

# **Comparing municipal performance agreements: policy contexts and social housing policies in Amsterdam and Rotterdam**

Master's Thesis  
Management in the Built Environment  
Msc. Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences  
Delft University of Technology  
Julianalaan 134, 2628 BL Delft  
Joes de Klein / 4702166  
Supervised by prof. dr. M.G. Elsinga & dr. H.M.H. Van Der Heijden  
Delegate of the board: Dr. A.J. Oxenaar  
30 October 2023  
Word count: 31.352

## Abstract

The Netherlands has faced a significant housing shortage for years, with a deficit of over 300,000 dwellings. This shortage is prevalent in both the owner-occupied and rental sectors, particularly in social housing. With national average waiting times of seven years, and up to twenty years in major cities, the issue is pressing. Housing associations, governed by the national Housing Act of 2015, play a crucial role in providing affordable housing to vulnerable and low-income groups. However, there is a noticeable discrepancy in the social housing development policies between Rotterdam and Amsterdam. This research aims to understand the differences in the municipal performance agreements of these two cities, considering both municipal context and policy. The study delves into the municipal policy context, policy differences at the municipal level, and a comparative policy analysis of the performance agreements in both cities. Through in-depth interviews, the research seeks to explain the variations in the performance agreements from the perspective of municipal context and policy. The findings reveal that both the municipal policy context and the social housing policy play a fundamental role in explaining the differences in performance agreements between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Despite operating under the same national Housing Act, the cities' distinct social compositions, political climates, and financial capabilities have led to notable differences in their agreements. Amsterdam's approach is characterized by a focus on tenant welfare and inclusivity, while Rotterdam adopts a more result-oriented, efficiency-driven approach, with a specific emphasis on the mid-range rental segment. The influence of umbrella organizations and the absence of a centralized tenant association in Rotterdam also contribute to the disparities. This study contributes to the understanding of municipal performance agreements in the context of social housing, providing insights that could be useful for policy development and evaluation. The methodology used in this research could also be applied to other Dutch municipalities, offering a comprehensive framework for analyzing social housing policies and performance agreements.

**Keywords:** Social housing, policy context, municipal policy, performance agreements, Amsterdam, Rotterdam

## Preface

I am pleased to present this Master's Thesis, which marks the completion of the master degree Management of the Built Environment at the Technical University in Delft. In this research, I have explored social housing in the Netherlands' two largest cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam by taking a closer look at differences in social housing performance agreements between these two cities.

The choice of this topic was driven by my interest in public policymaking and the built environment. The strong policy- and context related differences between Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in combination with the current social housing shortages in the Netherlands made this an interesting and topical subject to research.

Conducting this research has provided me with valuable insights that I hope to take with me to my next steps after graduating from university. I hope that this research contributes to the ongoing debate on social housing, municipal policies, and the role of performance agreements.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. Dr. M.G. Elsinga and Dr. H.M.H. Van Der Heijden, for the support, guidance, and feedback that I have received during this master thesis research. I thank Dr. A.J. Oxenaar for his role as delegate of the board. I would also like to thank the interviewees that have provided their perspectives and on-the-ground expertise.

Joes de Klein

01-11-2023

## Table of contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Literature review</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Social housing, Housing Act of 2015, policy and PA's	9
2.2 Demarcation of research scope	15
2.3. Research gap	19
<b>3. Research design and methods</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1. Research question and conceptual framework	20
3.2 Methodology	21
3.3 Research design	23
3.3.1 Municipal policy context of the social housing sector	23
3.3.2 Municipal social housing policy	25
3.3.3 Municipal performance agreements	28
3.3.4 Performance agreements analysis through interview results	29
3.4 Data management plan	31
3.5 Societal and scientific relevance	31
<b>4. Multi-level policy context analysis</b>	<b>33</b>
4.2 National level policy context	34
4.2.1 General state of the Dutch housing market	34
4.2.2 Situation on the Dutch social housing market	36
4.2.3 Influence translated to policy context	37
4.3 Regional level policy context	40
4.3.1 Regional impulses: role of the provinces in housing policy	40
4.3.2 Provincial housing shortages and action	41
4.3.3 Tailored provincial social housing policies	43
4.3.4 Regional Networks: Regio Rotterdam's Influence	44
4.3.5 Metropoolregio Amsterdam's Influence	45
4.4 Local policy context	46
4.4.1 The social housing market in Rotterdam and Amsterdam	46
4.4.1.1 Social housing interest groups	48
4.4.2 History of social housing in Amsterdam and Rotterdam	48
4.4.3 Social composition of Amsterdam and Rotterdam	49
4.4.4 Political landscape in Amsterdam and Rotterdam	51
4.4.5 Economic differences in Amsterdam and Rotterdam	53
4.5 Conclusion	53
<b>5. Municipal social housing policy analysis</b>	<b>55</b>
5.1 Social housing policy profile of Amsterdam	55
5.2 Social housing policy profile of Rotterdam	59
5.3 Social housing policy profile comparison	63
5.4 Specific policy distinctions	64
5.5 Conclusion	68
<b>6. Comparing the municipal performance agreements</b>	<b>69</b>
6.1 Procedural differences	70
6.2 Affordability	71
6.3 Availability	75

6.4 Quality	78
6.5 Conclusion	81
<b>7. Interview results</b>	<b>84</b>
7.1 Formulation process of performance agreements	86
7.2 Content of the performance agreements	89
7.3 Role of municipal policy	93
<b>8. Explaining performance agreements differences</b>	<b>97</b>
8.1 Procedural differences	98
8.2 Affordability	100
8.3 Availability differences	102
8.4 Quality differences	104
8.5 Explanations for differences in performance agreements	106
8.5.1 Municipal policy context factors	107
8.5.2 Municipal social housing policy factors	110
<b>9. Conclusion and Discussion</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>10. References</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>11. Appendices</b>	<b>122</b>
Appendix A: Interview Questionnaire	122
Appendix B: Reflection	124
Appendix C: Data Management Plan	129

# 1. Introduction

## **Housing shortage in The Netherlands**

According to article 22.2 of the Dutch constitution, the government carries a responsibility in providing sufficient housing for the benefit of public health (Grondwet, 2022). Nevertheless, The Netherlands has faced a rising housing shortage for years. This is caused by a situation in which the supply side of the housing market fails to meet demand, resulting in high real estate prices and a general housing shortage (Boelhouwer, 2020). In 2020, this shortage reached a number of 300.000 dwellings (ABF Research, 2022). These shortages are not only present on the house owner side of the housing market, but also on the rental side of the market. The average waiting time for social housing in The Netherlands is seven years. However, in large cities, these waiting times can reach up to twenty years (NOS, 2021). The social housing shortage is especially present in the four largest cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht en Den Haag (Heylen, 2016). These large cities tend to also have a higher share of social housing as part of their housing stock, as well as more low-income neighborhoods compared to the national average (CBS, 2022). With a relatively large social housing sector and longer than average waiting lists, these large cities can be considered an important factor in the social housing shortage and for the social housing sector in general in The Netherlands (Boelhouwer, 2020 ; Heylen, 2016).

## **Dutch social housing market**

The Dutch rental housing market differentiates between a private rental sector and a social rental sector. In the social rental sector, the government has a responsibility in providing a social housing system that serves as a social safety net in which there is no competition with the private rental sector (Kemeny, 1995). In the Netherlands, rental dwellings are separated in "DAEB" (Services of General Economic Interest) for the social housing market and "niet-DAEB" for the private rental sector and commercial activities. DAEB-dwellings have tenancy protection and are valued at a maximum monthly rent based on a points system. In 2023, the threshold for a dwelling to be considered social housing is a maximum rent of €808,06 per month or 149 points. This is referred to as the liberalization threshold (Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2023).

## **Role of housing associations**

One of the aspects that characterizes the Dutch housing market is its relatively high share of social rental housing. Rental properties make up 42.7 percent of all dwellings in the Netherlands, with a majority of 28.6 percent consisting of social sector rental housing (CBS, 2022). Social housing is defined as housing provided to people with low incomes or to those with particular needs by government agencies or non-profit organizations (Van Bortel et al., 2019). In the Netherlands, providing these dwellings is the responsibility of housing associations. These housing associations are not-for-profit organizations that are tasked with building, managing and renting out high-quality living space with an affordable rent for people with a limited budget (Nieboer & Gruis, 2016). In order to ensure that housing associations fulfill their core task of providing affordable housing to their target audience, it is required by law that at least 80 percent of all houses owned by a housing association is assigned to low-income households (Hoekstra, 2017). In total, The Netherlands has approximately 280 active housing associations, widely ranging in portfolio size from 100 dwellings up to 70,000 housing units. Combined, these organizations manage approximately 2.4 million units and provide affordable housing to more than 4,9 million people (Aedes, 2022). When taking into account the number of people who live in social rent housing and their dependency on the system, the social housing sector is considered to have an important role within Dutch society (Heylen, 2016).

In 2015, the Dutch national government implemented a new housing act. This revised set of rules and regulations was focused on the role of housing associations in providing affordable social housing. Amongst others, it described how housing associations were tasked with providing housing to low-income groups, it aimed to ensure appropriate allocation, it put boundaries on commercial activities and it increased the influence of the municipality and tenants (Woningwet, 2020). The act furthermore provided a national and overarching legal framework for the operation and policy of housing associations in The Netherlands.

## Discrepancies between social housing developments in Amsterdam and Rotterdam

When considering that all housing associations in The Netherlands operate under the same legal framework of the Housing Act of 2015, one can make the assumption that housing associations throughout the country have similar performance and policies. However, when observing the news concerning developments and the pursued policies for social housing in two of the largest cities in The Netherlands, a different empirical observation can be made. Media outlets suggest that there are discrepancies between Amsterdam and Rotterdam in the trend of new social housing developments.

There are multiple cases in Rotterdam where neighborhoods with a relatively large percentage of social housing dwellings are being demolished, or where residents are being relocated or forced out of the neighborhood as a result of gentrification. Examples of these neighborhoods are *Crooswijk* or the *Tweebosbuurt* (NOS, 2022; Rijnmond, 2022). Reports on social housing developments in Amsterdam show a different picture. In Amsterdam, a trend of new social housing developments, development plans, and allocated budgets becomes visible (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2022; NUL20, 2022). The empirical observation of this trend is visualized below in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Collection of news article headlines related to social housing developments in Rotterdam and Amsterdam (Source: Author).

### Problem statement

The empirical observation on differences regarding the social housing developments in Rotterdam and Amsterdam in relation to the previously described institutional context can raise some questions. This therefore leads to



the problem statement that, despite the fact that housing associations in both cities operate on the basis of the Housing Act of 2015, there is a discrepancy between Amsterdam and Rotterdam in the way in which social housing has been developed in recent years.

### **Research aim**

The aim of this research is to explain the distinctions in municipal performance agreements in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. It is a comparative case study that aims to explore and explain the possible differences with regards to the municipal context and policy. The study aims to explain the origin of these possible differences. Where this originates and how it can be further investigated is addressed in the next chapter that reviews the current literature on this subject.

## **2. Literature review**

This chapter provides a review of the most important and most relevant literature concerning this field of research. It aims to discuss the current state of the academic debate on social housing in the Netherlands and its role within municipalities through an analysis of what has already been published about the topic by other scholars. The chapter is structured through a number of themes that come forward as relevant, based on the studied literature.

### **2.1 Social housing, Housing Act of 2015, policy and performance agreements**

#### **Social housing in The Netherlands**

According to Houard (2011), in a study about social housing in Europe, the social housing system in The Netherlands is of great societal importance. This is due to the fact that social housing sector dwellings are, through the provision by housing associations, in essence the only provider of housing for vulnerable low income households. Over 30 percent of all households in The Netherlands live in social sector rental housing. Due to the relative size of the sector compared to other countries, this creates a large institutional system with an extensive policy-making process and a broad field of stakeholders involved (Houard, 2011). This study displays the importance of the social housing sector within Dutch society and its institutional context.

A report by Deuten & De Kam (2005) attempts to explore the possibility for new practices to measure and evaluate societal performance of housing associations. In order to achieve this, an extensive elaboration of the most important stakeholders and involved governance levels was provided. It distinguishes a number of stakeholder types including housing associations, tenants and tenant organizations, other interest groups, and umbrella organizations such as Aedes. From a governance perspective on social housing, the policy making levels can be differentiated into two categories: the national government and the local (municipal) government (Deuten & De Kam, 2005).

A study by Elsinga et al. (2014) describes the development of Dutch social housing and its housing associations system from the emergence in the Housing Act of 1901 to the current state in 2014. This literature study was carried out for the purpose of the parliamentary inquiry into housing associations. The aim of

the study was to provide an overview of the most important literature concerning housing associations. It elaborates on how housing associations operate in the institutional social housing system. The report covers a description of the system, legal context, tasks, and the governance of housing associations. In addition, the finances and risks for housing associations, the role of the Dutch and European government and performance management of housing associations are discussed as well (Elsinga et al., 2014). This study serves as useful contextual background information about the Dutch social housing system. However, due to the publishing date, it lacks information on the period from 2015 to 2023.

According to De Jong (2013), the role of national government has changed since the 1990's from a focus on actively and strategically steering the sector to a more supervising role with a high degree of freedom of action for housing associations. The national government therefore focuses on auditing the policy in retrospect (De Jong, 2013).

In order to fill the time gap between from 2015 onwards, an article by Van Gent & Hochstenbach (2020) can be consulted. This more recent study identifies the relation between and implications of spatial planning and neo-liberal politics in post-crisis social housing policy, with a focus on the period from the financial crisis of 2008 up to 2019. The study provides historical context on the neo-liberal housing policy since the late 1980's. It argues how the implementation of the landlord levy and the Dutch Housing Act of 2015 changed the institutional and operational context of social housing in The Netherlands. In addition the article states that these policy changes increase financial stress on housing associations and with that possibly increase the demographic clustering of disadvantaged social groups. These spatial consequences can possibly compromise the quality and social sustainability of the Dutch social housing system as a result of segregation. This phenomenon is especially likely in large urban areas (Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020). This article shows the societal importance of the policy changes in the social housing sector in recent years and its relevance in larger cities.

### **Lead-up to the Housing Act of 2015 and its implications**

Boelhouwer (2018) states that the Housing Act of 2015 marked a significant turning point in the Dutch social housing sector, introducing substantial changes

to the roles and responsibilities of housing associations and other stakeholders. The lead-up to this legislation was characterized by a series of debates, policy changes, and societal shifts that underscored the need for reform (Boelhouwer, 2018).

In the years preceding the Housing Act of 2015, the Dutch social housing sector faced increasingly strict supervision due to a series of financial scandals and mismanagement cases involving housing associations. These incidents raised questions about the adequacy of existing regulations and the need for stricter oversight. The government responded by initiating a comprehensive review of the sector, aiming to redefine the roles of housing associations and enhance transparency and accountability (Aalbers et al., 2017).

According to Jongbloed et al. (2022), the Housing Act of 2015 was introduced as a direct response to these challenges, aiming to refocus housing associations on their core mission of providing affordable housing to low-income households. The Act clarified the permissible activities of housing associations, restricted their involvement in commercial ventures, and strengthened the regulatory framework governing the sector. The period from 2015 to 2022 saw a gradual implementation of the Housing Act's provisions, with housing associations adapting to their new roles and responsibilities. The Act's emphasis on transparency and accountability led to increased supervision of housing associations' activities, ensuring that they remained focused on their primary social housing objectives. (Jongbloed et al., 2022).

### **Role of the National Government post-2013**

The role of the national government in the Dutch social housing sector has undergone significant changes since 2013, transitioning from a more active and strategic role to a supervisory and regulatory function (Jongbloed et al., 2022).

Post-2013, the national government's focus shifted from actively steering the social housing sector to adopting a supervisory role, emphasizing accountability and transparency. This change was driven by the need to prevent the mismanagement issues that had plagued the sector in the previous years (Aalbers et al., 2017).

According to Hoekstra (2017), the government introduced a series of regulatory measures to strengthen oversight of housing associations, ensuring that they adhered to their social housing mission and operated in a transparent

and accountable manner. These measures included stricter financial reporting requirements, enhanced governance structures, and regular audits (Hoekstra, 2017).

### **Municipal role in social housing**

From a municipal governance perspective, Elsinga & Van Bortel (2011) argue that the Dutch social housing sector and its provision of affordable housing can be outlined by engagement of (local) housing associations and involved municipalities. In the Netherlands municipalities have a relatively high-degree of governing freedom and can therefore be considered the most relevant governance level for social housing policy and performance (Elsinga & Van Bortel, 2011).

According to Koffijberg & De Bruijn (2021), there are three key stakeholders in the policy making process of municipal social housing policy. These stakeholders are part of the Local Triangle and consist of the involved municipality, housing associations and tenants organizations. In collaboration with the housing associations and tenants organizations, the municipality is considered to be the most influential governmental body concerning social housing policy and performance (Koffijberg & De Bruijn, 2021).

Aalbers et. al. (2017) describe that the (local) housing associations are responsible for providing the affordable social housing units in a certain municipality or district. These housing associations are independent non-profit organizations that receive no government subsidies. However, if necessary, they can apply for state-backed loans (Aalbers et. al., 2017).

### **Role of performance agreements**

A study by Beekers (2008) provides a historical perspective on the history of Dutch housing policy. The study discusses how the Dutch social housing sector became more professionalized as it evolved during a century since it officially originated with the Housing Act of 1901. It is argued how, over time, the performance management of the sector became increasingly important. Beekers (2008) states that the most important tool to measure performance and ensure policy consistency is through performance agreements.

According to Koffijberg (2021), performance agreements are the most important and influential policy measure to shape and control social housing

policy within a municipality. Performance agreements are made between the actors of the Local Triangle within a municipality. The formulation process of a performance agreement changed with the implementation of the Housing Act of 2015 when this process was officially included in the new set of regulations (Koffijberg, 2021). The study by Deuten & De Kam (2005) underscores that agreements with housing associations are the leading policy tool in municipal social housing policy, but also states that there are possibilities for other policy tools.

In an article by Hoekstra (2017) it is argued how the new Housing Act changed the role of the housing associations. From 2015 onwards, housing associations received a more clear description of their allowed policy and were set to focus on their primary task of building and providing social rent housing for their target groups. It also increased the influence of the tenants and municipalities through the renewed process of formulating performance agreements. In addition, the new Housing Act also embedded the process between the key stakeholders of developing performance agreements in the law.

A study by Plettenburg (2018) described how not only the process of formulating performance agreements changed in the light of the Housing Act of 2015, but also the manner in which the output of these agreements is evaluated. Before 2015, although there were a number of options to measure societal performance, the most relevant output-oriented societal performance measurement tools were the visitations by the *Stichting Visitaties Woningcorporaties Nederland* (SVWN) (Plettenburg, 2018). After 2015, the *Autoriteit Woningcorporaties* (AW) was founded as the successor of the *Centraal Fonds voor de Volkshuisvesting* (CFV). This authority controls the finances, governance and activities of housing associations (Hoekstra, 2017).

According to Ekkers (2006), performance agreements regarding housing policy are a phenomenon that is present on multiple governmental levels. These vary from the national level, or in some cases even the European level, to the level of individual housing associations. As is also underscored by Koffijberg & De Bruijn (2021), it is stated that the municipal performance agreements are considered the most important and influential in determining housing policy and the performance of housing associations within a certain municipality (Ekkers, 2006).

## **Assessment and development of performance agreements**

The establishment and assessment of performance agreements plays an important role in the Dutch social housing sector, serving as a tool for municipalities, housing associations, and tenant organizations to align their objectives and ensure the provision of affordable, available, and high-quality housing (Koffijberg, 2021). This section delves into the conditions and methods used in formulating and evaluating these agreements.

The Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) provides a comprehensive guide outlining the key considerations and steps in formulating performance agreements. Three central pillars in these agreements are affordability, availability, and quality of housing (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2019). The focus on the affordability aspect ensures that low-income households have access to housing that is within their financial means. Performance agreements provide conditions to maintain or increase the stock of affordable housing, addressing rent levels, and implementing policies to protect vulnerable tenants. Availability relates to ensuring a sufficient supply of social housing to meet the demand. Agreements aim to optimize the use of the existing housing stock, plan for future developments, and address specific needs of specific target groups. Quality focuses on the condition and sustainability of the housing stock. Agreements include provisions for maintenance, renovations, and energy-efficiency improvements, contributing to the longevity of the housing stock and enhancing living conditions for tenants (VNG, 2023).

The evaluation of performance agreements is a critical aspect of ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in the social housing sector. The *Stichting Visitaties Woningcorporaties Nederland* (SVWN) plays a central role in evaluating the performance of housing associations, including their adherence to performance agreements (Plettenburg, 2018). The SVWN conducts regular audits, assessing associations on various performance indicators and providing recommendations for improvement. The evaluation criteria used by SVWN include a range of aspects, from financial stability and governance to tenant satisfaction and social performance. The assessment of performance agreements also focuses on the extent to which housing associations have met their commitments in terms of affordability, availability, and quality (SVWN, 2021).

The evaluation process is designed to provide constructive feedback, enabling housing associations to identify areas for improvement and implement

changes to better serve their tenants. This continuous improvement cycle is integral to upholding the standards of the social housing sector and ensuring that performance agreements fulfill their intended purpose (Koffijberg & De Bruijn, 2021).

