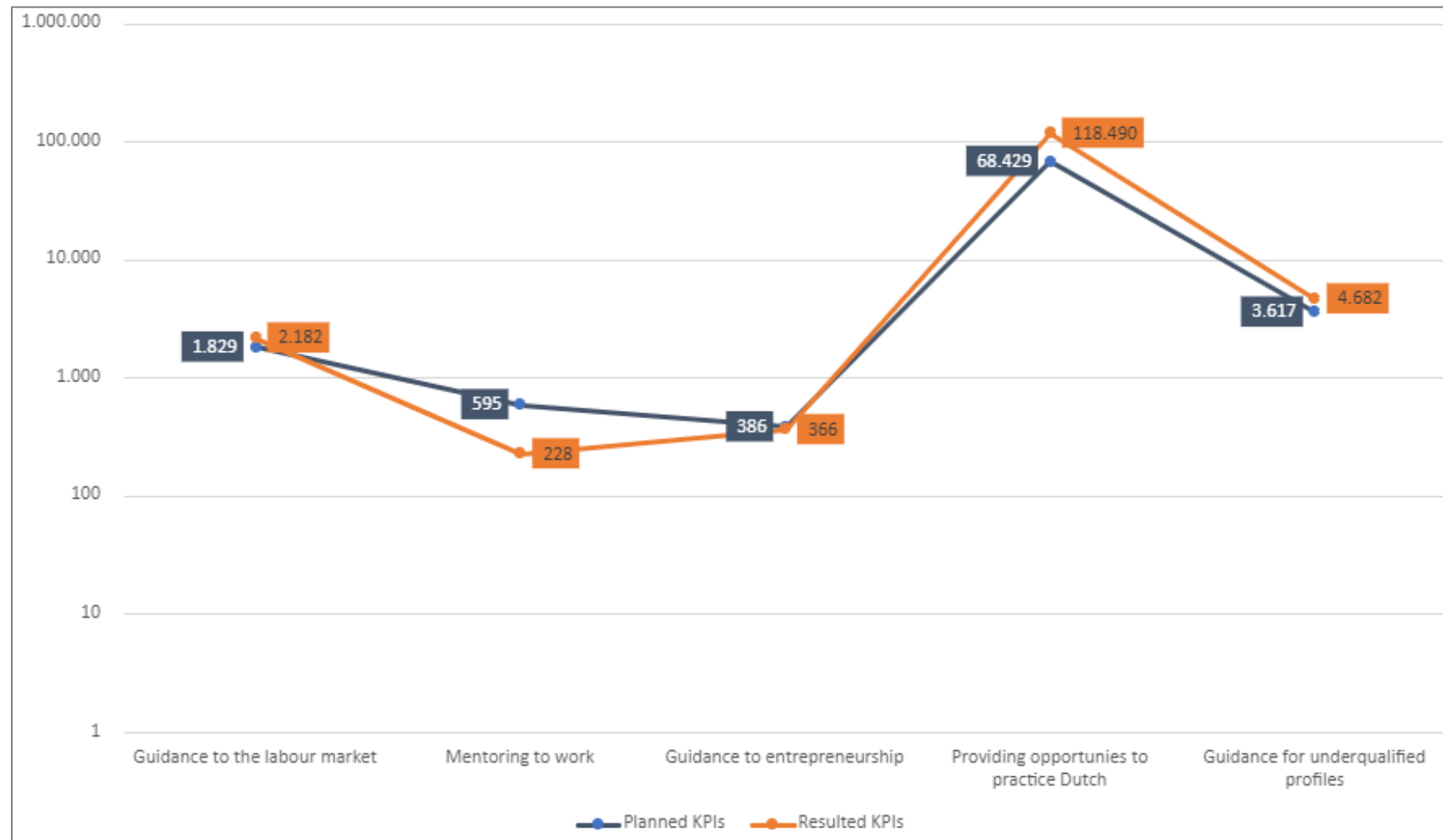
87 local authorities, VGC en De Rand vzw

€1.185.660





# Performance of municipalities year 1





Vlaanderen.be/samenleven  
www.plansamenleven.be

[Pepijn.nollet@vlaanderen.be](mailto:Pepijn.nollet@vlaanderen.be)

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# “Plan Living Together”

Supporting local efforts  
towards inclusion and  
diversity



Vlaanderen  
is divers



Let us introduce ourselves...

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INTEGRATIE &  
INBURGERING

# WHO ARE We?

A **government agency** (since 2015)

Our **mission**:

implementing the Flemish social and civic integration policy

Our **clients**:

local authorities, organisations, and citizens

Independent **partners**:

- City agencies Atlas (Antwerp) and Amal (Ghent)
- *Huis van het Nederlands Brussel* (Brussels House of Dutch)

