

**Evaluation Bridging  
phase 'Rotterdam  
beyond discrimination'**

Rotterdam  
voorbij discriminatie

D3.3 EN



## **D3.3**

# **Evaluation Bridging phase ‘Rotterdam beyond discrimination’**

### **Colofon**

The Rotterdam beyond Discrimination project is a collaboration of:

Gemeente Rotterdam



Antidiscriminatiebureau RADAR



Kenniscentrum Art.1



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## Introduction

The second phase of the project in the period from May-July 2022 focused on bridging and further development of the social capital of the three communities in the development of an effective and tenable antiracism policy in the city of Rotterdam. A total of four bridging meetings were held with 40 participants from the three communities, three facilitators who were also involved in the bonding meetings (each community an own facilitator), the project leader and the researcher. These were the meetings in which staff (n=2) from the municipality of Rotterdam participated for the first time. Bridging is defined by Szreter and Woolcock (2004) as "Bridging (...) involves relationships of respect and reciprocity between people who know that they are not equal in socio-demographic terms (or social identity) (differences in age, ethnic group, for example)" (Johnson, 2016; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004)<sup>1</sup>.

The standard for success adopted by the project organization is that 75% of the participants must believe that there has been positive growth/impact (= rating of at least 6 on a scale of 10) of social capital based on the meetings. This six-or-higher standard was also used in the bonding phase. The bridging phase was evaluated on 6 aspects, by means of a questionnaire (19 items) in which people were asked to give an opinion on a 5-point scale (with an opportunity to add qualitative data). The evaluations concern:

- a. **Increase of bridging capital** as a function of giving trust (vulnerability), having trust (in the other) and increase of mutual contacts (questions 7, 8, and 10)
- b. **Increase in trust** in local authorities (government, administrators institutions, etc.) (question 11).
- c. **Experienced learning effect** as a function of increased knowledge and skills, relevance of the content of the meetings to one's own situation, connection to prior knowledge, and readiness to engage in the linking phase conversation (readiness) (questions 2, 3, 5, 9, 12)
- d. **Increase of social capital** as a function of learning effects (growth of knowledge and skills) and growth of contacts outside one's own community, the trust people give and receive from Others, and the trust they see in local authorities to effectively tackle the problem of discrimination and exclusion with them (questions 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).
- e. **Experienced relevance** of the meetings as a function of whether the meetings met expectations, relevance to one's own situation, connection to prior knowledge, space for one's own input, and the connection of the programs offered to the goals set (questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)
- f. **Satisfaction with the organization** as a function of a judgement about the moderating of the conversations, the location and the catering, as well as a judgement about the fit of the organized meetings with expectations (questions 16, 17, 18, 19).

For each evaluation category, the scores on the questions were averaged and the percentage who believed that there was positive growth was counted. The evaluation categories, as is clear from the above, sometimes overlap, for example in the case of the learning effect and the growth of social capital.

## Evaluation of the bridging phase.

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<sup>1</sup> This is placed next to bonding which refers to "inward-looking connections within homogeneous groups, from which others are excluded." "Linking" is a specific type of bridging that describes the connections and relationships between individuals or organizations with people and institutions of different levels of authority or power" (Johnson 2016:61). Linking is, on the one hand, a matter of gaining mutual trust and contacts and interactions with others with authority or power, but also a measure of the (implemented) willingness and policy stance of those authorities to engage in the conversation, and their recognizability and accessibility to the community-members (Johnson, 2016). Social capital in this context consists of a composite of learning effects, the mutual trust people express, the contacts they have made and the quality of the relationships, and the willingness of authorities to work towards a society based on equality of citizens, in addition to dialogue and co-production to effectively combat discrimination and exclusion.



The ratings of the various components of this evaluation are summarized in Table 1. For each cell, the average rating of the participants is displayed and the percentage of participants who scored higher than a six (out of ten) for perceived growth. If more than half of the participants did not see a positive impact or growth, the percentage is shown in red.