## 2.2 Demarcation of research scope

### Time frame context: municipal performance agreements in the local triangle

The social housing sector in The Netherlands has a long history since its origin with the Housing Act of 1901. During this period, the sector evolved into its current status as it is to date. There have been a number of important events that shaped the institutional and societal context (Elsinga et al., 2014). These are displayed below in Figure 2. The period from 1901 until 2009 can be considered as the evolving period of the sector until the financial crisis in 2008 (Beekers, 2008). The period between 2008 and 2015 is defined by the start of the financial crisis and ends with the implementation of the Housing Act of 2015. This was a difficult time for the sector as it faced the financial crisis, scandals with numerous housing associations and a changing role for housing associations because of an era of neoliberal politics in The Netherlands (Aalbers et al., 2017; Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020).

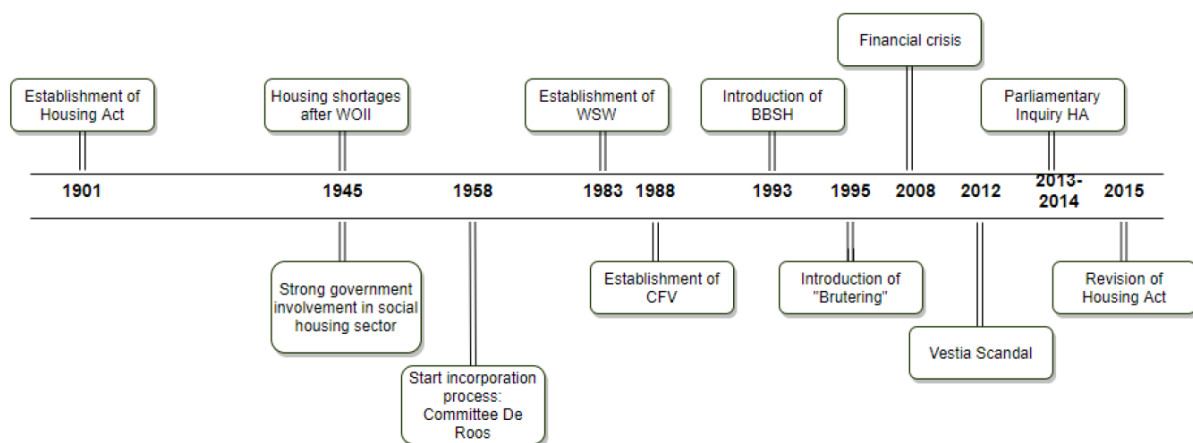


Figure 2. Important events in the development of the Dutch social housing sector (Elsinga et al., 2014).

The period from 2015 onwards is characterized by the revision of the Dutch Housing Act of 2015 (Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020), which had minor iterations in a revision in 2022 (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en



Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022). The implications of this implementation shape the recent institutional context of the social housing sector in an ever-changing process. The year 2015 also marks the last significant change in the system regarding social housing policy and performance agreements. Specifically, the introduction of the Housing Act of 2015, where the development process of municipal performance agreements by the parties of the local triangle was embedded in the law as a basis to focus on the institutional context of that time-frame (Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020).

Therefore, the time-related scope of this thesis is the period since 2015 with a special focus on the most recent time frame. This is due to the fact that the sector is still changing from the implications of the Housing Act of 2015 and is also facing other recent policy developments such as the abolishment of the land-lord levy (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022). In addition, the recent period is not solely shaped by the implementation of the new housing act, but also by the neo-liberal political climate of the last decade. This was also taken into account when selecting a relevant time frame (Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020).

### **Social housing: focus on the regulated stock owned by housing associations**

A portion of the housing units in the social segment (33%) is owned by private landlords, compared to 67% by housing associations (CBS, 2022). These privately owned units are not part of the local triangle and are thus not a party within the institutional context of the performance agreements. No performance agreements are made with these private landlords at the municipal level. However, they are subject to the national performance agreements (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022b). For this reason, this research focuses only on housing units owned by housing associations.

Additionally, a distinction can be made in the segment of property ownership by housing associations. *DAEB* (Services of General Economic Interest) refers to the core tasks of Dutch housing associations, such as providing social rental housing for people with a lower income. This includes housing units with rent levels under the liberalization threshold. Non-DAEB, on the other hand, encompasses the more commercial activities of corporations, such as free-sector rental homes and commercial real estate. The distinction

between DAEB and Non-DAEB provides a clear differentiation in the tasks and responsibilities of housing associations (Ministerie van Infrastructuur & Waterstaat, 2022).

Due to the absence of private landlords in the local triangle and the earlier recognized importance of the primary role of housing associations in the provision of affordable housing, this research is centered on regulated social housing stock (*DAEB*), in ownership of housing associations.

### **Municipal policy-context and social housing policy perspective**

As previously mentioned, the formulation of municipal performance agreements is a process that occurs on the municipal level between the key stakeholders of the local triangle (Koffijberg & De Bruijn, 2021). This thesis aims to take a policy-making perspective and therefore focuses on the municipal social housing policy. The objective of this scoping decision is to identify the influence of differing municipal policy on the process of developing performance agreements. This process occurs within the policy-context of a certain municipality. This can be regarded as the institutional, social and economical background in which municipalities operate. This differs between each municipality and influences the behavior and perspective of all stakeholders of the local triangle. There is also a relation between the policy context and the policy (Koffijberg, 2021). This report does not look into that connection. The focus therefore lies on both the municipal social housing policy and policy-context, which has been visualized below in Figure 3.

In addition, there are many other variables that influence the outcome of the agreements and the dynamics in which these are developed. This, amongst others, includes the financial part of the agreements and the sustainability challenge within the social housing sector (Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020). However, these are not a primary part of this research, as a result of the demarcated scope.

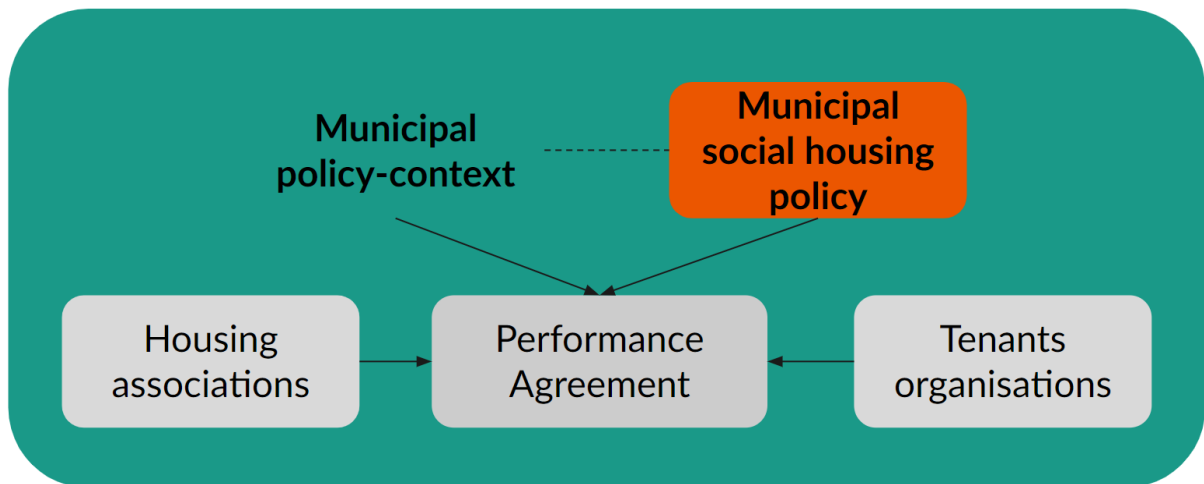


Figure 3. Municipal context and policy in relation to the performance of the local triangle (Adopted from Koffijberg, 2021).

### Case selection: Amsterdam and Rotterdam

In this comparative case study, the selected cases are the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Although the reason for this study came forward based on an empirical observation of discrepancies in the trend of social housing developments in both cities, there are a number of arguments that underscore the scientific and societal relevance of these specific cases.

The Netherlands is considered to only have four large cities, which together form the Randstad. These are Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht (Engel, 2005). Amsterdam and Rotterdam are the two largest Dutch cities in terms of population, with a combined population of about 1.5 million residents, with a relatively large number of dwellings in the social housing sector (CBS, 2022). As a result, these cities can be considered to play a considerable role in providing affordable social housing in the Netherlands (Heylen, 2016).

Rotterdam and Amsterdam are also two cities that are considered to have some characteristics that differ fundamentally from each other in a large number of areas. This also includes different policies and political vision regarding the housing market in both cities (Overeem, 2020). Both cities are interesting for a policy comparison because of these distinctions.

Lastly, the size of the municipal bureaucracy is linked to its number of residents. This means that municipalities that are larger in terms of residents have a larger municipal institutional structure (Van der Meer, 2021). As this study takes a comparative municipal institutional perspective, it is considered logical to select the largest municipal institutions as these are expected to have

the most extensive institutional structures and policies to research. This offers another reason for comparing the two largest Dutch cities.

### 2.3. Research gap

Despite the extensive history and evolution of the social housing sector in The Netherlands, there remains limited understanding about differences in municipal performance agreements across major cities. Both cities, while adhering to the same national legal frameworks, face unique local challenges and uphold different priorities, potentially leading to diverse approaches in social housing policies and performance agreements. Existing research predominantly examines these agreements in isolation, lacking a comparative analysis between varied urban contexts. Furthermore, evaluations and comparisons of performance agreements are primarily conducted using existing frameworks provided by the *Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten* (VNG) and the *Stichting Visitaties Woningcorporaties Nederland* (SVWN). These frameworks may not fully capture the local context or the specificities of municipal policy, potentially leading to assessments that do not entirely reflect the local situation of the social housing sector. This study aims to address these gaps by focusing on the policy and context aspects of municipal performance agreements in these two major Dutch cities, providing insights into the complexities of local governance in the social housing sector and potentially offer a new perspective on the existing evaluation mechanisms.

### 3. Research design and methods

This chapter addresses the research question and conceptual framework, followed by the research design and methodology. Lastly the chapter delves into data management and the societal and scientific relevance of the study.

As suggested by literature in combination with the limited provided timeframe to perform the research of this thesis, the research of the formulated problem statement has been demarcated on a number of aspects. It contributes to the feasibility of the thesis and also provides a specific focus that is in line with the gap found in the literature.

#### 3.1. Research question and conceptual framework

This leads to the research question: ***"To what extent can differences in the municipal performance agreements of Amsterdam and Rotterdam related to social housing be explained from a perspective of policy-context and social housing policy?"***

To answer the main research question, a number of steps need to be taken in the form of subquestions. These are as follows:

- Subquestion 1: *"How does the policy-context of the social housing sector differ between the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam?"*
- Subquestion 2: *"How do the municipal social housing policies of Amsterdam and Rotterdam compare?"*
- Subquestion 3: *"In what ways do the municipal performance agreements vary between Amsterdam and Rotterdam?"*
- Subquestion 4: *"What factors account for the variations in municipal performance agreements between Amsterdam and Rotterdam?"*

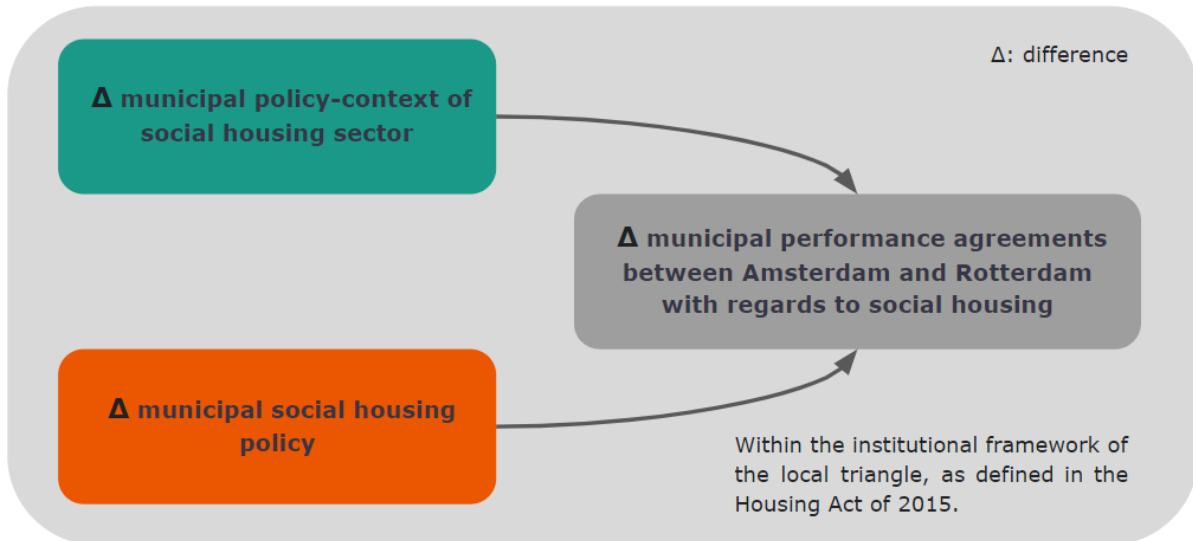


Figure 4. Conceptual framework (Source: Author).

The problem statement, literature review, demarcation of the research scope and the research question have resulted in a conceptual framework, which is visualized in Figure 4. This framework displays the main aim of the research. In essence, the objective of the thesis is to explain differences between the municipal performance agreements in both cities from a perspective of policy-context and municipal social housing policy, by bringing these together through a comparative study.

### 3.2 Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative comparative research design, aiming to unravel the role of municipal policy and context in explaining differences in collective municipal performance agreements regarding affordable social housing in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The research leverages qualitative data, primarily sourced from comparative case studies (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

Three primary methods are employed for data collection, these include the following. This dual approach serves the descriptive part of the research, providing a comprehensive understanding of the policy context, municipal social housing policies, and performance agreements in both cities. The literature study encompasses an extensive review of academic literature, policy documents, and prior research. The comparative document analysis focuses on official documents, policies, and performance agreements, identifying patterns,

discrepancies, and commonalities between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Conducted to address the explanatory part of the research, these interviews target key stakeholders, policy makers, and experts in the field. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allows for a mix of deductive and inductive reasoning, with the opportunity for open and closed coding of responses (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

The study predominantly follows a deductive approach, testing established theories and frameworks against the empirical realities of the two cities. However, an inductive component emerges from the in-depth interviews, allowing for the generation of new insights and patterns (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

### **Analysis Structure**

The analysis unfolds in a structured manner, addressing the research question and subquestions through the following series of steps. Further elaboration on the operationalization of the sub-questions will be presented in the next section.

### **Chapter 4: Policy-Context Analysis**

Examining the policy-related contextual differences of the social housing sector between Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

### **Chapter 5: Municipal Social Housing Policy Comparison**

Delving into the specific policies related to affordable social housing in both cities.

### **Chapter 6: Performance Agreement Comparison**

Scrutinizing the performance agreements, highlighting variances and drawing connections to municipal policies and contextual factors.

### **Chapter 7: Interview Findings**

Presenting and analyzing the results from the in-depth interviews, identifying key findings and themes.

### **Chapter 7: Analysis**

The final chapter aims to synthesize the accumulated data, drawing correlations, and providing a comprehensive analysis to answer the research question.

### 3.3 Research design

To operationalize this research and identify potential relationships between differences in municipal performance agreements and the policy context and municipal social housing policy, a research design has been developed. For each component of the study, it visualizes how it is researched and its relationship with the conceptual framework and the (sub)questions. The sections further explain how each part of the research is specifically conducted (See Figure 5).

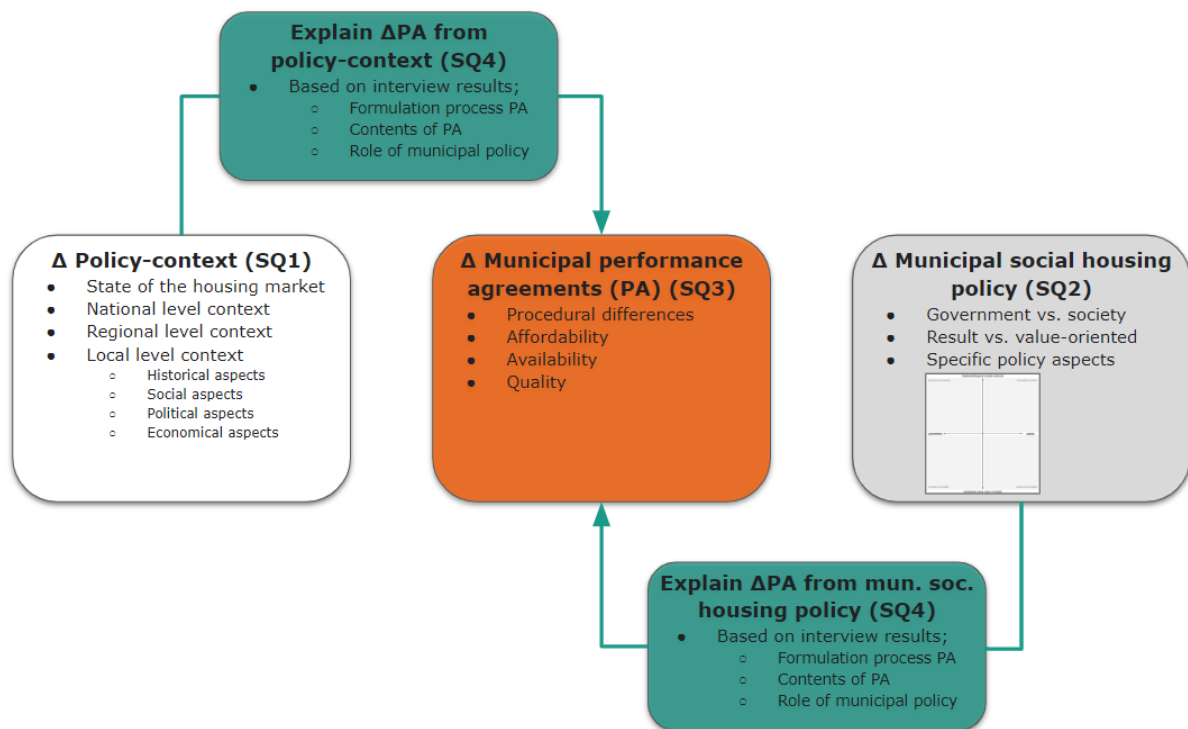


Figure 5. Research Design (Source: Author)

#### 3.3.1 Municipal policy context of the social housing sector

The purpose of the first subquestion is to provide an overview of the policy-related contextual differences of the social housing sector between the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The chapter combines data about both municipalities in order to shape the contextual differences and commonalities that form the basis for the comparative research.

The research method for this chapter consists of a combination of a comparative literature study and a comparative document analysis and serves a descriptive purpose (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).



It has previously been described how the housing associations in both cities operate under the same national legal umbrella of the Housing Act of 2015. This is not only the case for the housing associations, but for the municipalities as well (Woningwet, 2020). The Netherlands has a multi-level governance institutional system separated into three levels of government: national, regional, and local. The national and provincial governance levels both have an influence on municipal policy and are therefore part of the municipal policy context (Van Der Meer, 2021). The municipal policy context, as part of the urban context, is a broad concept and is determined by a number of aspects. Delgado argues that urban (policy) context can be determined through a combination of social, political, economic and historical aspects (Delgado, 2017).

In order to distinguish the contextual distinctions regarding social housing in both cities, this chapter is therefore structured by means of the governance levels including a general overview of the state of the housing market across the governance levels, in which the comparison of both cities on the municipal level is performed by means of the four context shaping aspects. This is displayed in figure 6.

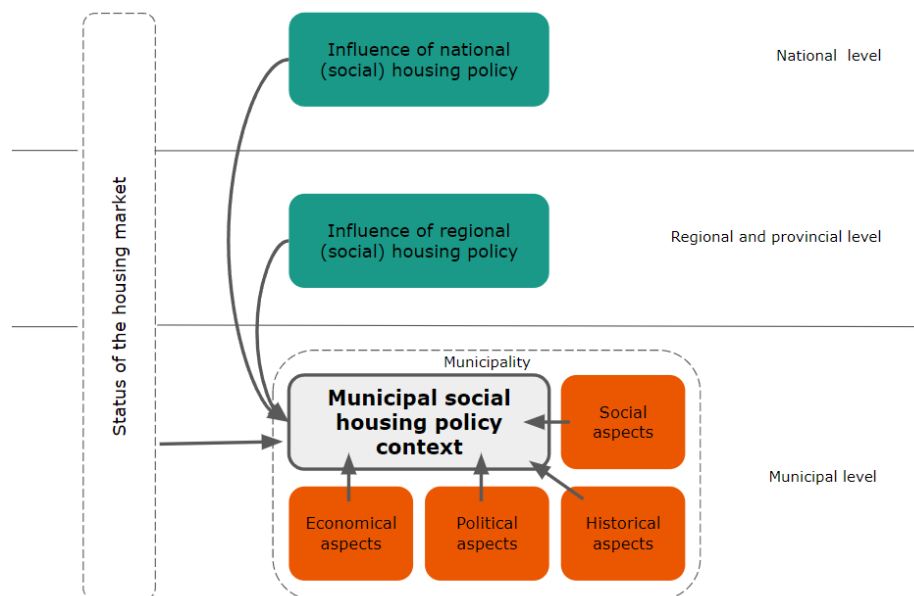


Figure 5. Framework for municipal policy context comparison (adopted from Van der Meer, 2021 & Delgado, 2017).