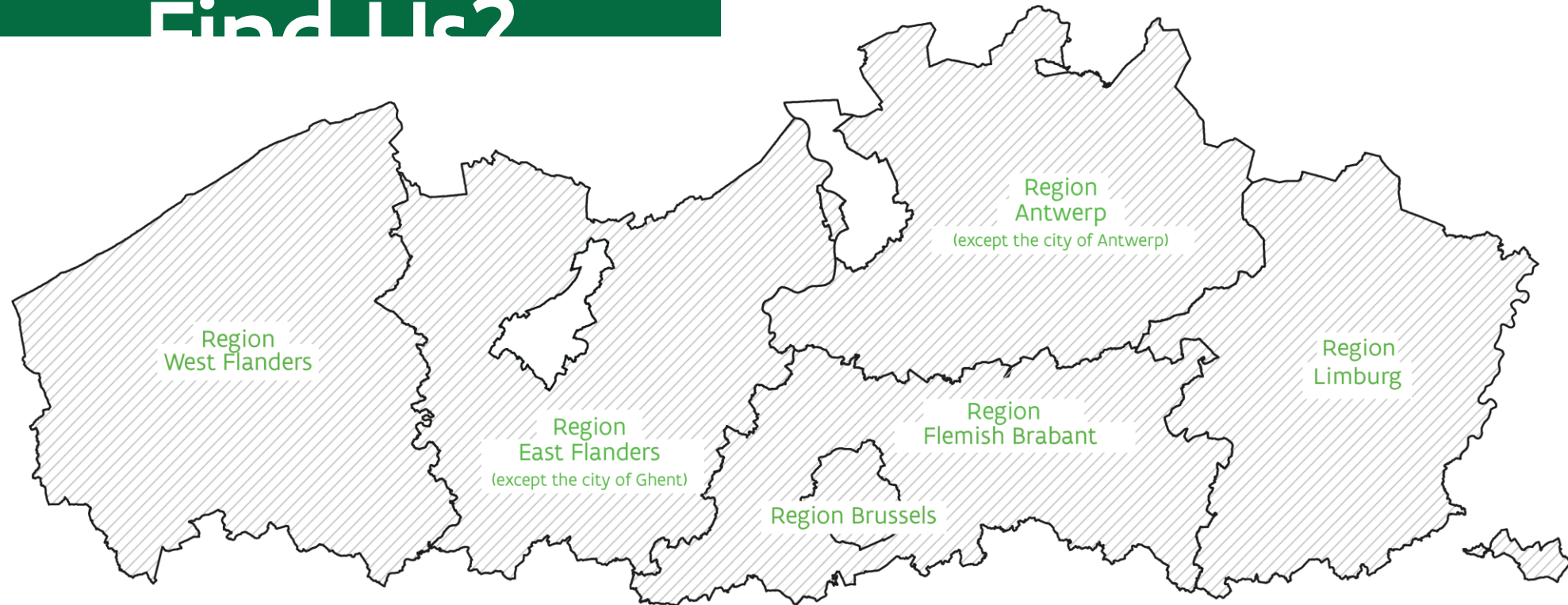




## Our Goal

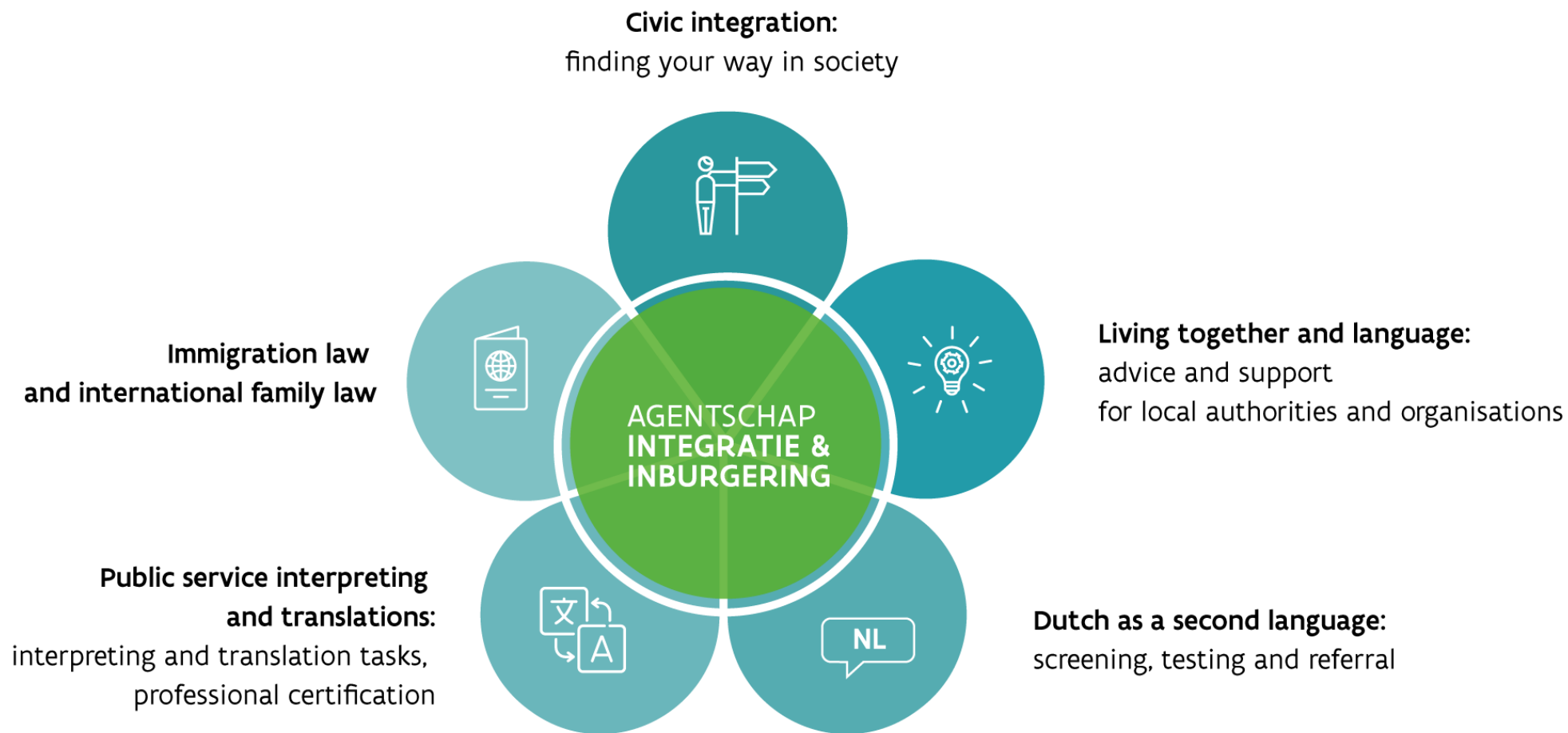
Help build a **society**  
where **everyone**,  
regardless of origin or context,  
can have **equal opportunities**.