Table 1: scores for elements of the bridging phase

	Jewish community	Islamic community	Black community	Average for the three communities
<b>Bridging</b>	6,07 61,9%	6,43 57,1%	6,25 36,4%	6,25 51,8%
<b>Increased trust in local authorities</b>	4,29 14,3%	3,93 0%	4,38 25,0%	4,20 13,1%
<b>Experienced learning effect</b>	6,36 51,4%	6,36 51,4%	5,99 51,7%	6,23 51,5%
<b>Increase of social capital</b>	6,03 53,9%	6,11 50,8%	5,90 47,4%	6,01 50,7%
<b>Experienced relevance</b>	6,71 51,4%	5,57 42,9%	5,22 40,0%	5,84 44,8%
<b>Organization</b>	7,14 78,6%	7,77 82,1%	6,56 59,4%	7,16 73,4%

The following picture emerges from the data:

### a. Bridging

The average score for the three communities is 6.25. This means that a satisfactory rating is given to the bridging process. The willingness to make oneself vulnerable is highest within the Black community and lowest with the Jewish community. This reserve corresponds to the cultural fact expressed in the Jewish community in this phase that they were educated to avoid vulnerability and especially to radiate strength. In the Black community, the number of people who evaluate this aspect positively is clearly a minority. The willingness to cooperate, contact and trust is highest in the Islamic community. Does the bridging effect meet the predetermined standard (75%)? It does not: just over half of the participants, fifty-one point eight (51.8) percent scored 6 or higher on this aspect.

### b. Trust in local authorities.

When assessing the social capital of a community, the confidence that one has that the local authorities are serious and want to work in a sustainable way on combating discrimination and exclusion also plays a role. Has that confidence grown? The participants rate this growth with a big fail (4.2) and only 13.1 % of the participants rate this with a six or more. The standard of 75 % is not met. All figures in this category are red. The local authorities did not yet play a substantial role at this stage. Representatives of the municipality were indeed present for the first time, either as witnessing the discussions or as a moderator in a subgroup, but not as an interlocutor. The fact that confidence in this case 'comes on foot' (=slowly and cautious) is certainly also due to the fact that local authorities are seen as a solution, as well as a source of the problem of discrimination and exclusion.

### c. Learning effect

Of all participants, 51.5% give the learning effect of the bridging phase (knowledge/ skills/ relevance/ readiness) a rating of 6 or higher. The average rating on these questions is 6.23 (neutral to moderately positive). No training or teaching modules were offered to the communities, by any



means, but the group was treated as a "learning community" or a "community of practice" that learns based on shared experience and knowledge and feedback based on aggregated data from previous sessions (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006; Wallner & Heemskerk, 2017). Criterion for the project was that 75% of participants felt that the overall learning effect should have improved. That criterion was not met.

What individual elements were scored best on? The most appreciated was the increase in knowledge (6.53) and the aspect that people felt ready to engage in conversation with authorities based on the meetings (6.73). Is there a difference between the communities? The Jewish community felt that the content of the program matched well with their prior knowledge (7.5) and based on the program they felt ready to engage in conversation with authorities (7.14). The Islamic community felt that the meetings had contributed to their skills (7.14) and knowledge (7.14) and they also felt ready to engage in the conversation (6.8). The Black community scored lower (5.9) than the other two communities (both 6.35) on all items combined and rated the knowledge aspects the highest (6.53). It seems that while they found the content relevant to their situation, they did not feel that it would help them further in discussing the discrimination and exclusion they experience with local authorities.

#### **d. Social Capital**

The overall rating for growth in social capital experienced by participants in this context is 6.01 (6.03 for the Jewish community, 6.11 for the Islamic community, and 5.9 for the Black community). Based on the bridging meetings, social capital increased the most according to the participants from the Islamic community. And according to the Black community the least. However the communities seem divided. About half are slightly positive and the others are slightly negative. In terms of scores, they are all close together.