The data for this chapter is collected through desk research for academic literature. For the document analysis, mostly open-source databases are

consulted that can provide the necessary contextual information. These include policy documents from national level, provinces of North-Holland and Zuid-Holland, Regio Rotterdam, and Metropoolregio Amsterdam. In addition, data sources such as CBS and Aedes Datacentrum are consulted, as well as scholars that have researched a particular aspect of this chapter.

The findings from this analysis are used to unfold the distinctions in policy related contextual differences between the two cities, which serves as input for the eventual analysis that aims to unfold the reasons for the differences in the performance, based on the interview results.

### 3.3.2 Municipal social housing policy

The second subquestion aims to unfold differences in the municipal social housing policy of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The methodology for this subquestion is a qualitative comparative policy analysis (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). In order to compare the differences in municipal policy, a framework by Van Der Steen et. al (2014) is used. This framework distinguishes four perspectives on two different axes about the role of the government in policy-making and serves as a guideline to compare the differences in municipal policy between Rotterdam and Amsterdam (Van Der Steen et. al, 2014).

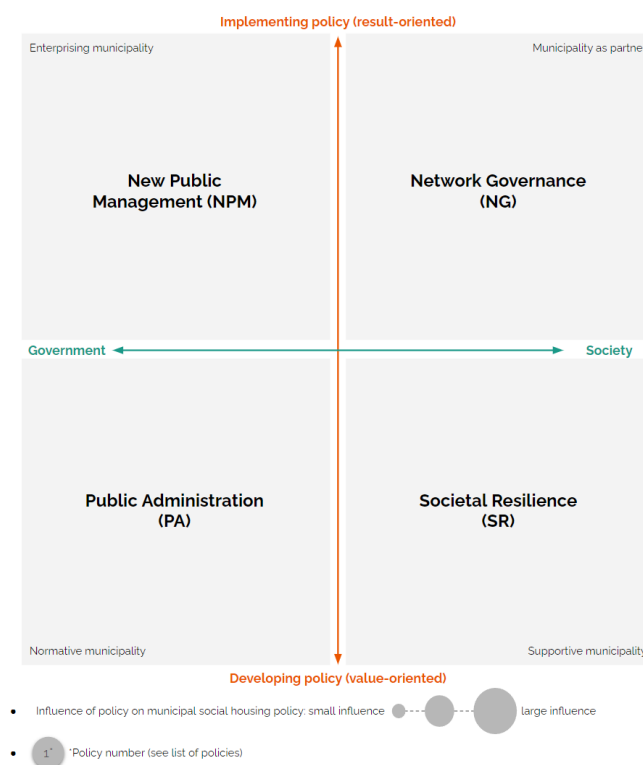


Figure 6. Framework for comparative municipal social housing policy analysis (adopted from Van Der Steen et. al, 2014).

This framework is used to develop a social housing policy profile for both municipalities. These developed profiles can subsequently be utilized to compare the distinctions and characterize the regarding social housing policy in the two cities (See Figure 6). In order to perform the analysis, and develop a social housing policy profile using this framework, a number of steps are taken. Policy instruments regarding social housing are collected for both municipalities. These are then tested along three variables:

- **Vertical axis:** Determine whether the policy instrument is developed in a result-oriented manner (above) or from the objective of value creation (below). Based on this, the policy instrument is placed on the vertical axis (Van Der Steen et. al, 2014).
- **Horizontal axis:** Define if the policy instrument is primarily developed from the perspective of the municipality (left), or is more oriented towards society with the possibility of citizen input and/or participation in the policy (right). Based on this, in addition to a vertical placement, the policy instrument also receives a horizontal placement in the framework (Van Der Steen et. al, 2014). This distinction is therefore based on policy making from the government on one hand, and from society, through alliances, cooperatives, partnerships, and citizen participation and input on the other hand.
- Additionally, it can be stated that not every evaluated policy instrument has an equal influence on the policy regarding affordable social housing in either of the municipalities. For this reason, in addition to placement on the framework, a size of the circles has been assigned to all policy aspects, with influential policy instruments being allocated a larger circle and less influential ones a smaller circle (See Figure 6). In this way, it becomes clear which of the various policy instruments have more or less impact on the overall municipal social rental policy.
- It is important to note that for all three variables, the classification in the framework is based on the perspective of the social housing policy. The classification could hypothetically be different when viewed from another policy domain.
- Lastly, the four quadrants resulting from the vertical and horizontal axis can be linked to four administrative paradigms. These include New Public

Management (enterprising municipality), Network Governance (municipality as partner), Public Administration (normative government), and Societal Resilience (supportive municipality). When categorizing policy based on the vertical and horizontal axis, for those reasons, a connection can be made with a specific administrative paradigm (See Figure 6; Van Der Steen et. al, 2014).

Regarding data collection, to map out these policy instruments, several municipal and regional policy documents related to the social housing policy within the respective municipality are used. A distinction is made between primary and secondary documents (Van Der Meer, 2021). In this case, the primary policy documents are the main municipal documents that directly relate to the social housing policy of the respective municipality. In both cities, these are three documents, addressing the short, medium, and long term (VTW, 2022).

The secondary policy documents, in this case, are policies at both the municipal and regional levels, which do not necessarily have housing policy as their main subject but do indeed contain relevant policy instruments related to social housing. For this reason, several of these secondary policy documents have been included in the analysis. The specific primary and secondary policy documents for both cities are detailed in the chapter, explaining which documents these are and why they were chosen.

The identified documents are then analyzed for the presence of the previously described policy instruments, which serve as the basis for the analysis using the model of Van Der Steen et. al (2014). Regarding the secondary policy documents, more documents were analyzed than are shown in the chapter. These documents turned out not to contain relevant policy instruments and were therefore not included in the analysis.

The findings from this analysis are used to determine the distinctions in the social housing policy profiles between the two municipalities, which serves as input for the eventual analysis that aims to unfold the reasons for the differences in performance agreements, based on the interview findings. In addition, apart from the complete social housing policy profile, specific policy categories in both cities can be substituted from this analysis as well, which are elaborated on in the analysis.

### **3.3.3 Municipal performance agreements**

The third subquestion is aimed to compare the municipal performance agreements of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. To answer this subquestion, a qualitative comparative policy analysis is performed (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

To conduct this analysis, the performance agreements are studied based on the aspects affordability, availability and quality of the social housing segment. In this context, quality is referred to as the (technical) housing quality and livability of the social housing stock. These are considered as the common three aspects for assessing performance agreements. This is evident from both literature and the official guidelines provided by the VNG (Association of Dutch Municipalities) for drafting performance agreements. (Elsinga et al., 2014; VNG, 2023). Additionally, the procedural differences in the development process of performance agreements in both cities are also addressed. The performance agreements in both cities are assessed based on the impact and implications of the three different aspects in the agreements on the social segment specifically. As a result, it is possible that the mid-range rent or sustainability aspects appear in the analysis, even though it is not specifically part of the scope of the research. This can occur because it might influence the affordability, availability, or quality of the social segment in one of the two cities.

For data collection, the most recent municipal performance agreements are used. In the case of Amsterdam, these are the collective *Samenwerkingafspraken 2019-2023* (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2019). In Rotterdam, there are no collective performance agreements, only individual ones between the municipality and specific housing associations. However, there is a letter addressed to the council, summarizing the guidelines and main agreements of all performance agreements (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2021). This will be used as a substitute for the case of Rotterdam due to the absence of an official collective agreement at the municipal level. For a deeper understanding of the specific components of the agreement set, individual performance agreements can be consulted.

The findings of this chapter outline the differences between the performance agreements in both cities. The aim is to map the characteristics of both sets of performance agreements using the chosen method. The focus of the selected framework, combined with the fact that there is no standard template for performance agreements, means that not all content features of the

performance agreements are reflected in the comparison. Aspects such as the sustainability challenges and finances are therefore not included in the analysis. Nevertheless, the results of the chapter should, by using the chosen method, provide a good overview of the characteristics related to the social segment. These will be used later to investigate where any differences originate.

#### **3.3.4 Performance agreements analysis through interview results**

In order to answer this subquestion, which attempts to explain potential differences between the municipal performance agreements in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, it is necessary to first answer the previous subquestions, which are of a descriptive nature. This chapter serves as the actual explanatory analysis and aims to clarify how the policy-context and municipal social housing policy in Rotterdam and Amsterdam relate to the performance agreements. To achieve this, in-depth interviews are held with relevant experts and stakeholders. The interviews are semi-structured and last between 45 and 60 minutes (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

The local triangle is used to select interviewees, as these are the most important stakeholders in the development of performance agreements. With this, a distinction was made between **insiders** and **outsiders** of the policy-making process (Van Drimmelen, 2014). In total, 6 insiders are interviewed, one from each stakeholder type within the local triangle in each city. This includes a respondent from the municipality, a housing association, and a tenant's association. In addition, a councilor from each city is interviewed as an outsider of the process to provide a broader perspective of the political side of the process as well. This results in a total of eight interviews (See Figure 7). Specific focus was laid down in selecting two interviewees from similar organizations and with similar roles in both cities, with some additional criteria for the selection of different interviewees:

- Municipality: Professionals that are both closely involved in the policy making process of the performance agreements.
- Housing associations: Preferably large housing associations, because they have relatively much influence and impact, and a broad spectrum of involvement in both cities. Both must be comparable in size and activities in both cities.

- Tenant's associations from two large housing associations in both cities were interviewed. In Rotterdam, the tenants' associations are not united at the municipal level. In Amsterdam, this is the case. The interviewee, in addition to a role in the association, also has a role in the municipally united association. This interviewee can therefore provide a broad perspective on the performance agreement process at both levels.
- Councilors for the political perspective. The choice was made for two councilors from the only common party that is active in both councils. Additionally, specifically the councilors with the housing portfolio were interviewed.

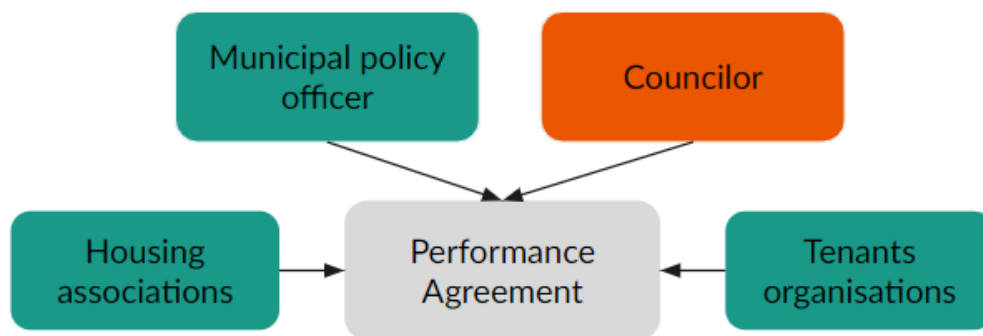


Figure 7: Interviewee selection in each city based on involved stakeholders  
(Source: Author)

The interviews are held with a semi-structured protocol, with a questionnaire that focuses on three main topics: the formulation process of performance agreements, contents of the performance agreements, and the role of municipal policy (See Appendix A). These are recorded, transcribed and subsequently coded using a combination of open and closed coding (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). The interviewees were asked for permission through informed consent. The recordings were deleted after transcription. All results and personal details of the interviewees are fully anonymized. The anonymized transcripts will not be published, but can be requested from the author if desired. Through the coding process, each interviewee is being anonymized to safeguard their privacy. After the coding and transcription process is finalized, the processed data will be shared with the interviewees in order to ensure the data validity.

The coded results of the interviews can then be used to perform the

comparative explanatory analysis that can possibly contribute to explaining differences between the performance agreements in both cities, in which the results are used in conjunction with the earlier findings to establish an explanatory relationship. In this, the relationship between the policy context and the social housing policy is acknowledged, but it is not an explicit part of the analysis. However, a combination of context and policy aspects can lead to a specific difference between the two cities.

These empirical results are then elaborated upon in chapter seven, following the structure of the interview questions. Specifically, the focus is on the differences between the viewpoints and answers of the various stakeholders from both cities. This serves as a foundation for identifying a possible link between the content of the performance agreements and the municipal policy context and social housing policy

### **3.4 Data management plan**

Given the increasing concerns about privacy and data leaks in research, it is important to handle collected data with care. Since the collection of interview data in this study involves personal research data, a Data Management Plan has been established in line with the standards of TU Delft (See Appendix C). Data is typically anonymized to such an extent that even the cities where the interviewees work aren't disclosed, to prevent potential traceability. However, given that this research specifically revolves around two distinct cases, complete concealment isn't feasible.

The results of the interview transcripts are summarized in Chapter 7. The actual transcripts are fully anonymized and are not published with the thesis, but can be requested from the author if desired.

### **3.5 Societal and scientific relevance**

#### **Scientific Relevance**

From a scientific standpoint, this research addresses a notable gap in the existing literature. Previous studies have not extensively explored collective municipal performance agreements within the specific context of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, particularly from a municipal perspective and within the selected timeframe. Comparative research in this domain is scarce, and this study aims to



contribute valuable insights to the ongoing academic debate. The methodology and approach adopted in this research could also enrich discussions on performance agreements in relation to municipal housing policies, providing a fresh perspective and potentially influencing future research directions.

### **Societal Relevance**

The societal implications of this study are multifaceted. Given the established importance of affordable social housing in larger cities, the insights garnered from this research could play a pivotal role in enhancing the understanding of municipal social housing policies. This, in turn, has the potential to improve the policy-making process for developing municipal performance agreements in large Dutch cities.

This research could be a potential addition to the current methodologies used by organizations such as the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) and the Social Housing Guarantee Fund (SVWN). The approach taken in this study could provide additional insights for performance agreements and municipal housing policies, enriching the existing toolkit for analysis and policy development.

By combining scientific and societal relevance, this study aims to bridge the gap between academic research and practical policy-making and potentially contribute to a more informed and effective approach to addressing the challenges with regard to affordable social housing in larger cities.

## 4. Multi-level policy context analysis

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the policy-related contextual distinctions concerning affordable social housing in both Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The primary objective is to compile and analyze the important components of the social housing landscape, which will then pave the way for a detailed assessment and comparison of the most important context-specific factors between the two cities.

These contextual differences and resemblances can provide further insight and an essential backdrop for comprehending not only the pursued municipal policies, but eventually also the contents of the performance agreements themselves. As underscored in the preceding chapter, the municipal policy context holds particular significance within the scope of this thesis. This part of the study therefore holds profound implications for the entirety of this thesis.

The exploration of these contextual nuances unfolds across several distinct sections. The first section examines the broader national and regional policy contexts, and its subsequent effects on the municipal policy arena. To accomplish this, the previously described framework of the Multi-Level Governance model is adopted as a foundational guide. Subsequently, the analysis narrows to the local level, where the contextual contours of social housing policy are explained across dimensions including social, economic, political, and historical aspects. In addition, data on the current of the housing market is also provided.

## 4.2 National level policy context

The cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam and the provinces of Noord-Holland and Zuid-holland, the provinces in which the cities are located, are part of the same national context (Van der Meer, 2021). As Rotterdam and Amsterdam are both Dutch cities, the same national institutional context applies to both cities. This section therefore elaborates on the housing market and the national context that influences both cities and their social housing policy.

### 4.2.1 General state of the Dutch housing market

In 2022, the housing shortage on the Dutch housing market is still present and slowly increasing as calculated by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. The total housing demand is 405.000 dwellings, and when compared to 90.000 available dwellings this results in a shortage of 315.000 dwellings. The shortage slightly increased from approximately 300.000 dwellings in 2020 and is expected to reach its peak in 2024 with a shortage of 326 thousand dwellings (See Figure 8). After 2024, the shortage is expected to decrease as the increase of the housing stock exceeds the population growth and more dwellings are adjusted to the right target audience. The increased housing stock is realized by new construction, transformation and splitting of dwellings (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, 2023).

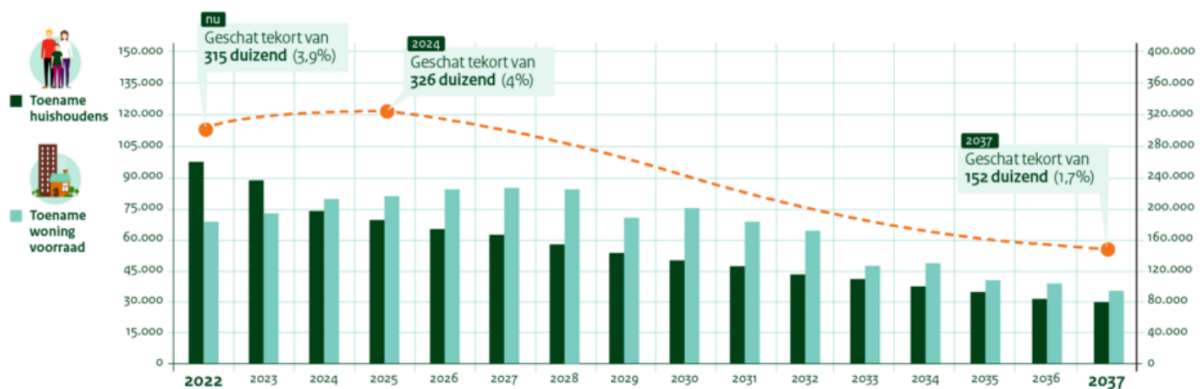


Figure 8. Forecast of the housing shortage in The Netherlands (Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2023).

Apart from the shortage, the housing market also faces other problems such as the arising energy transition and the quality of life being under pressure due to decreasing housing and neighborhood quality. Several factors contribute

to these issues. Demographic changes lead to a population that is expanding and changing in composition. There is also a lack of direction and cohesion within the national policy-making process. Without centralized control and programming, local issues will arise. The financial situation of low interest rates and rising real estate prices result in improper incentives and unequal possibilities. The construction sector also faces a resource shortage and longer construction periods. In addition, the construction of new dwellings is not the only spatial challenge. There is also a trend where societal issues accumulate in vulnerable neighborhoods. Lastly, the pace of making the housing stock more sustainable is too slow, especially in the social housing sector (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, 2023).

Another issue of the Dutch housing market, which is especially relevant for the social housing sector, is the phenomenon of *Scheefwonen*. This is a situation in which a household, while having relatively high incomes, occupies a social sector rent dwelling. The tenants' income is officially too high for this type of housing, resulting in them paying too little rent and preventing flow on the housing market. This further induces the shortage on the social housing market (BIN Nederland, 2017).

## 4.2.2 Situation on the Dutch social housing market

This section provides facts and figures on the current state of the social housing market in The Netherlands. The aim is to map out the most important data regarding the social rental sector and the associated housing stock. Some of these key figures that characterize the sector are displayed below in Table 1. Later in this chapter, these figures are used to compare the local situation in both cities, as well as relate them to the national average.

**Table 1. Key figures of the social housing sector in The Netherlands**

	<b>The Netherlands</b>
Division owner occupied / rented stock	57,3 / 42,7
Social housing stock: Housing associations (as part of total stock)	28,6%
Social housing stock housing associations: < <i>liberalisatiegrens</i> (as part of total stock)	26,3%
Social housing stock housing associations: < <i>Aftoppingsgrens</i> (as part of total stock)	24,2%
Social housing stock: Private landlords (as part of total stock)	14,1%
Mutation of <i>DAEB</i> stock (2015-2021)	-3,6%
Mutation of <i>Niet-DAEB</i> stock (2015-2021)	+71,4%
Number of Housing associations	289
Average waiting time for social housing	84 months (7 years)
Average rent social housing (per month)	560 euro
Average property value - total stock (2022)	317.000 euro
Average property value - housing association stock (2022)	211.000 euro

Source: CBS (2022) & Aedes Datacentrum (2022)

A number of findings can be withdrawn from the table. With 42.7%, the Netherlands has a relatively high percentage of rented housing stock. More than 65 percent of these dwellings (28,6% of total stock) are owned by housing associations, which is the focus of this study. The remaining 35 percent (14.1% of total stock) is owned by private landlords and are included in this research. It is also shown that almost 85 percent of the dwellings owned by housing

associations have a monthly rent that is under the *aftoppingsgrens* and are therefore eligible for rent allowance for the full rent price. These are with that considered as properly affordable housing and displays the importance of housing associations in the provision of these dwellings. For 2022, the *aftoppingsgrens* is set at €633,25 per month. Additionally, the table displays how the *Niet-DAEB* stock has largely increased since 2015. This can mainly be attributed to changing regulations in regards to how the housing stock is divided between *DAEB* and *Niet-DAEB*, which has been implemented in 2018 (Ministerie van Infrastructuur & Waterstaat, 2022). Nevertheless, one of the implications of this is that the *DAEB*-stock, that is purposed to provide affordable housing, actually decreased in size between 2015 and 2021. The average waiting time of seven years for social housing also underscores the current housing shortage. The average property value owned by housing associations is significantly lower than the average of the total housing stock.