# WHERE CAN YOU Find Us?



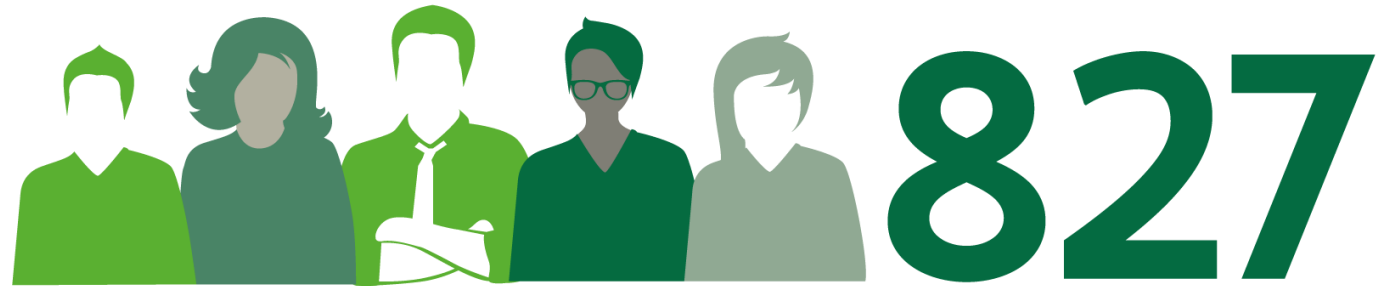
- About **70 offices** spread across six regions in **Flanders and Brussels**
- **Head office** in Brussels
- **Not** in the cities of Ghent (Amal) and Antwerp (Atlas) and no Dutch language courses in Brussels (*Huis van het Nederlands Brussel* ( Brussels House of Dutch))

# WHAT DO WE Offer?

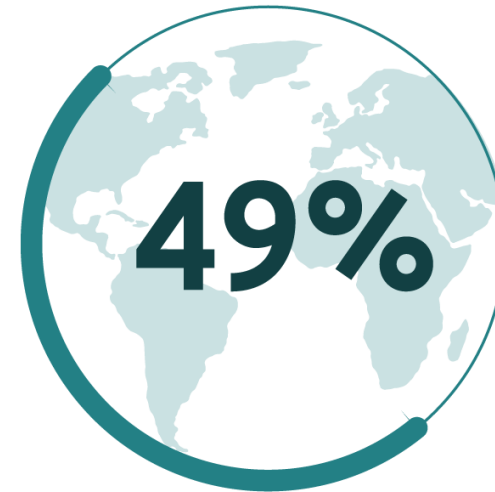




# Our Staff in 2022



Staff members of  
foreign origin



# Living together & language

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[www.integratie-inburgering.be](http://www.integratie-inburgering.be)





# LIVING TOGETHER and Language

We provide support to **local authorities and organisations** in dealing with the implications of migration. We focus on **language, connection and participation**.

For instance:

How do you, as a municipality, facilitate access to your services?

How do you promote communication with foreign-language speakers?

How do you promote a community feeling in the neighbourhood?

66 FTE integration consultants in 6 regions



Language

Connection

Participation



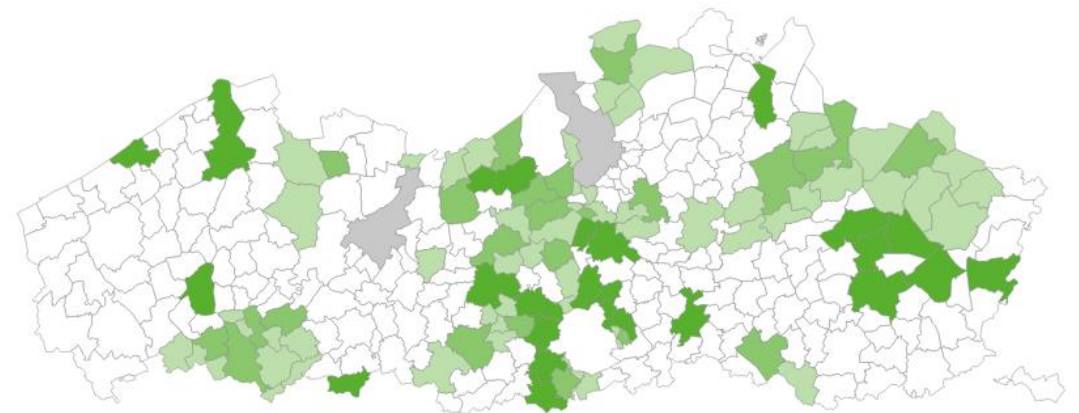
# Plan Living Together

What?