Is mutual trust evenly distributed? This was asked in questions 13, 14 and 15. This does not appear to be the case. Trust in the Black community has grown the most in the eyes of the other two communities and in the Islamic community the least:

- Increase in trust in the Jewish community: 53.3% of the Islamic and Black communities believe it has increased (6 or higher)
- Increase in trust in the Islamic community 40.0% of the Jewish and Black community believe it has increased (6 or higher).
- Increase in trust in the Black community 71.4% of the Jewish and Muslim community believe it has increased (6 or higher)

In terms of mutual trust, all the communities seem to be still waiting to see what happens. There are differences between them: people from the Islamic community give the Black community a high score for growth in trust. But the reverse is true to a much lesser degree. Then a neutral attitude emerges. This is actually true of all bilateral relations between communities. People are expectantly neutral, but also curious.

If we include the assessment of one's own community in this (bonding was still a relevant process even in the bridging phase), the differences decrease and the growth of trust in the Jewish community is the smallest: 40.9% give this growth a rating of six or higher. This is 54.5% for both the Black and Islamic communities. This means that bonding was important for the Islamic community during this phase, while it played much less of a role for the Jewish community. This is consistent with the data from the bonding phase, in which bonding was rated relatively higher by the Islamic community.

#### **e. Relevance**

Did the meetings meet the participants' expectations and adequately match their situation and knowledge, and was there enough room for their own contribution? Less than 50% of the participants hold this opinion and the average appreciation score is also low, (5.84). The most positive about this is the Jewish community who gives almost a sufficient score (6.71). The other two



communities are less positive. However, especially the black community members are significantly less positive (5.57 and 5.22) because the meetings did not sufficiently meet their expectations and the formulated objectives. For the Islamic community, the meetings did not sufficiently meet their formulated objectives and were not sufficiently relevant to their situation. Sometimes, however, the picture is unclear because it does not seem entirely consistent. They did learn the most from the meetings.

In terms of relevance, people in the qualitative explanations of the ratings mainly point to the interrelationships. This may partly explain the low scores where relevance is linked to the experience of discrimination. The latter is actually only mentioned within the Islamic community. It is mainly the growth process that stands out in the qualitative data: seeing each other's pain and experience, sharing, experiencing the power of words, seeing the vulnerability of others. It is experienced as deepening knowledge and contributing to mutual understanding.

## **f. Organization of the meetings**

The location (the municipal; office building 'Timmerhuis') was evaluated most positively and the conversation leadership least. The Black community in particular is more negative about the fit with their expectations and about the conversation leadership.

There seems to be a tension between the process and the results in the conversations. One of the participants is explicit in the observation that the process is sometimes steered too much towards 'results', while at the same time there is also a desire for more space for mutual acquaintance and contact and trust building. The qualitative data also point to this. The process aspects are mentioned most often: listening to each other, discovering what one has in common (shared pain), learning to see each other without discrimination and prejudice, daring to make yourself vulnerable, vulnerability and combativeness or resilience at the same time. In any case, this indicates that the organizers have started a process of bridging, but have perhaps not yet allowed it to develop sufficiently.

When participants were asked about their wishes and needs for the future, they expressed that they would like to continue the mutual discussion, again in smaller groups so that there would be more personal contact. In addition, they would like to go into more depth when it comes to understanding and learning about discrimination and what it does to people. This applies in particular to the Jewish and the Islamic community. Within the Black community they asked for stricter discussion leaders and more time. Everything has to be done too quickly now.

Here, too, the pre-set standard is not met, although it missed by a hair: 73% of the participants scored this with a six or higher.