#### **4.2.3 Influence translated to policy context**

Whereas the majority of the executive policy making power lies within the municipalities through the system of municipal performance agreements, the national government also has a mandate in defining the social housing policy. This is from a more strategic and general perspective of the entire social housing market and this policy is shaped by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environmental governance, which has been re-opened in 2022 after being abolished in 2010.

The ministry developed the *Nationale Woon- en Bouwagenda* (NWBA) and, which aims to identify the cause of the housing shortage, other housing related issues, and to propose solutions for it. This nation-wide, state led programme aims to decrease the current problems that the Dutch housing market faces (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2023). Every year, the *Staat van de volkshuisvesting* is published. This document evaluates the progress of the NWBA and is used to adjust the policy. In 2022, the ministry also launched a plan in which they aim to better spread the social housing density throughout the country, rather than having a relatively high-population in the larger cities. This also included municipalities being obliged to draw up a residential care vision and housing or emergency ordinance (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022a).

In addition, Performance agreements are also made on a national level between the Ministry, *Aedes*, *Woonbond* and *VNG*. These national agreements provide a long-term strategic vision for the social rental sector market towards 2030 and aims to facilitate in providing the conditions for housing associations to improve on sustainability, liveability and affordability. The reasons for these agreements are the accelerated investments of housing associations and the abolishment of the landlord-levy, which creates 1,7 billion euros of annual investment space for housing associations (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijkrelaties, 2022b). These funds will primarily be used to double the construction output of social housing, rent moderation and reduction, improve sustainability of current stock, and for home and neighborhood improvements (See Figure 9).



Figure 9. national performance agreements for public housing (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijkrelaties, 2022b).

Rotterdam has a specific programme in which the national government influences the local social housing sector, namely the *Nationaal Programma Rotterdam Zuid* (NPRZ). The program is a collaborative effort between the municipality of Rotterdam, the national government, and other stakeholders to improve the socioeconomic situation in *Rotterdam Zuid*. Amongst others, it focuses on improving the quality of the (social) housing through collaborations with housing associations to develop new housing units and enhance neighborhood quality. The initiative for the programme comes from a national level, with the municipality of Rotterdam acting as the coordinator and facilitator.

The national government provides financial support to the program and assists the municipality of Rotterdam in achieving its goals. The project is considered as a national example of an integrated approach to address socioeconomic inequalities (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2022). It is therefore one of the aspects that characterizes the national influence on Rotterdam's social housing policy, whereas the municipality of Amsterdam does not have a similar programme.

Furthermore, Figure 10 shows that, from a national perspective, the regulated social housing stock that consists of both ownership by housing associations and private landlords, is not equally distributed throughout The Netherlands as compared to the owner occupied market. Regulated housing is represented to a relatively higher degree in larger cities (CBS, 2022). The national government aims to balance this out better throughout the country by striving for 30% social housing stock in all municipalities (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022a). Additionally, specifically for the social housing sector the programme of “*een veilig thuis voor iedereen*” has been developed. Aiming at additional social rental homes for vulnerable and low-income groups such as students, elderly and chronically ill people (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022a).

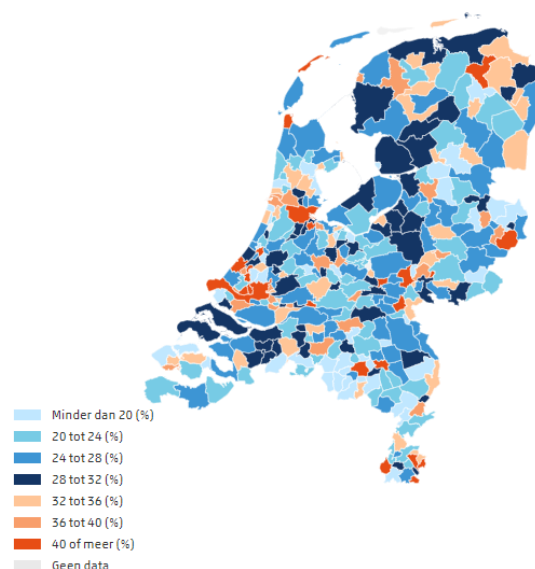


Figure 10. Regulated rental properties per municipality as percentage of total housing stock (CBS, 2022).



### 4.3 Regional level policy context

In similar alignment to the structure of the national level policy context, this section aims to frame the influence of the regional-level policy context on the local situation in both cities. As the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam are situated within the provinces of Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland respectively, they operate in a shared national context (Van der Meer, 2021). This overarching national framework can subsequently have a possible influence on their social housing policy and performance agreements, as a backdrop against which local social housing policies are forged. Nevertheless, while both cities reside within an identical national context, they are also subject to the distinct dynamics of their respective provinces and urban regions. Thus, this section delves into the regional policy contexts, unraveling how these regional elements converge with the local level policies and impact the cities' social housing landscapes.

#### 4.3.1 Regional impulses: role of the provinces in housing policy

Mimicking the manner in which the national government outlines the overarching contours of policy, the provinces exert their influence in shaping the local policy environment. While municipalities orchestrate executive policy, the provinces wield authority in steering urban expansion, infrastructure, and certain housing policies. Their mandate regarding housing policies includes determining whether towns and villages can expand and where industrial estates and office parks may be constructed. They exercise this influence through legislative instruments as laid down in the Spatial Planning Act (Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2022).

In recent years, there has been a growing provincial influence in public housing policy (Aedes, 2022b). Provinces now play a dual role, besides facilitating municipal activities, they also have an increasingly significant role in the allocation of construction sites and locations for urban expansion. Provincial Housing policy is laid down in regional housing visions, the primary objective of which is to harmonize and coordinate housing programs at the regional level. Within this process, municipalities collaboratively formulate housing visions that establish a unified direction for housing development and define the desired residential qualities (Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2022).

The main objective of these regional housing visions is to find a balance between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of housing construction in relation to market demand. They outline strategies for aligning the supply and

demand for residential environments and provide a blueprint for managing the social housing stock with respect to target demographics. Furthermore, these visions prioritize the development of housing projects in proximity to high-quality public transportation hubs, optimizing accessibility and mobility for residents (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2017).

### 4.3.2 Provincial housing shortages and action

Amid the multitude of previously mentioned housing challenges, a serious shortage on the housing market looms on a provincial level as well, echoing across both Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland. Figure 11 shows how both provinces are facing one of the largest housing shortages compared to other provinces, with a deficit of 4.5% in Noord-Holland and 4.0% in Zuid-Holland, compared to a national average of 3.5%. Both provinces are only surpassed by Flevoland (5.4%) and have a similar shortage as the province of Utrecht (4.5%), which is the third province that includes the Randstad region. The figure also presents how, compared to other provinces and the national average, the shortage will decrease to a lesser extent until 2031 and is expected to remain prevalent in both Noord-Holland (3.3%) and Zuid-Holland (3.0%) (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022a). This demonstrates that, despite the fact that there is a general housing shortage at the national level, this deficit at the provincial level in the provinces in which Amsterdam and Rotterdam are situated can be considered as extra pressing. Both provinces, however, have developed specific policies to combat this current shortage and to further reduce it in the future.

Provincie	Raming woningtekort		Toename woningbehoefte			Opgave 2021 t/m 2030			Raming woningtekort	
	2021		2021 t/m 2025	2026 t/m 2030	Totaal	Bruto nieuwbouw*	Raming sloop*	Netto uitbreiding	2031	
Groningen	6.200	2,2%	7.600	2.600	10.200	16.500	4.500	12.000	5.400	1,8%
Friesland	4.400	1,4%	8.200	4.300	12.500	15.300	4.500	10.800	6.000	1,9%
Drenthe	4.200	1,9%	4.600	2.700	7.300	9.900	3.000	6.900	4.700	2,0%
Overijssel	11.700	2,3%	19.000	13.000	32.000	41.600	7.100	34.500	9.800	1,8%
Flevoland	9.400	5,4%	16.200	14.800	31.000	35.400	800	34.600	6.500	3,1%
Gelderland	34.900	3,8%	44.100	32.900	77.000	94.900	10.000	84.900	28.300	2,8%
Utrecht	26.600	4,5%	39.200	37.300	76.500	92.700	7.400	85.300	19.300	2,9%
Noord-Holland	65.000	4,8%	86.400	71.000	157.400	199.800	23.900	175.900	50.400	3,3%
Zuid-Holland	67.600	4,0%	96.500	81.900	178.400	230.200	36.900	193.300	56.700	3,0%
Zeeland	0	0,0%	3.700	1.400	5.100	7.100	2.600	4.500	800	0,4%
Noord-Brabant	40.500	3,5%	59.100	44.300	103.400	130.600	11.200	119.400	26.700	2,1%
Limburg	8.800	1,6%	6.100	-1.400	4.700	18.400	5.900	12.500	3.800	0,7%
Nederland	279.300	3,5%	390.700	304.800	695.500	892.400	117.800	774.600	218.400	2,5%

Figure 11. Housing shortage and housing needs per province in The Netherlands (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022a).

In Noord-Holland, the provincial housing policy is driven by a commitment to address the pressing shortages. The scarcity of housing units in the region has directed the provincial authorities towards aligning their efforts with municipalities to counteract this challenge (Mulder et al., 2021). In order to achieve this, the province has developed a number of policy goals tailored towards the housing market. Firstly, encouraging housing construction. The province of North Holland has drawn up various plans and programs to stimulate the construction of new dwellings. This includes identifying construction locations and simplifying planning procedures to accelerate housing production. Secondly, the province of North Holland is working with housing associations to increase the supply of social rental homes. This includes financially supporting the construction and renovation of social housing to shorten waiting lists. These collaborative initiatives aim to stimulate the construction of social rental housing, thus alleviating the pressure on the overall housing market. Lastly, the lobby for regulating the rental market. The province advocates rules to stabilize the rental market and prevent excessive rent increases (Provincie Noord-Holland, 2023).

In Zuid-Holland, the provincial housing policy is also shaped by a dedicated effort to combat the persistent housing shortage and address the extensive waiting lists for social rental housing. The province has formulated several key strategies in collaboration with municipalities and other stakeholders to tackle these, some of which partly overlap with the policy objectives of the province of Noord-Holland. These include promoting housing development, increasing social rental housing to reduce waiting lists and improve accessibility, and the lobby for rental market regulations. Furthermore, and not being present in the strategy of North-Holland, regional cooperation is a cornerstone of Zuid-Holland's housing strategy. The province collaborates closely with municipalities and other stakeholders with a focus on citizen participation to formulate and execute regional housing plans. These collaborative efforts enable the province to address housing issues and tailor solutions to the specific needs of sub-different regions within Zuid-Holland (Provincie Zuid-Holland, n.d.).

In summary, while both provinces share common goals of addressing housing shortages and increasing social rental housing, they adopt slightly different approaches. Noord-Holland emphasizes policy alignment with municipalities and a strong focus on the lobby for rental market regulation, while Zuid-Holland has a more comprehensive approach that includes regional

cooperation on a provincial level. Regarding social housing, there are few differences between the two provinces in terms of social housing policy, due to the provinces having a relatively little share in the specific social housing policy of a certain municipality (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2017).

#### **4.3.3 Tailored provincial social housing policies**

In the context of addressing the regional housing challenges, With regards to social housing policies on a provincial level, there are some striking distinctions between both provinces. The province of Zuid-Holland, later followed by the Province of Utrecht, has adopted a focused strategy to combat social housing shortages with the *knelpuntenpot*. This comes down to the implementation of a subsidy scheme for municipalities aimed at incentivizing the construction of social rental housing. Municipalities in Zuid-Holland have the opportunity to receive a maximum subsidy of 5,000 euros for each completed social rental housing unit (Provincie Zuid-Holland, 2023). This policy measure was originally inspired by the *Versnellen Woningbouw* programme in Noord-Holland. However, the province of Noord-Holland never translated this strategic goal into a similar policy measure with financial incentives and a subsequent subsidy scheme (Mulder et. al, 2021).

Thus, the province of Zuid-Holland recognizes the importance of targeted interventions, motivating municipalities to actively contribute to the expansion of the social rental housing stock. This subsidy scheme, designed to alleviate social housing shortages, is a distinctive feature of Zuid-Holland's housing policy landscape and distinguishes it from North Holland (Mulder et al., 2021).

#### **4.3.4 Regional Networks: Regio Rotterdam's Influence**

The city of Rotterdam is, in addition to being located in the province of Zuid Holland, part of a collaborative cooperation known as the Regio Rotterdam, which includes 14 other municipalities, totaling 1.246 million inhabitants, with 656 thousand residing in Rotterdam itself (CBS, 2022). When evaluating the influence of this sub-provincial collaboration on the municipal social housing policy, a central entity is the "*Samenwerkingsverband Wonen Regio Rotterdam*" (SvWrR). This is a cooperation of 12 of these municipalities, which aims to exchange knowledge and to carry out specific tasks jointly (Rijksoverheid, 2023).

One distinctive aspect of the Regio Rotterdam's influence on housing policy is the regional housing vision jointly developed by the participating municipalities. This vision recognizes the widening shortage of social rental housing, which extends from Rotterdam to the surrounding municipalities. In response, the municipality of Rotterdam aims to more equitably allocate social housing to target groups throughout the region. This strategy is part of a regional housing vision formulated by the municipalities of the Regio Rotterdam (SvWrR, 2021).

Furthermore, a regional performance agreement has been established involving the Province of South Holland, SvWrR, and *Maaskoepel*. This agreement underscores the collaborative approach to addressing housing challenges within the Regio Rotterdam and enhances coordination among key stakeholders at the regional level (SvWrR, 2019). The presence of such regional-level agreements and collaborations within the Regio Rotterdam exemplifies the concerted efforts to tackle social housing issues collectively, setting Rotterdam apart from Amsterdam in terms of structured regional performance agreements.

#### **4.3.5 Metropoolregio Amsterdam's Influence**

Amsterdam is also part of a sub-provincial level cooperation in the Metropoolregio Amsterdam. This administrative partnership encompasses a regional alliance, including the province of Noord-Holland, Flevoland, 32 municipalities, and the Amsterdam Transport Region. The alliance consists of 30 municipalities within the southern part of the province of North Holland, and the municipalities of Almere and Lelystad in Flevoland. In total, 2.5 million inhabitants reside within this regional partnership, with 905,000 residing within the municipality of Amsterdam itself (CBS, 2022).

Within this regional partnership, several overarching goals have been outlined. These consist of the enhancement of mutual cooperation, fostering regional economic growth, creating an integrated metropolitan mobility system, aligning housing development with regional needs, and advancing sustainability (Metropoolregio Amsterdam, 2023). Notably, the collaborative efforts between Metropoolregio Amsterdam and the Dutch government have secured over 150 million euros in national subsidies for housing construction, a testament to their combined commitment to improving accessibility and new construction within the region (Intres, 2022).

Unlike the Regio Rotterdam, the Metropoolregio Amsterdam does not employ regional performance agreements. Nevertheless, the involved municipalities have jointly developed a comprehensive regional vision, titled "Verstedelijking Concept Metropoolregio Amsterdam 2050", which is not solely focussed on (social) housing related policy making, but rather on broader urbanization aspects (Metropoolregio Amsterdam, 2023). The distinction from the Regio Rotterdam, by not employing regional performance agreements on social housing, underscores the regional context of Amsterdam. This is characterized by its reliance on other collaborative strategies and a shared long-term vision for urban development, rather than on binding agreements (SvWrR, 2019; Metropoolregio Amsterdam, 2023).

## 4.4 Local policy context

In this section, an analysis of the municipal policy context in Rotterdam and Amsterdam is performed. It provides a general overview of the social housing market in both cities. Followingly, the distinctions on the historical, social, political and economic aspects between Amsterdam and Rotterdam are explained.

### 4.4.1 The social housing market in Rotterdam and Amsterdam

This table illuminates the significant distinctions between the social housing sectors of Amsterdam and Rotterdam when compared to the Dutch average. These differences can provide valuable insights into the distinctions that shape the social housing landscape in these two cities.

**Table 2. Key figures of the social housing sector in Amsterdam and Rotterdam**

	Dutch average	Amsterdam	Rotterdam
Division owner occupied / rented stock	57,3 / 42,7	29,3 / 70,7	34,9 / 65,1
Social housing stock: Housing associations (as part of total stock)	28,6%	39,9%	44,2%
Social housing stock housing associations: < liberalisatiegrens (as part of total stock)	26,3%	36,2%	39,1%
Social housing stock housing associations: < Aftoppingsgrens (as part of total stock)	24,2%	33,0%	35,4%
Social housing stock: Private landlords (as part of total stock)	14,1%	30,8%	20,9%
Mutation of DAEB stock (2015-2021)	-3,6%	-2,9%	-7,8%
Mutation of Niet-DAEB stock (2015-2021)	+71,4%	+69,2%	+172,5%
Number of Housing associations	289	10	11

Average waiting time for social housing	84 months (7 years)	156 months (13 years)	57 months (4+ years)
Average rent social housing (per month)	560 euro	578 euro	566 euros
Average WOZ-value (2022)	317.000 euro	434.000 euro	275.000 euro
Average WOZ-value housing association stock (2022)	211.000 euro	324.000 euro	214.000 euro

Source: CBS (2022) & Aedes Datacentrum (2022)

The table underscores disparities in the social housing sector between Amsterdam and Rotterdam, compared against the Dutch average. Amsterdam boasts a significantly higher percentage of housing stock designated for social rent at 70.7%, while Rotterdam follows closely with 65.1%. In contrast, the Dutch average stands at 42.7%. The division of owner-occupied and rented stock is markedly different, with Amsterdam showcasing a higher prevalence of rented stock (70.7%) compared to Rotterdam (65.1%). The Netherlands, as a whole, leans toward a more even division (57.3 / 42.7).

Housing associations, central players in the social housing landscape, own a more substantial portion of the total housing stock in Amsterdam (39.9%) and Rotterdam (44.2%) compared to the Dutch average (28.6%). Additionally, both cities surpass the national average in terms of social housing stock under the *liberalisatiegrens* and *aftoppingsgrens* thresholds.

Private landlords play a more prominent role in Amsterdam's housing market, owning 30.8% of the total stock, compared to 20.9% in Rotterdam and 14.1% nationally. Notably, Amsterdam's stock of non-DAEB properties has grown by 69.2% between 2015 and 2021, while Rotterdam has experienced an impressive increase of 172.5% during the same period.

Amsterdam's extended average waiting time for social housing, at 156 months (13 years), starkly contrasts with Rotterdam's 57 months (4+ years) and the national average of 84 months (7 years).

Furthermore, average rent and property values (WOZ) demonstrate substantial variations between the cities and the national average. Property values for both total stock and housing association-owned stock are notably higher in Amsterdam, reflecting the distinct housing market dynamics in the city.



#### **4.4.1.1 Social housing interest groups**

In the Netherlands, all housing associations have a tenants' association responsible for negotiating performance agreements with the municipality (Koffijberg & De Bruijn, 2021). However, there is a notable difference between Amsterdam and Rotterdam in this regard. In Amsterdam, these tenants' associations, besides their individual existence for internal matters, are united under the *Federatie Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels* (FAH). In Rotterdam, no such umbrella organization exists, which results in individual negotiations with the municipality for performance agreements (Federatie Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels, 2023; Gemeente Rotterdam, 2023).

Additionally, in Amsterdam, housing associations are also organized under the Amsterdam Federation of Housing Associations (Amsterdamse Federatie Woningcorporaties or AFWC). However, a similar umbrella organization does not exist in Rotterdam in the same form. Rotterdam has an interest organization for the housing associations called *Maaskoepel*, but it covers the Regio Rotterdam, not just the municipality of Rotterdam. This distinction sets the Maaskoepel apart from the AFWC. In both cities, housing associations are organized, but they follow different models of organization (AFWC, 2022; Maaskoepel, n.d.).

#### **4.4.2 History of social housing in Amsterdam and Rotterdam**

Amsterdam established its path in social housing during the early 20th century. This marked the development of an approach to providing affordable and accessible housing for its residents. The Amsterdam housing model, born out of social reform movements, aimed to address housing inequalities and improve living conditions. As a result, Amsterdam has a relatively extensive history in social housing, which has played an important role in shaping the city's urban context (Beekers, 2008).

Rotterdam, on the other hand, experienced a different trajectory. The devastation as a result of the Second World War destroyed a large part of the city, necessitating extensive reconstruction efforts. It was during this post-war period that social housing in Rotterdam gained prominence. The city's housing policy pivoted towards the development of affordable housing units, setting the stage for the development of social housing projects (Beekers, 2008).

Amsterdam and Rotterdam also diverge in their housing association traditions. Amsterdam boasts a robust lineage of housing associations, which have played an influential role in managing and constructing social housing since the early 20th century. These associations contributed not only in providing housing but also in shaping the city's neighborhoods and communities (Van De Kamp & Welschen, 2019). In contrast, Rotterdam had housing associations as well, although they occupied a comparatively less prominent role within the city. While these associations contributed to the provision of social housing, they did not have the same historical influence or extensive reach as those in Amsterdam (Beekers, 2008).