- Support local authorities to improve living together in diversity
- 7 objectives with 24 actions

Agency for Integration

- We support 10 of the 24 actions
- 1-on-1 guidance, advice and information, training, monitoring and evaluation





## Services Open to All

For local authorities, organizations and volunteers

Different learning formats, such as:

- Formations
- Learning and coaching trajectories
- Information and exchange moments
- Networking events
- E-learnings

Themes:

- **Language:** clear Dutch language, opportunities to practice Dutch ...
- **Connection:** bystander training, depolarizing communication through social media ...
- **Participation:** culturally sensitive action ...

Innovation based on questions and trends

# Achievements 2023

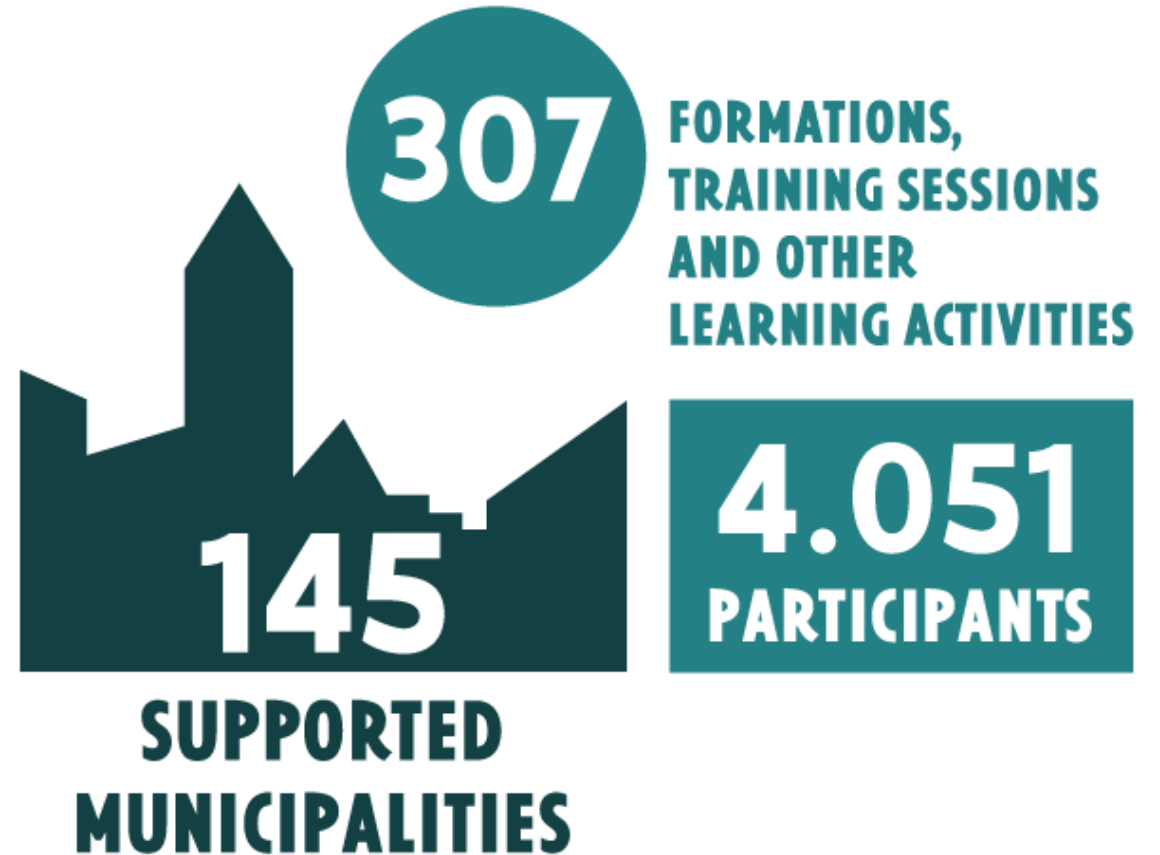
## SERVICES OPEN TO ALL

**147**  
FORMATIONS,  
TRAINING SESSIONS  
AND OTHER  
LEARNING ACTIVITIES

**2.921**  
PARTICIPANTS



## LIVING TOGETHER PLAN



# Impact of Plan Living Together on the Flemish agency for integration and civic integration

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# GAME CHANGER

## Classic role (2015 - 2021)

Support

Sideline

Broad focus

Supply-oriented

Output



## New role (since 2022)

Working together, co-creation

Nearby

Focus on 3 areas & 10 projects

Demand-oriented

Outcome



# 1| Working together, co-creation

*“The integration consultant is like a colleague to me”*

**Julie Van Nieuwenhoven – diversity officer Meise**



## MUNICIPALITY OF MEISE

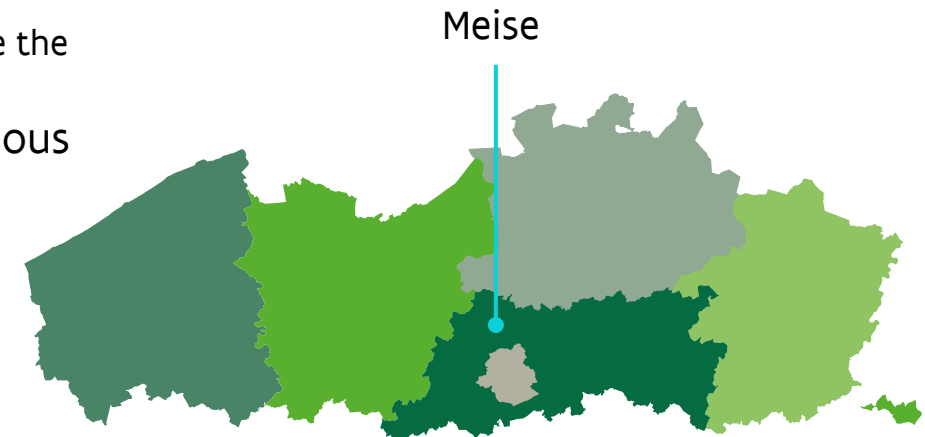
The consultant works at least 1 day per week in the municipality.