## **Discussing the figures**

The rating for this bridging phase is significantly lower than for the bonding phase. This is understandable if one realizes that the participants in this phase were challenged to get out of the security of their own identity and comfort of bonding, to seek connection with people from other communities. In general, this produces a picture of ambivalence: from both the figures and the qualitative data, it seems that people are hesitant, positive and negative scores are very close. They represent much more of a middle ground of hesitation and doubt, than a specific negative or positive score. People are challenged, show willingness towards each other and show interest, but also do not (yet) feel solid ground under their feet. The desire to go further with each other, in the process, and the desire to get results and start doing things, compete with each other. The moderators of the conversations steer for results and seem to be corrected by the participants with the message that results can also lie in the process, for example in the result that participants stop discriminating against each other.

Based on the pre-set standards and the assessment associated with them, this phase does not meet the standards. However, questions must be asked in this regard. The norm of 75% believing there is a positive effect (>6) is very sharp. If the standard is placed on a majority of participants (>50%)



experiencing growth, then the approach is successful on all counts. If the norm is set at a rating higher than five (>5, higher than a neutral rating), then the same applies and the intervention is successful. The ratings for all measured aspects cluster around the middle grounds: The range of the scores is limited and a positive rating is close to a negative rating, and is quickly found if the threshold is set slightly lower. This indicates appreciation, but is for the time being just a little too low. In the interpretation, also based on the qualitative data, this is seen as showing hesitation about the process and the result, people are slightly positive and hesitant.

In all communities there were also atypical negative outliers: participants who scored exceptionally negative (1 Jewish, 2 Muslim, 2 Black [6; 8, 22, 13, 20]). If the participants who scored very negatively are removed from the assessments, then there is an average between 6 and 7 and the unsatisfactory scores disappear, except for the increase in trust in the local authorities. That low rating remains even if the threshold is lowered in this way. While all other scores fully or nearly fully meet the standard, growth in this trust again remains well below the standard.

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## Annex 1: evaluationform

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EVALUATION FORM ROTTERDAM BEYOND DISCRIMINATION  
Phase 2: Bridging



In the Bridging phase, Black, Jewish and Muslim inhabitants of Rotterdam come together to:

- to get to know each other,
- share experiences and knowledge and
- build cooperation and trust,

to be able to have a joint discussion with local authorities in Rotterdam and develop an effective and sustainable anti-discrimination agenda for Rotterdam.

**All data will be processed anonymously.**

What conversations did you participate in during the previous phase?	Black community	Islamic community	Jewish community
I was at conversation(s) in the previous phase of the:			

How do you rate:	Completely	almost completely	neutral	Not completely	Not at all
Have the meetings so far met your expectations?					
Were the contents relevant to your situation?					
Did your knowledge increase as a result of participating in these meetings?					
Was there enough room for questions or your own input?					
Did the content match your previous knowledge?					
Did the meetings in this phase fulfill the stated objectives?					

Can you name an aspect of the content that first comes to mind that touched you?.

How do you rate:	Very good	good	neutral	moderate	bad
Did these meetings give you more contacts with people from other communities, which you did not have before?					
Did it increase your confidence that together you can better fight discrimination and exclusion?					





How do you rate:	Very good	good	neutral	moderate	bad
Did it increase your skills that you can better fight discrimination and exclusion together?					
Did the meetings lead you to dare to be vulnerable in the conversations with the others?					
Has this phase increased your confidence in the local authorities?					
Are you ready, on the basis of this meeting, to enter into a dialogue with local municipality and administrators?					
Has your confidence in working with people from the Jewish community to address the problem of discrimination and exclusion increased?					
Has your confidence increased in working with people from the Islamic community to address the problem of discrimination and exclusion?					
Has your confidence in working with people from the Black community increased to address the problem of discrimination and exclusion?					

Can you name one aspect that has contributed most to mutual trust among the three communities?

How do you rate:	Very good	good	neutral	moderate	bad
Did the organization of the evenings meet your expectations?					
Did the moderator meet your expectations?					
Did the venue meet your expectations?					
Did the food service meet your expectations?					

What suggestions do you have for the follow-up program:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR FILLING IN THE FORM