#### 4.4.3 Social composition of Amsterdam and Rotterdam

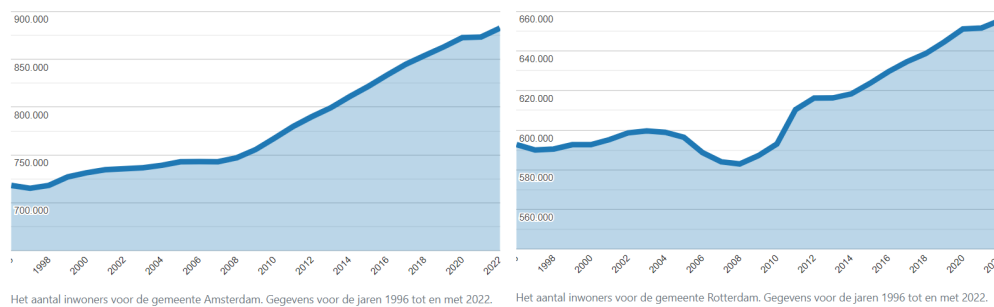


Figure 14. Population and growth since 1996 (Left: Amsterdam - Right: Rotterdam) (CBS, 2022).

Amsterdam has almost 1.5 times the amount of inhabitants compared to Rotterdam. In September 2021, Amsterdam had a population of around 872,680 residents, while Rotterdam had a population of approximately 651,446 residents. Both cities have witnessed substantial population growth since 1996. Amsterdam has been experiencing consistent growth. On the other hand, Rotterdam faced a decline in population between 2005 and 2008. However, it managed to recover in the years following that period (CBS, 2022).

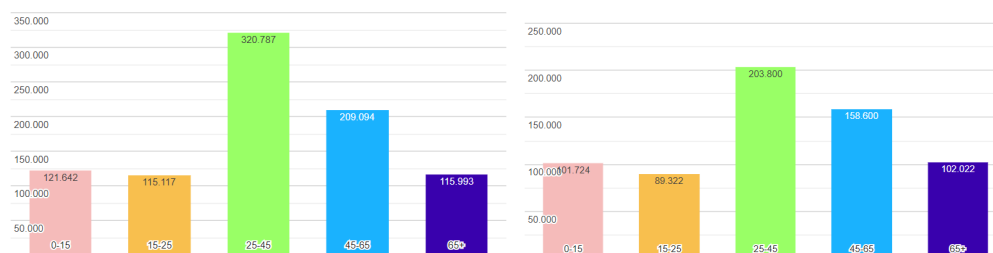


Figure 15. Inhabitants by age categories (Left: Amsterdam - Right: Rotterdam) (CBS, 2022).

Both cities demonstrate a comparable population distribution in terms of age categories. However, there are notable differences between the two cities in terms of the dominant age groups. In Amsterdam, there is a larger concentration of individuals belonging to the working class category, specifically those between the ages of 25 and 45. This age group represents a significant portion of the population and is indicative of the city's active workforce. On the other hand, in Rotterdam, the elderly population (65+) is more prevalent compared to Amsterdam. This suggests that Rotterdam has a higher proportion of senior citizens. Overall, while both cities have similarities in their age distributions, Amsterdam leans towards a larger working-age population, while Rotterdam demonstrates a relatively higher representation of elderly individuals (CBS, 2022).

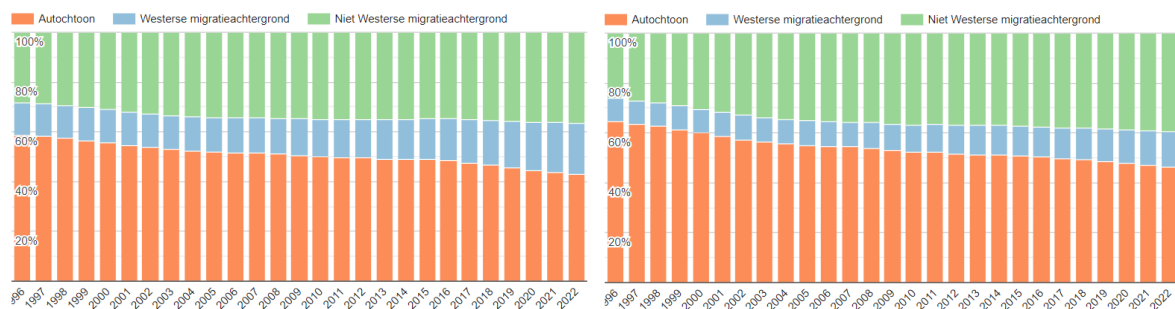


Figure 16. Migration levels and history (Left: Amsterdam - Right: Rotterdam) (CBS, 2022).

When comparing the migration levels between Amsterdam and Rotterdam, it can be observed that Amsterdam has a slightly higher overall migration rate. This difference becomes evident when examining the migration patterns in terms of Western and non-Western backgrounds. In terms of Western migration, Amsterdam surpasses Rotterdam with a higher percentage. Approximately 20.56% of the population in Amsterdam consists of individuals who have migrated from Western countries, whereas in Rotterdam, this percentage is comparatively lower at 14.08%. Therefore, it can be concluded that Amsterdam has a larger Western migrant population than Rotterdam.

However, the scenario is reversed when considering non-Western migration. Rotterdam outpaces Amsterdam with a higher percentage of 39.63% compared to Amsterdam's 36.64%. This shows that Rotterdam has a relatively larger non-Western migrant population compared to Amsterdam. It is worth

noting that both cities have relatively high migration levels when compared to the national average.

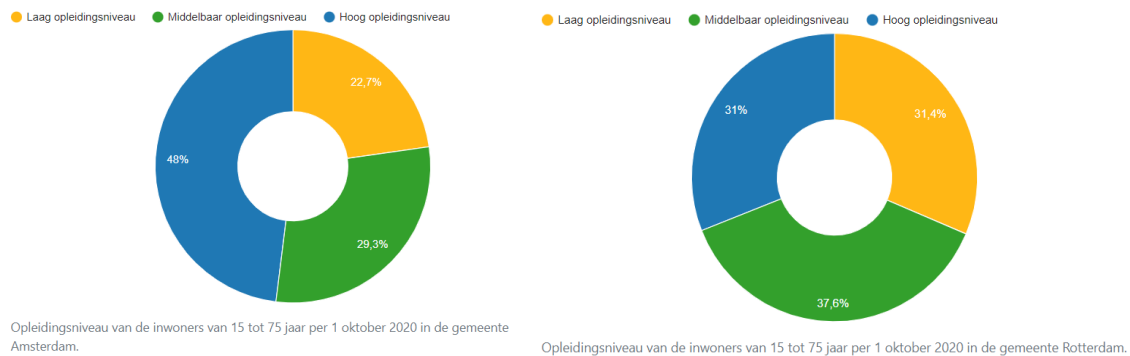


Figure 17. Education level of inhabitants in the age of 15 to 75 years old (Left: Amsterdam - Right: Rotterdam) (CBS, 2022).

On average, Amsterdam has a significantly higher level of education compared to Rotterdam. Amsterdam's educational distribution consists of a substantial number of highly educated residents. In contrast, Rotterdam, generally lags behind Amsterdam in terms of the average educational attainment of its population. The educational profile of Rotterdam tends to reflect a comparatively lower level of formal education. It is important to note that these observations reflect general trends and therefore should not disregard the presence of highly educated individuals in Rotterdam, and neither the existence of lower-educated individuals in Amsterdam. However, when examining the overall educational landscape, Amsterdam emerges as a city with a significantly higher average level of education than Rotterdam (CBS; Scholten et. al, 2019).

#### 4.4.4 Political landscape in Amsterdam and Rotterdam

Rotterdam and Amsterdam have different political orientations, which are reflected in their municipal election results (See Figure 11). Rotterdam leans more towards a right-wing political orientation. This is evident in the city's preference for conservative and center-right political parties. These parties tend to prioritize economic and fiscal policies that are aligned with right-leaning ideologies. In contrast, Amsterdam showcases a left-wing political orientation, with a pronounced preference for progressive and center-left political parties. This ideological stance places a greater emphasis on social welfare,

environmental policies, and progressive social values (CBS, 2022; Van Der Meer, 2021).

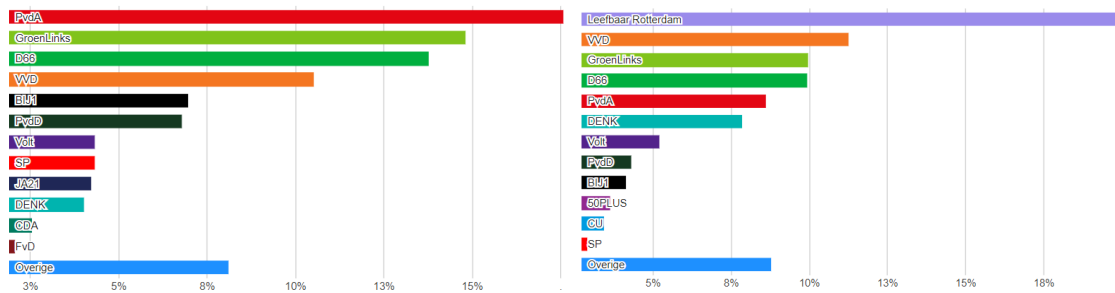


Figure 18. Results of municipal elections (Left: Amsterdam - Right: Rotterdam) (CBS, 2022).

There are significant differences in national election results from both cities as well. These distinctions emphasize the divergent political landscapes between the two cities, with the municipal elections in Rotterdam voting for a more right-wing oriented political landscape, whereas the voting results in Amsterdam are considered left-wing oriented (See figure 12). Rotterdam boasts the presence of a significant local party, Leefbaar Rotterdam, which holds substantial influence in local politics. This party's prominence contributes to Rotterdam's right-leaning political climate. In contrast, Amsterdam lacks a counterpart to the influential Leefbaar Rotterdam (Fenger et al., 2022).

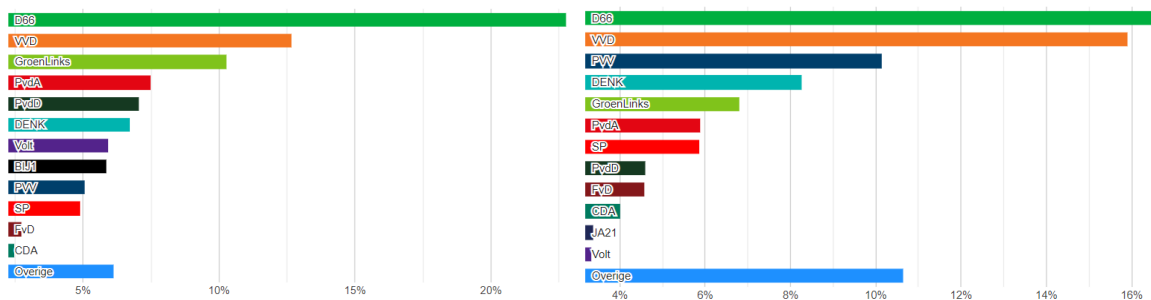


Figure 19. Results of national (parliamentary) elections (Left: Amsterdam - Right: Rotterdam) (CBS, 2022).

The political context of a city is also strongly influenced by the composition of the city council and the coalition partners in the College of B&W (Mayor & Aldermen). These bodies are responsible for making decisions at the local level and shaping the city's policy (Van der Meer, 2021). After the most recent elections in Amsterdam, the college was dominated by a coalition of PvdA, GroenLinks, and D66 (CBS, 2022). These parties generally have progressive and left-leaning positions. Their policy priorities might focus on issues such as sustainability, social equality, affordable housing, and integration. On the other

hand, in Rotterdam, after the latest elections, the college was formed by a broader range of parties: Leefbaar Rotterdam, VVD, D66, and DENK (CBS, 2022). This suggests a more mixed political composition, as these parties generally have more center-right positions compared to Amsterdam.

#### **4.4.5 Economic differences in Amsterdam and Rotterdam**

In the economic comparison between Amsterdam and Rotterdam, several key differences emerge. Amsterdam boasts a significantly higher average income per inhabitant compared to Rotterdam, indicating a wealthier population. Amsterdam's average income stands at 34,500 euros per inhabitant, whereas Rotterdam lags behind with an average income of only 27,200 euros per inhabitant (CBS, 2022).

The economic disparity between the two cities aligns with their respective identities. Amsterdam, often referred to as a *kennisstad* (knowledge city), reflects a strong presence of knowledge-based industries, including finance, technology, and creative sectors. This contributes to its higher average income. In contrast, Rotterdam has historically been characterized as an *arbeidersstad* (working-class city), with a stronger focus on industries such as shipping, logistics, and manufacturing. This economic backdrop contributes to the lower average income in Rotterdam (Scholten et. al, 2019). Understanding these economic differences can be of importance when assessing the dynamics of social housing and affordability in both cities.

### **4.5 Conclusion**

The objective of this chapter was to research the policy-related contextual differences regarding affordable social housing between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. This was achieved by collecting and evaluating information on a variety of aspects within the policy-context. A number of conclusions and findings can be drawn from this.

On the national level, it has been explained how the influence of national policy and the extent to which social housing policy has recently been developed at national level, such as with national performance agreements and an increasing influence of the ministry on local and regional housing policy. In addition, the national influence on the housing policy can be considered as more influential than in Amsterdam, due to the *Nationaal Programma Rotterdam-Zuid*.

At the provincial level, it can be stated that there are no significant or specific differences in the policy context regarding (social) housing policy between South Holland and North Holland. However, there are certainly distinctions between the *Regio Rotterdam* and *Metropoolregio Amsterdam* in the manner these impact municipal policy. Most notably, Rotterdam has binding regional agreements, while Amsterdam is more focussed towards regional collaboration.

An overview of the local social housing market in both cities was provided. Amsterdam and Rotterdam exhibit distinct profiles in their social housing stock, most notably characterized by a higher percentage of social housing stock in Amsterdam, a steep increase in *Niet-DAEB* stock in Rotterdam since 2015, and lastly longer waiting lists for social housing and higher property values in Amsterdam. In addition, there are differences in the manner in which housing interest groups are organized. Amsterdam has a city-wide unified tenant organization called the *Federatie Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels* (FAH), while Rotterdam lacks such centralization. Housing associations in Amsterdam are also organized under the Amsterdam Federation of Housing Associations (AFWC), whereas Rotterdam has the *Maaskoepel*, covering a wider region.

Amsterdam has a longer history of social housing dating back to the early 20th century. In contrast, Rotterdam's focus on social housing emerged after World War II when the city needed extensive reconstruction. These historical distinctions have contributed to differing social housing landscapes in the two cities. Amsterdam has a higher proportion of working-age individuals, while Rotterdam has more elderly residents. Migration-wise, Amsterdam has more Western migrants, while Rotterdam has a larger non-Western migrant population. Additionally, Amsterdam has a higher average education level compared to Rotterdam, reflecting distinct social compositions in these cities. Amsterdam can be characterized as a knowledge economy, while Rotterdam more as a working-class city. From a political perspective, Amsterdam can be considered as left-wing oriented and Rotterdam as right-wing oriented. Rotterdam has an influential local political party with *Leefbaar Rotterdam*, this is not similarly present in Amsterdam. Lastly, Amsterdam has a higher average income per inhabitant, resulting from the two cities' differing economic cultures.

## **5. Municipal social housing policy analysis**

This chapter seeks to elaborate on the differences in municipal social housing policy between the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The social housing policies of both Amsterdam and Rotterdam, as well as potential comparisons between them, have not been systematically mapped in existing literature to date. The primary objective is therefore to gain insight into the social housing policy of both municipalities and subsequently compare these. This analysis forms an integral part of this thesis. To achieve this, the model by Van Der Steen et. al. (2014) has been employed, with a specific focus on the positioning of policy elements along both axes. This is explained in more detail in the methods section.

To perform this analysis, the policy in Amsterdam is examined first, then in Rotterdam, followed by a comparison of these policy profiles and the highlighting of some noteworthy differences. Finally, the findings are summarized in a conclusion.

### **5.1 Social housing policy profile of Amsterdam**

This section aims to unfold the characteristics of the social housing policy pursued by the Municipality of Amsterdam. To conduct this analysis, the most important policy documents were reviewed with regards to the presence of policy instruments related to social housing in Amsterdam. Both primary and secondary policy documents were consulted, as explained in Section 3.3.2. The selection of these documents was based on those identified by the municipality as having relevance within the broad category of housing (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2023). Additionally, the most recent version of each document was consulted. An overview of the policy documents consulted is presented in Table 3.

The primary policy documents pertaining to social housing policy in Amsterdam, as displayed in Table 3, include *Woningbouwplan 2022-2028* (1) (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2022b), *Woonagenda 2025* (2) (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2017), and *Omgevingsvisie 2050* (3) (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2021). These three documents constitute the primary municipal policy documents concerning (social) housing policy (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2023). This is in accordance with the standard practice in municipal social housing policy within the framework of the New Housing Act of 2015,



respectively forming a trio of documents focusing on policy for the relatively short term (1), intermediate term (2), and long term (3) (VTW, 2020).

Additionally, several secondary policy documents related to social housing policy in the Municipality of Amsterdam were analyzed for the presence of relevant policy instruments. These include *Koers 2025* (4) (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2016), *Programma huisvesting kwetsbare groepen (PHKG)* (5) (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2016a), and *Verstedelijkingconcept 2050 MRA* (6) (Municipality of Amsterdam 2022a). In these policy documents, which do not primarily focus on (social) housing policy, a number of policy instruments related to social housing policy in Amsterdam were identified. *Koers 2025* presents a municipal vision regarding spatial planning in the medium term (2016). *PHKG* is a specific program outlining a strategy to better protect vulnerable groups (2016). *Verstedelijkingsconcept 2050* provides a strategy for the future *Metropoolregio Amsterdam* in its regional collaboration (2022). Furthermore, other documents designated by the Municipality of Amsterdam in the context of its broad social and housing policy were examined. However, no relevant policy instruments related to social housing were found in these documents, and thus, they are not included in this analysis.

**Table 3. Consulted policy documents for policy analysis of Amsterdam**

<b>Primary policy social housing policy documents</b>	<b>Secondary policy social housing policy documents</b>
1. <i>Woningbouwplan 2022-2028</i> (2022)	4. <i>Koers 2025</i> (2016)
2. <i>Woonagenda 2025</i> (2017)	5. <i>Programma huisvesting kwetsbare groepen</i> (2016)
3. <i>Omgevingsvisie 2050</i> (2021)	6. <i>Verstedelijkingconcept 2050 MRA</i> (2022)

Source: Author.

The selected documents have been examined for policy instruments that have an influence on the social housing policy within the municipality of Amsterdam. As a result of this analysis, which encompassed a mix of primary and secondary policy documents, 33 relevant policy instruments have been identified. These are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Policy instruments regarding social housing in Amsterdam**

No. in framework	Policy instrument
<b>Primary policy documents</b>	
1. 2. 3. 4.	<b>Woningbouwplan 2022-2028 (2022)</b> Objective to build 3,000 social housing units Temporary housing market measure (among others for housing associations) <i>Kwaliteit Compact Wonen</i> Financing of housing associations (among other for social rent)
5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20.	<b>Woonagenda 2025 (2017)</b> Limiting the outflow of regulated rent New agreements on regulated rental stock 40-40-20 segmentation housing programming for new construction New agreements on the sale and liberalization of housing association stock Aiming for sufficiently large housing units Start strategic neighborhood development Expanding <i>vermogenstoets</i> (100.000 euro) Abolition of allocation by lottery Better chance of success for disabled people for a zero-step home Serving healthcare needs in senior housing New agreements with housing associations and tenants about sufficient housing supply for vulnerable groups Developing a standard for large family homes Structural resources for <i>Programma Woningkwaliteit</i> City-wide registration system for housing quality Agreements with housing associations about sustainability requirements for new construction and existing housing stock Maintaining the extent of resident support and advocacy
21. 22. 23. 24.	<b>Omgevingsvisie 2050 (2021)</b> Aiming for a more regionally functioning rental sector Steer for ' <i>Prettige Woningen</i> ' Clustered living as a solution for elderly housing Quality improvement in developing neighborhoods
<b>Secondary policy documents</b>	
25. 26. 27.	<b>Koers 2025 (2016)</b> Social housing stock at least 35% of housing stock in all 22 city districts Objective of rebuilding the same amount of social housing in demolition-new construction projects Focusing on mixed urban environments
28. 29. 30. 31.	<b>Programma Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen (2016)</b> Approach to wheelchair homes Suitable homes for vulnerable target groups <i>Tien Werkafspraken Thuis in de Wijk</i> <i>Woonwaaier</i>
32. 33.	<b>Verstedelijkingsconcept 2050 MRA (2021)</b> Meeting the qualitative and quantitative needs for living and working environments Diverse range of housing options throughout the region

Source: Author

The collected data from Table 4 form the basis for the analysis aimed at characterizing the social housing policy in Amsterdam. All the policy instruments delineated in the table have been scored within the framework established by Van Der Steen et al. (2014). The criteria for these scores are determined by the policy's outcome or value orientation (vertical axis), whether the policy is government-driven towards society or society-driven towards the government (horizontal axis), and the policy impact of the specific instruments (circle size). Further elaboration of these criteria can be found in Section 3.3.3. The outcomes of this analysis yield a social housing policy profile for the municipality of Amsterdam, as depicted in Figure 20 below.