The consultant and *the diversity officer* are complementary .

- The consultant provides info and data analyses and together they ensure the practical translation.

The consultant and *the diversity officer* closely collaborate on various tasks:

- Set up a welcome policy for new inhabitants
- Application for subsidy files
- Preparation of the internal annual report of the integration service
- Organization of the NT2 campaign (Dutch as second language)
- Organization of the selection process and onboarding of new (diversity) employees
- Reporting on the Plan Living Together



## 2 | Nearby

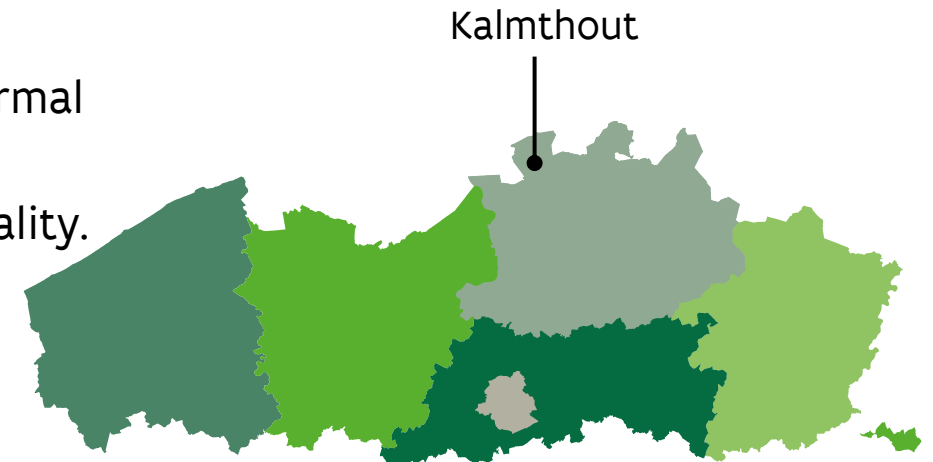
*“The integration consultant is always nearby. She brings expertise along and we can easily reach out to her whenever we have questions.”*

**Fredelinde Rossaert – expert in poverty & diversity Kalmthout**



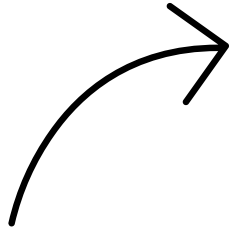
### MUNICIPALITY OF

- Intermunicipal project about practicing Dutch in an informal way.
- The consultant works 2 to 3 days a week in the municipality.
- The consultant is nearby.
- The consultant addresses matters locally.
  - ▶ Desktop- & field analyses
  - ▶ Advice
  - ▶ Capacity building
  - ▶ Co-create



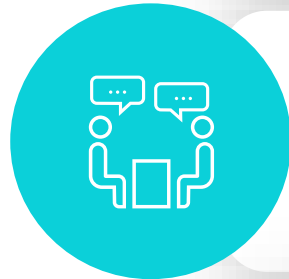
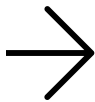
## 3| Focus on 3 areas & 10 projects

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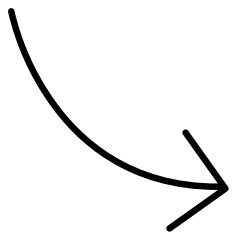
### Connecting people and groups

- Actionplan against polarisation
- Bystanderstraining
- Bridging figures in schools
- Connections around the school / Enhance social mix in schools