Figure 20. Social housing policy profile of Amsterdam (Source: Author).

It is important to emphasize that the scoring on the three different variables constitutes an empirical analysis, and as such, the placement of specific policy instruments can always be subject to discussion. However, the precise placement of each of the analyzed elements is not the primary focus. The purpose of the above figure is to map the overall policy character within the municipality and to later employ it as a tool for comparison.

## 5.2 Social housing policy profile of Rotterdam

The steps from the previous section are repeated in this section, but are this time used to analyze the municipal social housing policy in Rotterdam. Determining the characteristics of the social housing policy in the city of Rotterdam is therefore the primary goal. The analysis is carried out similarly to that of Amsterdam's social housing policy, with both the use of primary and secondary policy documents. The Municipality of Rotterdam provides an overview of its most important policy frameworks, policy monitors and legislation and regulations with any regards to housing policy (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2022). This serves as the leading source for the selection and evaluation of relevant policy documents. Of each document, the most recent version was consulted. Table 5 provides a summary of the policy documents that were examined.

There are three primary policy documents in Rotterdam concerning (social) housing policy, which can be categorized in policy for the short term, intermediate term and long term (VTW, 2020). For the short term agenda, the municipality has the *Wonen en Bouwen Voortgang 2021* (1) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2021). The *Woonvisie 2030* (2) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2016) serves the medium term policy, which was later adjusted with the *Addendum Woonvisie* (3) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2019). The municipality also developed a long term strategic vision with the *Omgevingsvisie Rotterdam* (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2021a).

The presence of policy instruments has also been examined in a number of secondary policy documents pertaining to social housing policy in the Municipality of Rotterdam. These include *Werkprogramma NPRZ Wonen* (4) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2022a), *Actieplan Middenhuur 2021* (5) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2021b), *Beleidskader Verkoop Huurwoningen* (6) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2017), and lastly the programme *Samen Tegen Woonoverlast* (7) (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2020). Although not primarily addressing social housing policy, all of these policy documents do include useful instruments for the analysis. Examining further policy reports developed by the Municipality of Rotterdam in relation to its housing policy did not turn up any relevant policy instruments for social housing, so they were excluded from this research.

**Table 5. Consulted policy documents for policy analysis of Rotterdam**

<b>Primary policy social housing policy documents</b>	<b>Secondary policy social housing policy documents</b>
1. Wonen en Bouwen Voortgang (2021)	4. Werkprogramma NPRZ Wonen 2019 - 2022 (2019)
2. Woonvisie 2030 (2016) + Addendum Woonvisie 2030 (2019)	5. Actieplan middenhuur (2021)
3. Omgevingsvisie Rotterdam (2021)	6. Beleidskader verkoop huurwoningen (2017)
	7. Samen tegen woonoverlast (2020)

Source: Author.

The relevant policy documents, as displayed in Table 5, have been reviewed to identify policy tools that impact the social housing policy of the municipality of Rotterdam. This analysis, which included a combination of primary and secondary policy documents, has led to the identification of 30 relevant policy instruments. These are detailed in Table 6.

**Table 6. Policy instruments regarding social housing in Rotterdam**

No. in framework	Policy instrument
<b>Primary policy documents</b>	
1. 2. 3.	<b>Wonen en Bouwen Voortgang (2021)</b> <i>Doorbouw Manifest</i> New regulation on housing mediation <i>Rotterdam Sterker Door</i>
4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17.	<b>Woonvisie 2030 (2016) + Woonvisie 2030 Addendum (2019)</b> 20-30-30-30 segmentation housing programming for new construction Different balance: smaller cheap segment, larger medium and expensive segment Ensuring a more differentiated housing stock in areas where this is still one-sided and the quality of living is under pressure Strengthening residential environments, with clear profiling and attention to child-friendliness Achieving good housing quality in new construction and the existing stock Offering space for temporariness, flexibility, innovation and experiment Promote energy-efficient and environmentally friendly living New construction of social housing more focused on elderly and student housing instead of 'regular' social housing Promoting the outflow of the primary target group towards regional municipalities Guaranteeing the presence of social housing in more expensive neighborhoods Addressing affordability problems at the source and with tailor-made applications Making independent living possible for everyone Ensuring good landlordism and a transparent housing market Address home owners and residents to their responsibility for undisturbed living enjoyment in and around the home
18. 19. 20.	<b>Omgevingsvisie Rotterdam (2021)</b> Proportional spread of social housing in South Holland Designate focus neighborhoods for urban renewal Addition of social stock for specific target groups in certain neighborhoods
<b>Secondary policy documents</b>	
21. 22. 23.	<b>NPRZ Wonen 2019 - 2022 (2019)</b> Discount on landlord levy for housing associations <i>Aanpak Corporatiewoningen</i> Housing and social agreements
24. 25. 26.	<b>Actieplan middenhuur (2021)</b> Mid-range rental properties as an alternative to <i>Scheefwoners</i> in the social segment Steering housing associations towards converting social rent to mid-range rent (Partial) priority for construction of the mid-rental segment compared to the social segment
27. 28.	<b>Beleidskader verkoop huurwoningen (2017)</b> Requirements regarding the sale of housing association stock Sale of association homes from the social segment for growth and development of the middle segment
29. 30.	<b>Samen tegen woonoverlast (2020)</b> <i>Instrumenten Aanpak Woonoverlast</i> Municipal action plan against residential nuisance

Source: Author.

The methodology employed for the analysis of the municipality of Rotterdam parallels that used for the case of Amsterdam. In a similar manner to the approach for Amsterdam, the data collected from Table 6 serves as the base data for characterizing Rotterdam's social housing policy. Likewise, the policy instruments listed in the table have been evaluated using the established framework by Van Der Steen et. al. (2014). These evaluations are based on criteria that consider the policy's outcomes or value orientation (vertical axis), the direction of policy influence from government to society or from society to government (horizontal axis), and the impact of these specific instruments (circle size).

The resulting analysis results in a distinct social housing policy profile for the municipality of Rotterdam, a visual representation of which can be found in Figure 21 below, following a similar structure to the one used for Amsterdam.

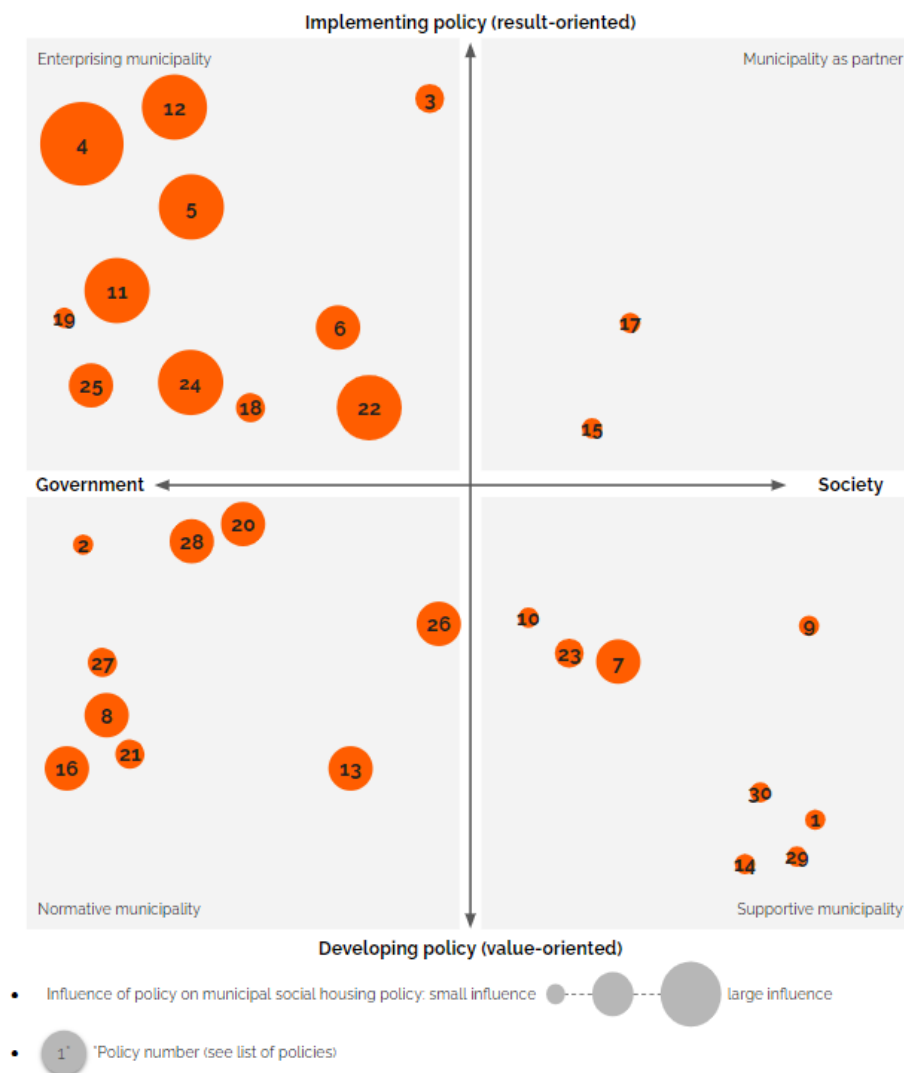


Figure 21. Social housing policy profile of Rotterdam. (Source: Author)

### 5.3 Social housing policy profile comparison

In the preceding two sections, social housing policy profiles have been formulated for both the municipality of Amsterdam and the municipality of Rotterdam, based on 30 and 33 relevant policy instruments, respectively. The outcome of this analysis is the creation of two distinct policy characterizations. These characterizations can subsequently be overlaid for the purpose of comparison and to identify potential differences. A projection of the overlaid policy profiles is presented in Figure 22.



Figure 22. Policy profile comparison (Green: Amsterdam - Orange: Rotterdam)

Based on this projection, several findings can be drawn, revealing some distinct differences in the policy character between both cities (See Figure 22). The key deviations will be elaborated upon.

On the vertical axis, it is evident that policy in Rotterdam predominantly focuses on the implementation of policy, in contrast to the value-oriented perspective of policy development. In the case of the municipality of Amsterdam, policy tends to lean more towards value-oriented policy development compared to Rotterdam. Consequently, Amsterdam occupies a position closer to the middle



along the vertical axis, while Rotterdam is more deviant in that aspect. On the horizontal axis, a similar trend is observed, with Amsterdam situated in the middle, while Rotterdam significantly diverges towards one perspective. One of the clearest findings is that almost all policy instruments in Rotterdam have been developed to a greater extent from the government towards the citizen, as indicated by a substantial presence on the left side of the framework. Regarding the third variable, the impact of various policy instruments on social housing policy, there is no significant difference between both cities. In both cases, there are instruments with varying levels of impact.

In summary, the analysis indicates that policy in Rotterdam can be considered predominantly result-oriented and developed from the perspective of the municipality. In contrast, the policy of the municipality of Amsterdam falls closer to the middle of both variables, thereby leaning more towards being value-oriented and developed from a societal perspective as compared to Rotterdam.

### 5.4 Specific policy distinctions

In addition to obtaining two policy profiles as the foundation for the policy comparison, the policy analysis has also revealed other noteworthy disparities between the two cities. These differences have emerged organically through the comparative analysis of the contents of the policy instruments that have been collected in Table 4 and Table 6. The most notable differences are discussed in this section.

#### Segmentation for new housing developments

One of the noteworthy distinctions in the social housing policies of both cities pertains to how they categorize segments for new housing developments. This specific policy instrument characterizes the difference between both cities. It is in line with the differences found between both cities and also further illustrates them due to the high impact that both policies have on both cities' social housing policy (See Figure 22 and Figure 23).



Figure 23. Source: Author

This categorization reflects the allocation of housing units across different affordability tiers. In Rotterdam, this distribution is structured as 20-30-30-20, indicating that the housing supply is divided as follows: 20 percent dedicated to social housing, 30 percent allocated to the mid-range segment, another 30 percent for slightly more expensive housing, and finally, 20 percent for the top-tier, which typically encompasses higher-priced properties (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2016). In contrast, Amsterdam's approach to segmenting housing is characterized by a 40-40-20 distribution. Here, the housing allocation is distributed as follows: 40 percent for social housing, 40 percent for the mid-range category, which includes both rental and owner-occupied properties, and the remaining 20 percent designated for high-end options (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2017).

The segmentation signifies a greater emphasis on social housing in Amsterdam (40% vs. 20%) and a larger focus on the midrange to high segment in Rotterdam (40% vs. 30%+30%). In the previous chapter, it was illustrated that Rotterdam (39.1%) has a relatively higher percentage of social housing units below the liberalization threshold compared to Amsterdam (36.2%). Additionally, Rotterdam has experienced a relatively larger increase in commercial activities (*Niet-DAEB*) by housing associations since 2015 of +172.5% in contrast to Amsterdam's increase of +69.2%. One potential implication of this policy instrument is that, with the segmentation of the new housing stock, the difference in the percentage of social dwellings may decrease while the disparity in commercial activities may increase even further.

### Target group focus: social segment vs. mid-range rental segment

Apart from the segmentation for new housing development, another notable difference between both municipalities is the primary target group focus within their housing policy concerning the rental sector, and the implications this has for the social housing segment. The policy instruments that underscore this are shown in Figure 24. Amsterdam places a significant emphasis on instruments within its housing policy that focus on the social housing segment. This is evident in



Figure 24. Source: Author

various ways, including ambitions to construct additional social housing units, efforts to counteract the sale or liberalization of social housing units, and goals for maintaining a minimum share of social housing in each city district. Consequently, many of the policy instruments are geared towards preserving and expanding the social housing stock, thereby safeguarding the relevant target group (See Figure 24 & Table 4). In Rotterdam, a different picture emerges with a strong focus on policy instruments related to the mid-range rental segment. This is manifested, among other things, in ambitions to expand the mid-range and expensive segments, steering housing associations towards converting social segment dwellings into mid-range segment properties, and prioritizing the construction of mid-range segment housing (See Figure 24 & Table 6). Amsterdam also does have policy measures with regard to the mid-range segment, but these are less prominent than in Rotterdam. This highlights that, concerning the target groups within the rental market, Amsterdam's policy places more emphasis on the social segment, whereas Rotterdam strives to shift its (social) rental sector more towards the mid-range segment.

### Focus on vulnerable groups in general vs. students and elderly

The analysis reveals differences in the focus of socially-oriented instruments aimed at protecting and supporting vulnerable groups between the two cities. Both cities have a number of instruments related to urban livability and quality of life, many of which overlap. However, a distinction is evident. The relevant policy instruments that highlight this discrepancy are depicted in Figure 25.

Specifically, in Amsterdam, there are a multitude of policy instruments concerning quality of life, often targeting vulnerable groups broadly without making a strong distinction among specific target groups (See Table 4). In contrast, the use of socially-oriented policy instruments in Rotterdam tends to focus more on specific subsets of vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and students, rather than addressing the group of vulnerable inhabitants as a whole (See Table 6). Consequently, the approach to this subset within the spectrum of social housing policy differs between the two



Figure 25. Source: Author

cities. It is worth noting that Rotterdam, like Amsterdam, also implements more general social policies. Still, the focus in Rotterdam seems to lean more towards the elderly and students within the category of vulnerable residents.

### Differing regional policy positions

When examining the regional influence on municipal social housing policy, another distinction becomes evident. The relevant policy instruments referred to are shown in Figure 26. In regional social housing policy, Amsterdam primarily focuses on collaboration with other municipalities within the *Metropoolregio Amsterdam* to enhance the functioning of the social housing sector at the regional level. This collaboration is reflected in joint initiatives in areas such as mobility and environmental quality,

as well as agreements concerning the future of social housing in the region. The underlying goal of this approach is to ensure a diverse range of housing options throughout the region (See Table 4). In contrast, Rotterdam places its emphasis on forging concrete regional agreements and accords, with a primary objective of achieving an equitable distribution of social housing within the region. The municipality actively promotes the outflow of this group towards neighboring municipalities in the region. Additionally, Rotterdam has ambitions that include the addition of social housing stock near specific bordering municipalities (See Table 6) .This highlights how both municipalities approach the regional component of social housing policy differently, with Amsterdam seeking regional collaboration and Rotterdam striving for concrete agreements to achieve an even distribution of social housing stock towards the peripheral municipalities.



Figure 26. Source: Author

## 5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the differences in social housing policy between the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. To achieve this, a thorough analysis of social housing policy in both cities was conducted based on municipal policy documents. The policy instruments related to social housing were extracted and analyzed from the key policy documents.

Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the social housing policy profiles in both cities significantly differ from each other. Rotterdam places a greater emphasis on a result-oriented approach, with policy development predominantly from the governments towards the citizens. Rotterdam can therefore be considered to pursue a more New Public Management type of municipal policy. Amsterdam appears to follow a more value-oriented approach and policy development from a societal perspective, as compared to Rotterdam.

Furthermore, a number of other specific policy distinctions were identified based on this analysis. Amsterdam and Rotterdam employ different segmentation models for new housing developments. Amsterdam strongly focuses on the preservation and expansion of social housing, whereas Rotterdam places more emphasis on the mid-range rental market segment. The policy instruments in both cities vary in their focus on specific vulnerable groups. Rotterdam's policies exhibit a focus on specific vulnerable groups like the students and elderly, whereas Amsterdam's policies encompass a broader perspective by addressing vulnerability across the entire population. Amsterdam and Rotterdam have different approaches to regional policy regarding social housing, with Amsterdam emphasizing collaboration within the *Metropoolregio Amsterdam* and Rotterdam pursuing concrete regional agreements To attain an even distribution of social housing units towards the surrounding municipalities.

The findings from this chapter, combined with the results of the policy-context chapter, serves as the basis for explaining the differences in performance agreements between both cities. The next chapter delves into the specific substantive differences between the municipal performance agreements in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

## **6. Comparing the municipal performance agreements**

This chapter aims to unfold the differences between the municipal performance agreements in the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, with a primary focus on the social housing sector and its relationship with the municipal agreements. To conduct this analysis, both sets of agreements are compared in terms of procedural differences, as well as distinctions related to affordability, availability, and quality. Further details on this approach can be found in the methodology section. It's important to note that the agreements from both cities are not structured identically or solely based on the selected aspects. There are other topics addressed in both cities, but these are not part of the scope of this thesis. The primary goal of this chapter is to outline the specific and thematic differences between the two performance agreements.

The comparative analysis is based on municipal documents, specifically aiming at the municipal level. In Amsterdam, this posed no challenges since the agreements were made at a collective municipal level. However, the situation in Rotterdam was more complex. There, agreements are not made collectively but rather with individual housing associations. Nevertheless, a letter to the city council summarizes the findings from all individual agreements. This letter serves as the primary guide for the Rotterdam analysis, enabling a comprehensive comparison at the municipal level (See figure 27). Additionally, the individual agreement with Rotterdam's largest housing association is utilized to further elaborate on specific agreements applicable to all associations.

Moreover, since all the information in this chapter is derived from three primary documents, namely the performance agreements in Amsterdam, the summarized performance agreements in Rotterdam, and the individual agreements with the largest housing association in Rotterdam, full references are not repeatedly provided due to the high amount of citations. Instead, abbreviations for the consulted documents are employed (See Table 7).

**Table 7. Abbreviations for in-text performance agreements (PA) referral**

Abbreviation of reference to document	Document contents	Document title	Reference
<b>PA. Ams.</b>	Collective performance agreement in Amsterdam	<i>Samenwerkingsafspraken 2020-2023 - Amsterdamse prestatieafspraken tussen de woningcorporaties, de huurderskoepels en de gemeente</i>	Municipality of Amsterdam (2019)
<b>PA. Rot.</b>	Summary of performance agreement contents in Rotterdam 2022-2023	<i>Prestatieafspraken 2022-2023 gemeente, corporaties en huurdersorganisaties.</i>	Municipality of Rotterdam (2021)
<b>PA. Woonstad.</b>	Performance agreement of the housing association Woonstad Rotterdam 2022-2023	<i>Prestatieafspraken 2022/23 - Woonstad Rotterdam, Huurdersbelang Stadswonen en de gemeente Rotterdam</i>	Woonstad Rotterdam (2021)

Source: Author.

### 6.1 Procedural differences

Apart from content differences, both sets of agreements also have several procedural or formal differences. These have been consistently handled in this manner in both municipalities since the introduction of the current system in 2015 (Woningwet, 2020). These procedural differences are explained below and are schematically displayed in Figure 27.