### Strengthening the Dutch language

- Opportunities to practice Dutch in an informal way



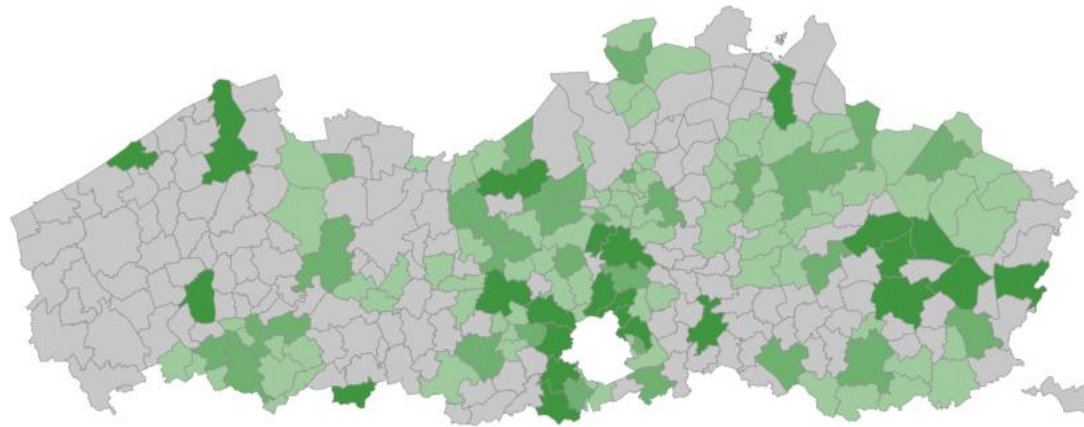
### Increasing participation

- Social Network newcomers
- Integral accessibility
- Get in touch with sports
- Get in touch with youth work
- Get in touch with culture



# 3| Focus on 3 areas & 10 projects

Top 10 chosen actions	
1	<b>Bridging figures in schools</b> 51 cases
2	<b>Opportunities to practice Dutch in an informal way</b> 50 cases
3	<b>Get in touch with sports</b> 43 cases
4	<b>Get in touch with youth work</b> 38 cases
5	<b>Guidance to labor market</b> 23 cases
6	<b>Bystanderstraining</b> 21 cases
7	<b>Actionplan against polarisation</b> 19 cases
8	<b>Guidance for underqualified profiles</b> 15 cases
9	<b>Neighbourhood figures</b> 15 cases



*Dashboard*

Top 10 actions supported by AgII	
1	<b>Opportunities to practice Dutch in an informal way</b> 37/50 cases (74%)
2	<b>Actionplan against polarisation</b> 10/19 cases (53%)
3	<b>Bystanderstraining</b> 11/21 cases (51%)
4	<b>Connections around the school</b> 4/8 cases (50%)
5	<b>Bridging figures in schools</b> 24/51 cases (47%)
6	<b>Get in touch with sports</b> 15/43 cases (35%)
7	<b>Get in touch with culture</b> 11/38 cases (29%)
8	<b>Integral accessibility</b> 3/14 cases (21%)
9	<b>Get in touch with youth work</b> 3/14 cases (21%)

## 4| Demand-oriented

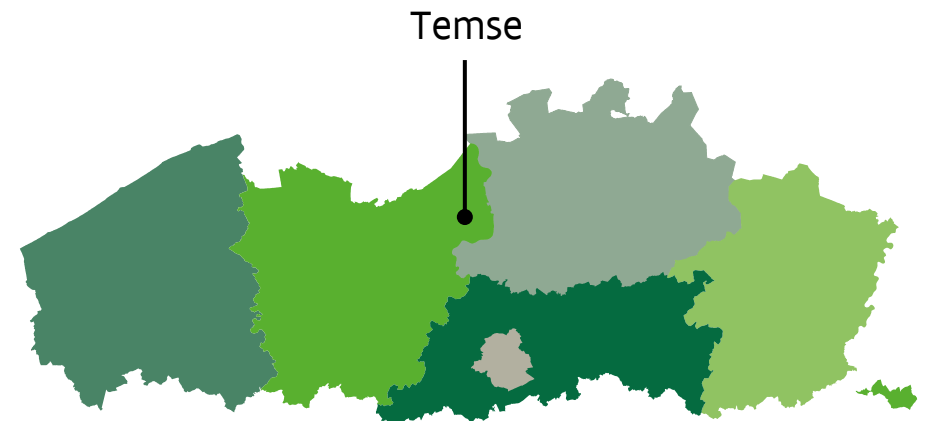
*“We tell the integration consultants our dream, and they make it reality.”*

Semra Badas – integration consultant Temse



### MUNICIPALITY OF TEMSE

- **In duo** with the service for equal chances.
- An **inclusion scan** in order to establish priorities and develop an **action plan**.
- **Participation** of various municipal services and citizens to gain **support** for the plan.



## 5| Outcome

### Key Performance Indicators

Annual satisfaction survey and interviews

- Net promotor score : 4
- General satisfaction : 7/10 are (very) satisfied
- Satisfaction with the usability, accesibility, communication,...

0,6 FTE commitment per municipality or intermunicipal colaboration

Dashboard with activities

*“We are grateful that you plod with us, instead of learning us to swim from a distance”*

## 6| Internal change process

### **New service model**

75 % local engagement on Plan Living Together = 49 FTE

25 % engagement to other municipalities and organisations: a contact person, open programs for trainings, webinars, publications, a liaison officer when a new asylum centre opens,...

**Change in the organisational structure** based on the new service model

### **Changes in staffing:**

- Shift of FTE between regions
- New roles for the integration consultants

**Other effects:** change in approach to internal learning and development programs, pricing adjustments,...



## 7| Conclusion

### Successes

- Local presence, embedded
- Boots on the ground
- Employing a transversal approach through actions, services and partnerships

### Challenges

- Finding a balance between being demand orientated and being sufficiently concrete in communicating our unique selling points
- Matching integration consultants to municipalities, with their own specific needs and requirements
- Adjust our approach to the pace of the municipality





Vlaanderen  
is divers

# Questions?

More info:

[www.integratie-inburgering.be/en](http://www.integratie-inburgering.be/en)

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[www.integratie-inburgering.be](http://www.integratie-inburgering.be)





**Plan Living together.**  
*Local efforts towards inclusion and diversity.*

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# The prequel

The importance of local policy

- Closest to citizens
- Direct influence on people's lives

Many challenges:

- Different policy domains that need solutions
- Matching the political context with society's needs
- Putting diversity and inclusion on the local political agenda
- Creating a support base within your local government
- ...

# The prequel

Lier:

- Between Mechelen and Antwerp
- Number of citizens: 37.909

	Lier	Flemish region
<u>Citizens – foreign nationality</u>		
<u>Number of foreigners</u>	3.612	714.508
%	9,5%	10,5%
<u>Number of different nationalities</u>	120	189
<u>Belgian citizens – foreign born</u>		
<u>Number of Belgian citizens foreign born</u>	9.290	1.782.070
%	24,5%	26,3%

±

	Lier	Flemish Region
<u>Newcomers (+18)</u>		
<u>Number of newcomers</u>	186	47.486
<u>Nationality of newcomers</u>		
- Dutch	9,7%	10,3%
- EU (except The Netherlands)	31,2%	42,2%
- Outside the EU	59,1%	46,8%
<u>Employment rate &amp; nationality</u>		
- Belgian	77,6%	78,3%
- EU	73,8%	65,9%
- Outside the EU	57,0%	57,5%
<u>Secondary education</u>		
<u>School delay</u>		
- Dutch language spoken at home	2,89%	2,04%
- Other language spoken at home	12,40%	11,03%
<u>School leavers without qualification</u>		
- Dutch language spoken at home	12,0%	8,4%
- Other language spoken at home	31,2%	24,9%

# The prequel

- Partnerships with local and regional organisations



- Well thought out plans and ideas based on years of experience
- A good set of survival skills that have led to some solid and high quality projects
  - the ability to work with smaller budgets
  - ways to create goodwill with partners

# The prequel

- Although we applied for all sorts of grants before, in reality:
    - Limited in time
    - Limited in amount
    - Therefore difficult to anchor
  - Ultimately: a shortage of financial means and staff created a barrier to really execute an horizontal policy towards more inclusion and social cohesion
- ⇒ Untill the spring of 2022...

# The opportunities of Plan Living Together

First calling by the Flemish government

- No hesitation to enter an application
- Teamed up with **3 other local authorities** while working autonomously

In the first year, this inter-municipal cooperation received:

Dutch language practice	€ 135.000
Education – preventing early school leavers	€ 97.500
Employment – supporting job seekers	€ 93.600
Education – building bridges	€ 76.480
Action Plan Accessibility	€ 25.000
Cultural activities	€ 37.800
	€ 465.380
Mentorship building bridges to education	€ 475.380



# The opportunities of Plan Living Together

Inter-municipal cooperation	475.380
Lier	375.793,75

- General coordinator of our local plan
- Hired 3 extra domain managers (working on education – employment and language practice)
- Hired a large external team of professionals integrated in several organisations
  - project consultants and executors, freelancers as well as subcontractors
  - they execute more dan 20 local projects in Lier

# The opportunities of Plan Living Together

- Partnered up with several services within our local authority such as:
  - local museum, cultural centre, youth centre, (art) schools, library, ...
  - Supporting services such as our communications office, IT-services, h&r, ...
- Results: helped more dan 5.000 vulnerable citizens
  - => equivalent of 1 in 7,5 people living in Lier
  - => indirect numbers are higher
- The local community got involved: e.g. worked with volunteers
- Imaging of diversity: projects spoken of in the press, on social media, ...

# The opportunities of Plan Living Together

Some of our actions:

- Customised Dutch practice for non native speakers.
- Support in finding employment, internships or courses for job seekers.
- Educational support for vulnerable families and children.
- Acces to cultural activities for people with limited means.
- Safe spaces with counselling for vulnerable youth.
- And much more...



# The opportunities of Plan Living Together

Within our own organisation:

- An investment in people
- Unlocking and securing knowledge and experience

⇒ Through:

- exchange with other local authorities (mentoring program)
- exchange with specialised organisations
- research
- formation of civil servants
- working with supporting agencies
- developing project scripts, ...

# The Future of Plan Living Together

Measuring system => impact

- To follow up
  - the course of our policy, the progress we are making and if any improvements are necessary.

The outcome will also be important for the future:

- Locale elections in october
- Possibly new policy makers
- Assuring that the lessons learned form the basis for future investments



The future is local.