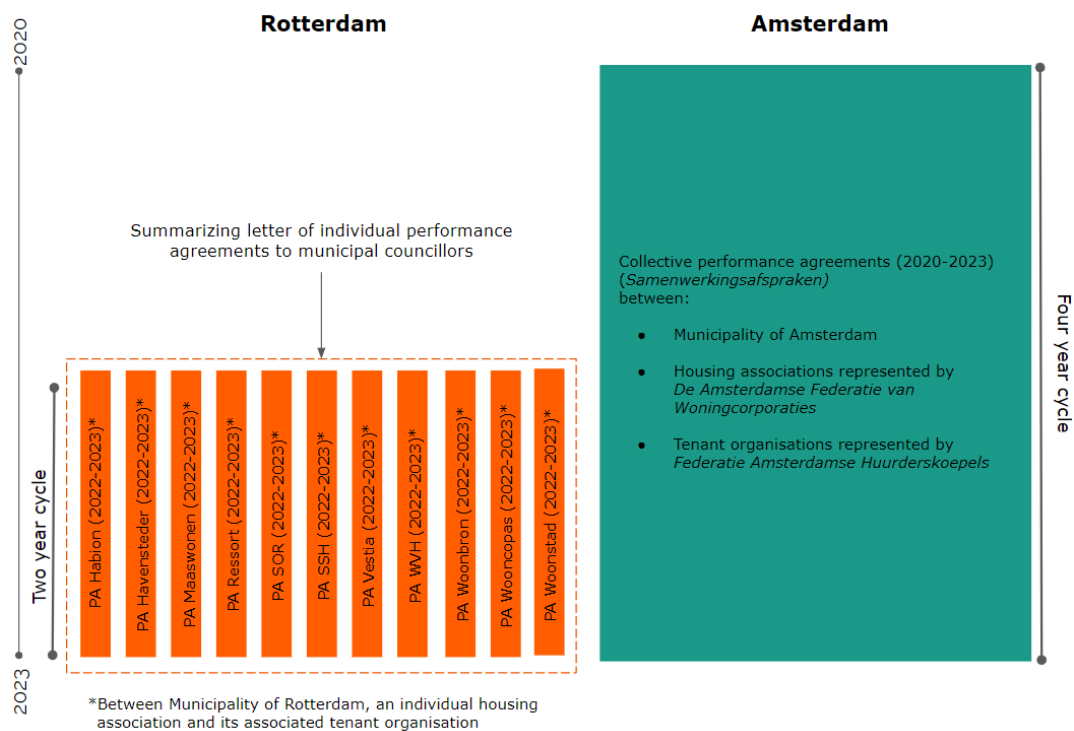


Figure 27. Schematic representation of performance agreement procedures in Rotterdam and Amsterdam (source: Author).

➤ To start with, Rotterdam operates on a two-year cycle for formulating performance agreements. These agreements have a duration of two years and are then renegotiated. The current set of agreements is valid for 2022 and 2023. Additionally, the municipality of Rotterdam makes individual performance agreements with the 11 largest housing associations. Specific tenants associations of the respective housing associations are also involved at an individual level. Such an individual agreement is made between the Municipality of Rotterdam, a housing association, and its tenants' association. In Rotterdam, there is no collectivization of performance agreements within the local triangle (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2023; PA. Rot.).

➤ The process in Amsterdam is different. There, new agreements are made every four years, and the agreements logically have a duration of four years. The current performance agreements run from 2019 to 2023. The negotiation and formulation of new performance agreements in Amsterdam occur at a collective level. For each cycle, one set of collective agreements is made that applies to all housing associations. These are made between the Municipality of Amsterdam, The *Amsterdamse Federatie van Woningcorporaties* (AFWC), and *De Federatie Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels* (FAH) (See section 4.4.1.1). The latter two operate on behalf of all housing associations and tenants associations. It should be added that, from a legal perspective, individual agreements are also made in Amsterdam, as it would otherwise not comply with the Housing Act of 2015. However, in practice, these are fully collectivized. In Amsterdam, a different name is deliberately given to its agreements, called *Samenwerkingafspraken* instead of performance agreements, which indicates that the focus lies on collaboration (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2019; PA. Ams.).

➤ In total, this results in two different procedures concerning the formulation of performance agreements. In Rotterdam, collective agreements are made every two years, while in Amsterdam, collective agreements are made every four years.

## 6.2 Affordability

### Rental price agreements

➤ Amsterdam's agreement emphasizes the importance of maintaining affordable rent levels for social housing units. This commitment ensures that low-income



residents can access and afford housing within the city. Specifically, Amsterdam has set a target where at least 70% of the social housing stock managed by housing associations should be offered at a rent price less than the low capping limit (*lage aftoppingsgrens*) in every city district and citywide. This is monitored annually in relation to each category and the proportion of actively seeking tenants in different income categories. Furthermore, in terms of rent increase, Amsterdam has set clear limits. In 2020, housing associations in the city will apply a rent increase of 0.50% above inflation. For the subsequent years, 2021 through 2023, they will apply a rent increase of 1.0% above inflation. The extra investment capacity released from this will primarily be invested in the quality and sustainability of existing homes and, to a lesser extent, in new construction (PA Ams.)

➤ On the other hand, Rotterdam's agreements have a different approach. The city does not have specific norms for rent development in the social segment or targets related to specific rent price classes. However, housing associations are expected to follow the guidelines regarding rent price classes from the Woonvisie 2030. Rotterdam's strategy also includes the potential application of an income-dependent rent increase when legally allowed. If an association wishes to use this mechanism, it's mandatory to include it in the performance agreements. Some have such agreements, ensuring that extra revenues from this rent increase contribute to investments in the demolition/new construction task in Rotterdam. Additionally, Rotterdam places a significant focus on middle incomes. Collaborations with housing associations aim to cater to (low) middle incomes. Most provide insights into their intention to allocate a portion of social homes with a higher (social) rent price for people with a lower middle income. They also indicate which part of the homes in the commercial portfolio have a rent price between €752 and €900 (PA. Rot.)

➤ Amsterdam prioritizes maintaining affordable rents by setting specific targets and limits on rent increases to ensure housing accessibility for low-income residents. Rotterdam adopts less strict measures, without specific rent norms agreed on, but with guidelines from the Woonvisie 2030. The city explores income-dependent rent increases and emphasizes support for middle incomes, with housing associations providing varied rent options for different income brackets.

## Tenant support and tailor-made solutions

Both Amsterdam and Rotterdam recognize the importance of supporting tenants, especially those facing financial challenges (PA. Rot.; PA. Ams). Their performance agreements reflect a commitment to ensuring that residents can afford their homes, even in the face of rising rents or declining incomes.

➤ Amsterdam's performance agreements at the municipal level have provisions in place for tenants who can no longer afford their rent due to rent increases or income drops. These provisions include partial waivers of municipal taxes, schemes for the additional costs of the chronically ill and disabled, various arrangements for families with children, and public transport and travel cost schemes. To qualify for these benefits, tenants must have an income of 120% of the Legal Social Minimum (WSM) or lower for three years and reside in a association-owned property. In such cases, housing associations reduce the rent to the applicable capping limit for these tenants. Additionally, for tenants who had an income in the previous year that would qualify them for rent subsidies but had a rent above the subsidy limit, their rent is adjusted down to the subsidy limit. The municipality also assesses whether the right households in the city are receiving support. There's an ongoing evaluation to see if it's beneficial to broaden the target group, potentially to tenants with incomes up to 130% of the Legal Social Minimum, with findings to be considered in the next performance agreements. Finally, an approach is guaranteed for people with payment arrears of two months. This could be a registration with a debt assistance organization or an approach from the association itself. The municipality has a facilitating role in this in financial and organizational terms (PA. Ams).

➤ In Rotterdam, the housing associations and the municipality continue their joint efforts to reduce affordability risks. Their focus is on early detection of payment problems and debts, with the ultimate goal of preventing evictions. The municipality addresses affordability problems at their source, applying tailor-made solutions. They prioritize the early prevention, detection, and addressing of risky debts. To this end, the municipality offers a comprehensive range of debt assistance, ensuring that tenants with low incomes can continue paying their rent and avoid eviction. Additionally, there's a *minimaregeling* in place. Housing associations plan not to increase the rent in 2022/23 for existing tenants in social rental homes (with rent above the quality discount limit and up to the liberalization limit) with an income up to 120% of the social minimum.

The municipality supports this initiative. Custom solutions are provided to existing residents with incomes up to 120% of the social minimum and to households facing a structural decline in income. Solutions are tailored to individual cases, which might include relocating to a different home or temporary rent reductions (PA. Rot.).

➤ Amsterdam and Rotterdam are both committed to helping tenants, especially those with financial struggles. Amsterdam provides financial aid and adjusts rents for certain tenants, while also considering expanding its support. Rotterdam focuses on early help, preventing evictions, and offers tailored solutions.

### **Affordability and sustainability**

In the performance agreements of both cities, it is described how the (energetic) sustainability of the existing and future stock is a significant challenge and may have various implications for tenants. This could arise because residents of housing units with relatively poor energy performance often face high energy costs. This can jeopardize the total housing costs. Secondly, with improved housing quality, including in terms of energy performance, the rent can be increased based on the *puntensysteem*. This too can have implications for the affordability of the social stock. For this reason, both cities mention cost neutrality in housing. This means that any rent increases due to measures related to energy performance (renovation) should be offset by decreasing energy costs. However, there are several aspects in the implementation where the approach in both cities in this area differs (PA. Ams.; PA Rot.).

➤ In Amsterdam, cost neutrality in housing is established in a concrete agreement as a condition for making sustainability adjustments to the existing stock. There are also agreements made about CO2 reduction, gas-free living, and the use of solar energy (PA Ams.).

➤ In Rotterdam, cost neutrality in housing is formulated as a principle for the housing associations, rather than a concrete agreement. This is in line with the Social Rental Agreement. The focus in these performance agreements is primarily on energy efficiency and sustainability in all new construction projects, to ensure high-quality standards for newly built homes. The emphasis here is less on making the existing stock more sustainable, with a lack of investment capacity of the housing associations being cited as the main reason (PA. Rot.).

### 6.3 Availability

This section focuses on the differences regarding the availability of social housing units in the performance agreements. It examines the development of the stock and other measures related to availability in the social segment. The most significant numerical differences that could be extracted from both sets of agreements are shown below in Table 8. These figures, along with other significant differences, are explained in this section.

**Table 8. Changes in housing association stock, based on performance agreements (annually).**

	Amsterdam	Rotterdam
New developments by housing associations (social + mid-range segment)	2.775	1.800
Construction of new social housing units	2.500	*800
Construction of new mid-range rental units	275	1.000
Demolition of social housing units	0**	485
Mutation of social housing stock (including liberalization, sales & temporary housing)	750	315***

Source: PA. Ams., PA. Rot. & PA. Woonstad

\*Total development - mid-range segment = expected construction of social housing units

\*\*Net demolition absent due to demolition-new construction replacement rule

\*\*\*Assuming absence of demolition-new construction rule in social housing segment

#### Development of the social housing stock

➤ In total, Amsterdam has agreed to add 750 housing units annually to their social housing stock, compared to an expectation of about 315 in Rotterdam. This shows that Amsterdam adds approximately twice as many homes to the social segment each year during the current period (See Table 8).

➤ Amsterdam's performance agreement emphasizes the need to increase the production of new social housing units. It sets ambitious targets for the construction of both affordable and social housing units over a specified period, addressing the city's growing demand for affordable homes. There's a commitment to increase the social housing stock by 3,000 units from 2020 to 2023, translating to an average annual growth rate of 750 units. The growth is based on the delivery of 2,500 units per year on average and is dependent on

the completion of specific projects mentioned in the agreement. Housing associations will be given priority on municipal sites for building social housing, added with efforts to speed up certain processes and procedures (PA. Ams.).

➤ On the other hand, Rotterdam's performance agreements indicate a prognosis that 1.800 homes will be built annually over the next two years commissioned by housing associations. Out of these projects, around 1.000 homes are annually dedicated to the mid-range segment, bringing the development of social housing units to about 800 homes per year. This growth in the social segment is based on agreements concerning the total number of homes to be developed and the agreements related to the mid-range segment. The exact number of social housing units to be built is not explicitly mentioned. Furthermore, there are agreements about accelerating and phasing new construction sites and stock development at the neighborhood level (PA. Rot.).

There is also a difference regarding the guidelines for the sale of the social housing stock. In both cities, housing associations aim to sell social housing units as needed to fund the necessary investments. However, in Amsterdam, housing associations are urged to be cautious about selling in seven specified areas and are encouraged to explore alternative financial structures to minimize the sale of social housing while achieving the same growth. sales ban for homes in the social segment in certain neighborhoods in Amsterdam. In total, 8 out of the 22 city districts have been identified where the social segment is under strain, and it has been agreed that the housing associations will be restrained in selling their stock. In contrast, Rotterdam lacks such guidelines regarding the sale of the social stock (PA. Ams.; PA. Woonstad).

### **Share of mid-range rental segment in new construction**

➤ Amsterdam has committed to increasing the mid-range rental stock by 1,100 units between 2020 and 2023, which equates to 275 dwellings per year. This represents 9.9% (275 out of 2,775) of the new developments by housing associations. They are exploring future opportunities to develop non-Daeb middle-income housing and are planning for further growth of at least 2,000 middle-income housing units in the medium term (PA. Ams.)

➤ Rotterdam plans to construct 8,000 homes in the mid-range rental segment between 2022 and 2030, which comes down to about 1,000 homes per year. This represents 55.5% (1,000 out of 1,800) of the new developments by

housing associations (PA. Rot.).

➤ In conclusion, the proportion of the mid-range rental segment in new development by housing associations in Rotterdam (55.5%) is significantly higher than in Amsterdam (9.9%).

### **Demolition, transformation & renovation of the social housing stock**

Both cities are demolishing homes in the social segment. In Amsterdam, this number is net zero because, due to the demolition-new construction replacement regulation, every demolished housing unit in the social sector is replaced by a unit in the same segment. Over the next two years, Rotterdam will demolish 970 social rental homes. No agreements have been made regarding the replacement segment for the newly built homes. Therefore, the demolition-new construction replacement regulation does not apply to these homes in Rotterdam.

Objectives related to transformation are mentioned in both agreements. In Rotterdam, this primarily involves a transformation for urban area development in specific neighborhoods. In Amsterdam, the focus of transformation is on converting commercial buildings into residential units (PA. Ams.; PA. Rot.).

The ambition to renovate social housing units in poor condition is mentioned in both agreements, but in neither case are numerical targets specified (PA. Ams.; PA. Rot.).

### **Temporary housing units to combat the housing shortage**

➤ In both municipalities, agreements have been made regarding the use of temporary homes (flex homes). Both in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, there is talk of "aiming for," and no concrete agreements have been made regarding the duration of use or the number of temporary homes to be realized (PA. Ams; PA. Rot.).

➤ In Amsterdam, it is indicated that keeping a number of temporary housing projects operational is essential to achieve the net growth balance of 750 social housing units annually. Additionally, in Amsterdam, it has been agreed to give priority to vulnerable groups when allocating flex homes (PA. Ams.).

➤ In Rotterdam, there are temporary housing units in several locations, and it has been agreed to continue this and to seek relocation for expiring projects. In this context, there is flexibility to assess which target group has the highest need/shortage when relocating (PA. Rot.).

## 6.4 Quality

In terms of the quality of the performance agreements, this case examines housing quality and quality of life (livability). Additionally, the qualitative targets are assessed, which are the primary objectives of the performance agreements.

### **Primary goal: A cohesive city for everyone vs. Balanced neighborhoods**

When considering the quality aspect within the context of the performance agreements, it is also important to distinguish the primary focuses and objectives. This can provide insight into the underlying motivations in both cities.

➤ In Amsterdam, the primary goal of the agreements is to ensure affordable and quality living in a unified city that accommodates everyone. Finding an affordable home is currently acknowledged as one of the biggest challenges in Amsterdam. In reaction to the long waiting lists in the social segment, significant investments will be made in the coming years to improve the housing stock where there are shortages. For this reason, many new social housing units will be added, along with a relatively smaller number of units in the mid-range segment. Another main objective is to keep rents affordable for a broad range of groups in Amsterdam in the coming years, with special attention given to vulnerable households (PA. Ams.)

➤ The main goal of the performance agreements in Rotterdam is to improve the balance in neighborhoods to promote the creation of attractive living environments. This involves promoting the diversification of neighborhoods. Rotterdam's agreements also aim to prevent concentrations of social housing in specific neighborhoods. The ambition is to achieve more differentiation and quality in living environments, providing a home for all citizens of Rotterdam. The housing stock plays a crucial role in this. Part of this includes agreements about accelerating and phasing new construction sites and stock development at the neighborhood level. The primary implication of this is a more balanced housing supply in Rotterdam's neighborhoods, with a smaller share of social rental homes and a growing number of homes for middle incomes. There are also objectives about the transition for tenants from social rent to low mid-range rent (PA. Rot.).

➤ Comparatively, while Amsterdam's performance agreements focus on creating a unified city where affordable housing is accessible to all, Rotterdam's

emphasis is on achieving neighborhood balance, ensuring diverse housing options, and avoiding concentrations of social housing in specific areas.

### **Housing quality**

This section compares the agreements concerning the condition and quality of the social housing stock. In both cities, it is indicated that a significant portion of the social stock, especially the older homes, are in poor condition and do not meet the legal (national) requirements concerning livability. Interventions against this are set up in both cities (PA. Ams.; PA. Rot.).

➤ In Amsterdam, it has been agreed that additional space for investments, resulting from potential rent increases, will be primarily invested by the associations in the quality and sustainability of existing homes and to a lesser extent in new construction. The principle is that associations will first address complexes in the worst condition. The goal is to ensure the basic quality of all units according to legal requirements. A specific project has been set up in the form of the *Programma Woningkwaliteit* (Housing Quality Program). This also includes improving energy performance. Additionally, a standard has been agreed upon that social housing units city-wide should average 60m<sup>2</sup>, with exceptions for youth and student housing. The collaboration in the local triangle on housing quality at both practical and strategic levels is also intensified. A 'quality meeting' is held twice a year, which provides an opportunity to discuss structural issues and current developments that require a joint approach (PA. Ams.).

➤ In Rotterdam, a letter of intent has been formulated, in consultation with the alderman, to create an action plan and jointly explore opportunities to address the backlog of maintenance of homes as soon as possible, also incorporating a component of sustainability. The eleven housing associations improve the energy quality of the homes annually and demonstrate this on the Energy Index. The principle is that the association's overall stock meets the legally established basic quality and that there is regular maintenance and management. Apart from energy aspects, no concrete objectives have been agreed upon to improve housing quality (PA. Rot.). However, there is a reporting point for residents at the municipality, in case housing associations do not respond to complaints concerning overdue maintenance (PA. Woonstad). Some housing associations will not achieve the objectives concerning housing quality



due to the currently lacking investment capacity of some associations. Lastly, specific agreements have been made about adding age-friendly homes, establishing elder hubs, and creating vital living communities for the elderly (PA. Rot.).

➤ Amsterdam's approach, with a housing quality programme, can be considered as more general and collaborative, focusing on overall housing quality and sustainability. Rotterdam leans towards addressing specific issues like maintenance backlogs, energy efficiency, and the needs of the elderly.

### **Livability**

Regarding livability in the social housing segment, as well as in a broader sense within the city, both municipalities have made several specific and notable agreements.

➤ The city of Amsterdam adopts a region-specific approach, recognizing that each area has unique challenges and opportunities, where the municipality, housing associations, and residents collaborate annually on various issues such as livability, neighborhood renewal, participation, housing, and care. Feedback from residents plays an important role in these discussions. Both the municipality and the housing associations are committed to making their contributions to livability transparent, and the outcomes are monitored by the municipality. Special attention is given to developing a robust social program for these neighborhoods, adding housing units, and involving residents in the planning process. The municipality prioritizes investments in the social domain for development neighborhoods and also invests extra in public spaces in terms of renewal, maintenance, and cleaning. Furthermore, the municipality and housing associations collaborate to combat housing fraud, which can undermine neighborhood livability, especially when associated with nuisances or criminal activities (PA. Ams.).

➤ In Rotterdam, a collaboration with the largest housing associations has identified specific neighborhoods for intensified efforts to improve livability over the next two years. This decision is based on a livability report by *CircusVis*. Due to the limited availability of social housing units, the municipality and housing associations jointly monitor the objectives regarding the rental-ratio to different target groups, maintaining an ongoing dialogue on this matter. There's also a shift towards more neighborhood-focused allocation of personnel and budgets. A

two-year pilot will deploy four neighborhood concierges who act as intermediaries between various community stakeholders, with a primary focus on residents. Local resident organizations will provide feedback for the pilot's evaluation. The municipality also offers subsidies to housing associations to realize additional green space and water storage initiatives. Additionally, the municipality leads the charge in addressing complex housing disturbances, collaborating with safety directors and experts. Their approach is based on the *Actieplan Woonoverlast* (Action Plan for Housing Disturbance). Housing associations continue their commitment to improving livability and countering housing disturbances, consistent with previous years (PA. Rot.).

Amsterdam's approach to livability is region-specific, emphasizing collaborations among the municipality, housing associations, and residents, with a focus on public spaces and combating housing fraud. In contrast, Rotterdam takes a targeted approach, identifying specific neighborhoods for intensified efforts on livability. Rotterdam deploys neighborhood concierges as intermediaries and offers environmental subsidies, while also addressing housing disturbances using the *Actieplan Woonoverlast* as a guide.

## 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has delved into a comparative analysis of the municipal performance agreements in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, focusing primarily on the social housing sector. Several key differences and similarities emerge.

From the perspective of procedural differences, Amsterdam operates on a four-year cycle for formulating performance agreements, while Rotterdam operates on a two-year cycle. Rotterdam's agreements are made individually with housing associations, whereas Amsterdam's are made collectively.