**VIP**

**05.2024**

**TURNHOUT**

**TURNHOUT**

**GRAVEL.BE**







47.000 citizens

39,5% foreign origine

129 nationalities

TURNHOUT

Turnhout  
39,5%

Antwerp  
56%

Genk  
58,4%



Current speed

Turnhout +13,8%

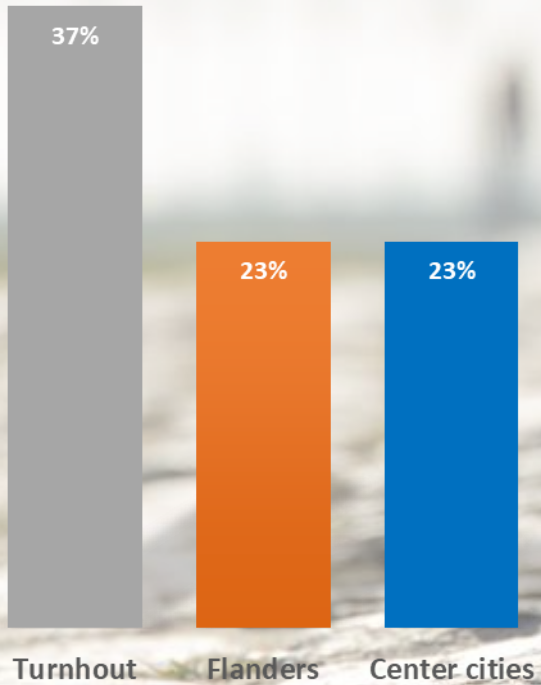
Oostende +12,6%

Roeselare +11,3%

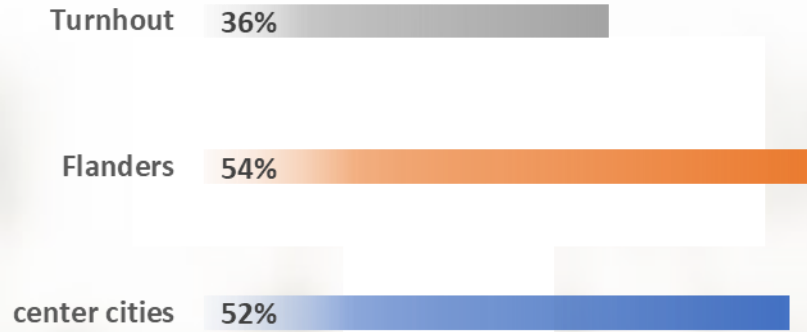
Antwerp +10,5%

Aalst +10,5%

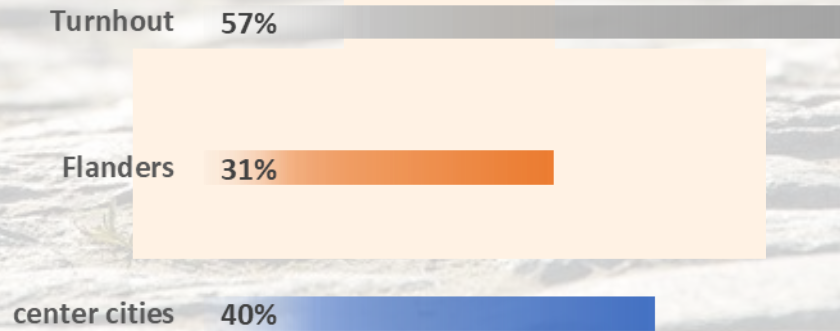
## NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIVERSITY



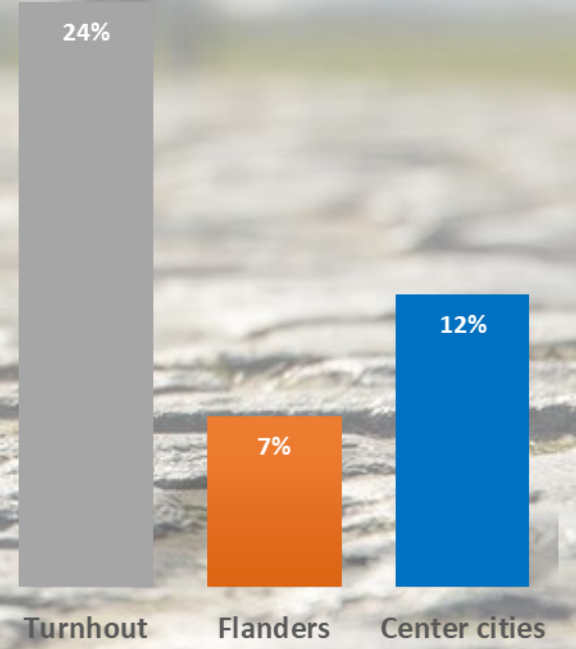
## LIVING WELL TOGETHER



## TOO MANY DIFFERENT ORIGIN



## FEELING OF INSECURITY



# Increasing social cohesion

Actionplan against polarisation

## Stimulating meeting

## Increasing the acceptance of diversity

## Tackling society problems

Actionplan against street harassment

Get in touch with culture

Get in touch with sports

Get in touch with youth work

Corresponance tests

## emancipation

Providing opportunities to practice Dutch

Mentoring to work

## accessibility

Bridging figures in schools

€ 164.820

Intensifying integration of foreign people

# HIGHLIGHTS

Get in touch  
with sports

## EFFECTS

- Cross-sectional work
- Extern expertise
- Strengthening local actions
- Exchange with other local authorities

Actionplan  
against street  
harassment

“Don’t look at  
the difference  
but at what  
unites us”



TURNHOU

# Reflections and Q&A



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