Concerning affordability, Amsterdam sets clear targets, ensuring 70% of social housing remains affordable, with rent increases capped at specific rates. In contrast, Rotterdam follows broader guidelines from the *Woonvisie 2030*, exploring income-dependent rent increases and emphasizing support for middle incomes. While Amsterdam has concrete provisions for tenants facing financial challenges, Rotterdam focuses on early debt detection and prevention. On the sustainability front, Amsterdam commits to cost-neutral housing improvements, Rotterdam leans towards energy efficiency in new constructions.

Amsterdam and Rotterdam both emphasize housing availability but differ

in approach. Amsterdam aims to add 750 units annually, with caution advised on selling in specific areas to preserve social housing. The city also plans to boost its mid-range rental stock by 1,100 (9.9% of construction by HA's). units between 2020 and 2023. In contrast, Rotterdam expects to build about 1,800 homes annually, with over half dedicated to the mid-range segment (55.5% of construction by HA's). While Amsterdam replaces every demolished social housing unit, Rotterdam is set to demolish 970 units over two years without a clear replacement plan, resulting in an expected addition of 315 social housing units annually. Both cities recognize the role of temporary housing, with Amsterdam prioritizing vulnerable groups and Rotterdam focusing on addressing acute shortages.

Amsterdam's agreements emphasize a cohesive city with quality living for all, investing heavily in the social housing segment and using a region-specific approach to enhance livability. In contrast, Rotterdam focuses on creating balanced neighborhoods, addressing specific housing quality issues, and targeting livability efforts in identified neighborhoods. While Amsterdam prioritizes collaboration among stakeholders and combating housing fraud, Rotterdam employs neighborhood concierges and environmental initiatives to improve community living.

Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in their municipal performance agreements, present distinct approaches for the social housing sector. Amsterdam emphasizes long-term planning, affordability, and a cohesive city vision, while Rotterdam prioritizes flexibility, neighborhood balance, and early financial interventions for tenants. While both cities value housing availability and quality, their approaches and priorities differ, with Amsterdam focusing on inclusivity and Rotterdam on adaptability and neighborhood-specific solutions.

An empirical finding based on this comparison is that the results found for both cities contain relatively few concrete objectives and figures regarding the identified differences, but mainly consist of agreements of intent and plans to address a certain issue. The precise operationalization is often lacking in the set of agreements. This has resulted in this chapter being more of a qualitative comparison of the themes of both cities, as concrete and identifiable numerical differences are often not present in many aspects.

The background of these performance agreements and the identified differences were further investigated through interviews with stakeholders

involved in the process. These interview results are ultimately used to further elaborate on the different performance agreements and to find explanations for the differing approaches in both cities.

## 7. Interview results

As part of this thesis research, interviews were conducted to seek explanations for the differences in performance agreements from a context and policy perspective. This chapter has the purpose to expand on the gathered interview data. After presenting the interview data in this chapter, chapter 8 will be focused on analyzing this data.

In total, eight respondents were interviewed, of which six are insiders from the local triangle involved in the process of the performance agreements. Additionally, two outsiders in the form of municipal councilors were interviewed, who can provide a broader, political perspective on the issue of social housing in both cities. These outsiders were chosen because the study on performance agreements specifically focuses on municipal policy and the municipal context (See Figure 28). The manner in which the results have been processed is explained in the methodology. The interview results are presented in this chapter and are organized based on the topics of the interviews (See Appendix A).

This chapter delves into the formulation process of performance agreements, contents of the performance agreements, and the role of municipal policy. It focuses on the most important and notable results, which are set out in a relatively concise and summarized manner.



Figure 28. Schematic representation of interviewee selection (Source: Author).

For practical reasons, abbreviations are used in this chapter to refer to the interviewees, as the same respondents are referred to repeatedly. The abbreviations for in-text referral are explained in Table 9.

**Table 9. Abbreviations for in-text interviewee referral**

	Abbreviations for interviewees	Interviewee subject & *In-text citation
1.	<b>Mun. Rot.</b>	Policy officer(s) performance agreements for the municipality of Rotterdam *(Municipality of Rotterdam, Personal communication, April 17, 2023)
2.	<b>Mun. Ams.</b>	Policy officer performance agreements for the municipality of Amsterdam *(Municipality of Amsterdam, Personal communication, April 18, 2023)
3.	<b>HA. Rot.</b>	Senior manager strategy & policy + senior advisor performance agreements for a housing association (HA) in Rotterdam *(Housing association in Rotterdam, Personal communication, April 13, 2023)
4.	<b>HA. Ams.</b>	Strategy advisor for a housing association (HA) in Amsterdam *(Housing association in Amsterdam, Personal communication, April 21, 2023)
5.	<b>TA. Rot.</b>	Policy officer performance agreements for a tenants association (TA) in Rotterdam *(Tenants association in Rotterdam in , Personal communication, May 03, 2023)
6.	<b>TA. Ams.</b>	Chairman of a tenants association (TA) in Amsterdam *(Tenants association in Amsterdam, Personal communication, April 11, 2023)
7.	<b>Cllr. Rot.</b>	Municipal councilor (Cllr) in Rotterdam *(Councilor in Rotterdam, Personal communication, April 20, 2023)
8.	<b>Cllr. Ams.</b>	Municipal councilor (Cllr) in Amsterdam *(Councilor in Amsterdam, Personal communication, April 24, 2023)

Source: Author.

## 7.1 Formulation process of performance agreements

The first section of the interviews focussed on the development process of the performance agreements.

### **Involvement in performance agreements process**

- *"In what way are you involved in the process, the translation of the housing vision to the creation of performance agreements and their realization? In other words, how does the translation proceed from your perspective to the making of the performance agreements, and where does the initiative lie?"*

In Amsterdam, the approach to performance agreements is notably proactive and assertive. Mun. Ams. highlighted that while Amsterdam often dictates terms, Rotterdam tends to delegate responsibilities to other parties. This assertiveness is evident in Amsterdam's efforts to organize the performance agreements process ahead of the market. Furthermore, housing associations have been integrally involved from an early stage, ensuring enhanced collaboration and a more streamlined process. Despite this proactive approach, there is an aspiration in Amsterdam to shift from aggressive negotiations to more collaborative engagements with all stakeholders (Mun. Ams).

Contrastingly, in Rotterdam, the formulation of performance agreements begins internally. Various departments, including sustainability and societal development, engage in discussions to outline their objectives and future projections. These deliberations result in a comprehensive letter detailing new constructions, renovations, and contributions to vital neighborhoods (Cllr. Rot.). At present, the performance agreements in Rotterdam are based on national and regional accords, primarily because the city's housing vision is still under development (Mun. Rot.).

Housing associations in Amsterdam coordinate their efforts through the *Amsterdamse Federatie van Woningcorporaties* (AFWC) (TA. Ams.). Direct communication channels with the municipality are also maintained, and tenant representation is considered as an important stakeholder in the process (HA Ams.). In Rotterdam, the municipality often takes the lead, presenting an initial draft proposal for performance agreements. Even though the law stipulates that housing associations should initiate the proposal (HA. Rot).

Tenant associations play a significant role in both cities. In Amsterdam, it was highlighted that a vast majority of housing organizations are affiliated with the FAH (*Federatie Amsterdamse Huurdersorganisaties*). The FAH, in collaboration with the AFWC and the municipality, are involved in discussions

around performance agreements. However, there's a sentiment that the municipality could exert more control in formulating the performance agreements to prevent housing associations from imposing too much of their own policy (TA. Ams.). In Rotterdam, the tenant association collaborates closely with its affiliated housing associations, However, while usually considered, their feedback isn't always incorporated into the final agreements (TA. Rot.).

Lastly, a councilor from Amsterdam emphasized the city's interconnectedness, noting that Amsterdam operates within broader policy and market dynamics and is not isolated in its approach to housing (Cllr. Ams.).

### **Key stakeholders in the development process**

- *Who are the main stakeholders in the process? In other words, with which stakeholders do you interact the most during the process?*

Housing associations are often seen as the most important partners by the municipality of Amsterdam. Involving private landlords would be desirable, but is not feasible. Despite occasional differences in opinions and interests, the (mandatory) collaboration is generally appreciated by the municipality. Tenant associations are considered a full-fledged partner in this process, but the other two parties have much more influence in the policy execution. Tenants provide a reality check and are also involved in the early stages of policy formation (Mun. Ams.). The tenant association confirms that in the interplay between the municipality, FAH, and AFWC, they experience it as an equal tripartite (TA. AMS.).

In Rotterdam, the municipality names the housing associations as the primary partner, followed by the tenant associations (Mun. Rot.). The housing association also agrees that, from their perspective, the municipality is much more focused on them than on their affiliated tenant association (HA. Rot.). However, the councilor in Rotterdam does mention that he works with both parties in an equal manner to enhance collaboration for the social housing policy (Cllr. Rot.).



### **Individual vs. collective agreements and a two or four year cycle**

- *In Rotterdam, the choice was made for individual performance agreements with housing associations in a two-year cycle. Amsterdam opts for collective agreements and a four-year cycle. Can you explain the choice for this in your city, including any potential advantages and disadvantages?*

According to the municipality of Amsterdam, both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages. The collective approach is beneficial because all regulations apply to everyone, making them more universal and clear. Secondly, the housing associations have a mutual responsibility; they can hold each other accountable and compensate for each other to achieve the overall goals. Individual agreements are more controllable from the municipality's perspective. On the other hand, the four-year cycle provides more clarity to housing associations for making investments and thinking long-term. Additionally, once every four years is considered sufficient work for all parties involved. Moreover, a lot can change in four years, and therefore, for the sake of collaboration, it is essential for everyone to re-evaluate occasionally. It is also possible to make new partial agreements in between if necessary. However, the collective approach can be disadvantageous when housing associations have different financial capabilities (Mun. Ams.; Mun. Rot.).

The municipality of Rotterdam mentions that they aim to make joint performance agreements in the future, with individual agreements possibly attached as appendices (Mun. Rot.).

From the perspective of the housing association in Amsterdam, the interviewee mentions the challenge of setting long-term agreements, especially when the world is rapidly changing. For instance, they discussed the difficulty of making commitments about CO<sub>2</sub> reduction due to various external factors. There is also a desire for fewer, more measurable agreements. The interviewee mentions the challenge of having many agreements that are not always easily measurable, which can be resource-intensive. The agreements are made for a four-year period, but the housing association also looks further ahead. For instance, they consider the implications of decisions like stopping property sales, which is a relevant topic in Amsterdam (HA. Ams.).

The housing association in Rotterdam also points out the impact of the absence of an umbrella organization for making collective agreements. There is only the *Maaskoepel*, but it represents the entire region, so it would not be able to specifically represent Rotterdam's interests in the negotiations.

A second argument is path dependency in collective policy-making, because *"the weakest link determines the pace."* Once collective agreements are made, it creates an interdependency between the housing associations. This is also considered a disadvantage of collective agreements (HA. Rot.).

The respondent from the tenant association in Amsterdam provided some further elaboration on the city's general collaborative approach. He states that *"What can be done collectively, we do collectively. And what needs to be done locally, we do locally."* This indicates that not everything has to be approached collectively, but it is the preferred method (TA. Ams.).

Initially, Rotterdam had separate performance agreements between each housing associations, the respective tenant association, and the municipality. However, for the years 2022-2023, tenant associations came together to give a joint reaction. This led to some tenant associations not signing the performance agreements (TA. Rot.).

## 7.2 Content of the performance agreements

The respondents are presented with the three main themes of the performance agreements in their cities: affordability, availability and a variety of quality aspects.

### Strengths of the performance agreements

- *What are the strengths of the current performance agreements in your city, or what do they excel in?*

In Amsterdam, concerning affordability, an additional rent reduction has been agreed upon for low-income households. This has now also become a national regulation; however, it remains more extensive here. In that aspect, we set a precedent. Additionally, we do a lot for vulnerable groups. There are also high ambitions in the area of new construction (*read: 40-40-20 division*) (Mun. Ams.).

According to the municipality of Rotterdam, the strength of the performance agreements lies in the structured dialogue they facilitate. They ensure that stakeholders are in regular discussion and have set agreements to work towards. The agreements provide a clear overview of what housing associations are doing in the city (Mun. Rot.).

The policy officer from the housing association in Amsterdam believes that

they excel in the area of rent development, being more conservative than what might be allowed, which benefits the tenants (HA. Ams.).

### **Particularities of the performance agreements**

- *What do you consider as the particularities of the current performance agreements in your city? For example, compared to previous agreements or other precedents such as policies in other cities.*

One of the notable changes in Amsterdam is the shift in the sale of social housing units. This has significantly decreased compared to 10 to 15 years ago, leading to better preservation of the social housing stock (Mun. Ams.).

It is explained how the current performance agreements in Rotterdam are based on national performance agreements, regional accords, and the coalition agreement. This was due to the housing vision (*Woonvisie*) still being in development. Normally, the housing vision would serve as the basis for the performance agreements. This is a distinguishing feature of the current performance agreements (Mun. Rot.).

The collective agreements in Amsterdam are a result of processes set in motion about 12 years ago. Initially, collective targets were set, but the housing associations interpreted this as if they could not be held accountable individually. However, with the involvement of independent tenant organizations, there was a push for monitoring individual housing associations within the collective agreements (TA. Ams.)

### **Weaknesses and missing aspects in the performance agreements**

- *What is lacking in the current set of performance agreements in your city, or what are its weaknesses? In other words, what were you unable to negotiate?*

In Amsterdam, the municipality actually wanted to further limit the sale of the social housing units. Additionally, the municipality wanted a larger percentage of the stock below the capping limit than the housing associations (Mun. Ams.). The tenant association in Amsterdam points out another aspect that he considered a weakness in the performance agreements. Initially, there was an agreement that the housing association was allowed to build smaller than 45m<sup>2</sup> (and less than 60m<sup>2</sup> on average). This was poorly received by the tenants and was eventually adjusted (TA. Ams.).

The interviewee touches upon challenges with specific housing associations with a poor financial status or different strategic vision, which can impact the content of the performance agreements (Mun. Rot.). The respondent from the housing association in Rotterdam described the previous cycle of performance agreements as *"a lot of intentions from the housing associations and very little effort from the municipality."* (HA. Rot.). In addition, the respondent from the tenant association highlights that the municipality planned to strongly reduce the number of social rental homes, which they disagree with (TA. Rot.).

### **Contextual influence on performance agreements**

- *To what extent is the content of the current performance agreements shaped by specific contextual factors of the city? Do you have examples of this?*

Housing associations in Amsterdam are theoretically wealthier due to the more expensive sale of social stock because of higher WOZ values. However, the municipality does not necessarily see this reflected in the form of wealthy housing associations (only on paper). In Amsterdam, there are also housing associations that are struggling. Large housing associations struggle with the absolute borrowing ceiling due to their vast scale (Mun. Ams.). Furthermore, demographic inequality between neighborhoods in Amsterdam plays a role in policy. For instance, sales within the city ring are made difficult, while outside the ring (in areas like *Zuid-Oost*), it is encouraged as a means of gentrification. Additionally, there's the influence of the city's left-wing oriented political character. Amsterdam has significant ambitions in areas like healthcare provisions, which housing associations find motivating. At the same time, this sets a high standard, which can lead to tensions due to elevated mutual expectations. This is summarized as *"We want to be friends with the housing associations, but we don't always manage to be friends. This makes for a peculiar way of collaborating"* (Mun. Ams.).

One of the contextual factors that housing associations in Rotterdam specifically deal with is the relatively low property values, resulting in limited investment capacity, especially when compared to Amsterdam. Additionally, there are still neighborhoods in Rotterdam with a very high proportion of social housing units, which has implications for (improving) the livability of their properties (HA. Rot.).

In Rotterdam, the relatively large social housing sector and sometimes the high number of outflow of middle-income groups towards peripheral municipalities are mentioned as context factors that influence the performance agreements (Mun. Rot.).

The influence of the political party *Leefbaar Rotterdam* is also pointed out. They were advocates of policies that focus on making certain neighborhoods accessible, and which had implications for the city's housing (TA. Ams.).

The councilor in Rotterdam mentions that certain measures might be more impactful for Rotterdam's housing associations than for other cities as a result of limited financial capabilities of housing associations. The most significant contextual factors are considered to be the relatively large social housing stock and the number of vulnerable neighborhoods, especially in *Rotterdam-Zuid* (Cllr. Rot.).

### **National and regional influence on local performance agreements**

- *What is the influence of national and regional policies on the content of the local performance agreements in your city? Do you have examples of this?*

National performance agreements were made in defense of the landlord levy, where these are influential due to the obligation to address EFG-labels by 2028, otherwise sanctions are threatened. In Amsterdam, this remains a significant challenge, due to the average construction year of the social housing stock. Additionally, MRA housing deals influence the performance agreements, but more in the form of influence from collaborations between governments and municipalities, not as strict agreements (Mun. Ams.).

National performance agreements provide a framework in which the housing associations operate. An example of this is high ambitions for sustainability, which aligns with national goals. However, achieving these goals remains challenging due to market situations and capacity issues (HA. Ams.). The tenants association in Amsterdam states that the role of the region is characterized by good cooperation between the parties involved. The performance agreements are not called *Samenwerkingsafspraken* without reason; this applies in a broad sense (TA. Ams.).

As mentioned earlier, the performance agreements are currently based on national performance agreements and regional accords (Mun. Rot.).

Rotterdam does have a form of collective agreements, but at the level of

regional accords in the *Stadsregio Rotterdam*. However, tenant associations were not involved in this. It was only between municipalities and housing associations (TA. Rot.).

### 7.3 Role of municipal policy

#### Characterisation of municipal approach

- *In your opinion, what characterizes the role or attitude of the municipality in the formulation process of the performance agreements? In other words, what is the main approach or key points from the municipality for the negotiations of the performance agreements?*

In the development of new policy, the municipality of Amsterdam sees two courses from the housing vision: objectives on one hand and policy that is not always aligned with it on the other. The focus is increasingly on housing circulation and housing exchange. *"Housing associations are seen as execution machines, especially by the municipal council, but they also have their own business philosophy, and we try to navigate within that and seek collaboration."* So, the municipality mainly tries to set frameworks and facilitate, for example, in creating temporary living spaces (Mun. Ams.).

The municipality of Rotterdam states that, despite it often being mentioned, they disagree with the perception that Rotterdam wishes to keep out low incomes. Their main aim is for everyone to take an equal part in this, including the surrounding municipalities. In addition, the municipality sees the importance of structured dialogue facilitated by the performance agreements. They ensure that stakeholders are in regular discussion and have set agreements to work towards. The agreements provide a clear overview of what housing associations are doing in the city, according to the municipality of Rotterdam (Mun. Rot.).

One of the interviewees also notes that the municipality of Amsterdam is quite participative in its approach. For instance, during the creation of a housing vision, there is significant input and involvement from various stakeholders, including tenants (HA. Ams.).

The housing association in Rotterdam describes how housing associations should make an offer based on the municipality's housing vision. However, in practice, the municipality of Rotterdam takes a more proactive role by sending a letter outlining their priorities and expectations. The municipality's approach initially seemed to be about taking control and directing housing associations on

what to do. This created some friction, especially given the understanding that housing associations are independent entities. While the municipality's approach was very directive before, there has been a positive shift towards collaboration and mutual support in recent years (HA. Rot.).

The tenant association in Rotterdam indicates that the government seems to prioritize the execution of national policy. Housing associations come in second place, and tenant associations are in third place in terms of influence and priority (TA. Rot.).

### **Specific characterizing policy aspects**

- *Are there specific aspects of the performance agreements in your city that characterize the municipal policy regarding social rent and housing in general?*

Within the municipality of Amsterdam, there is an internal debate about what the most important aspect within the performance agreements is: affordability, availability, or quality. One of the municipality's main focuses is on making the existing stock more sustainable and improving its quality, with the objectives from the national performance agreements considered challenging to achieve. This also has a significant component concerning affordability due to rising energy costs. The focus is thus more on affordability and quality, as availability is less of an issue in Amsterdam given the intrinsic motivation of housing associations to develop new housing units (Mun. Ams.).

The performance agreements allow for a focus on themes that are relevant at the time, such as sustainability or livable neighborhoods. This allows the municipality to request contributions from housing associations on these specific themes (Mun. Rot.).

According to the housing association in Rotterdam, there has been a dominant view in Rotterdam since the early 2000s that there are too many social housing units or too many poor people with low incomes living in Rotterdam. This does not have any racist or ethical implications; it is purely based on income. As a result, the municipality practices a "*bredeschouderpolitiek*" (broad shoulder politics) in order to increase the number of middle income households within the city. Moreover, it is not that the municipality deliberately let the middle group move to the surrounding municipalities in the past, or that this was the policy of those surrounding municipalities; the product simply lacked in Rotterdam (HA. Rot.).

One of the specific characterizing policies in Amsterdam, according to the tenant association, is the 40-40-20 segmentation rule for new developments and the special arrangements for vulnerable groups, such as the newly introduced allocation scheme for victims of the *Toeslagenschandaal* (TA. Ams.).

Regarding characterizing policies, the councilor mentions that Amsterdam is known as a progressive, socially-oriented city. They stress the importance of ensuring that the city doesn't become exclusive to only those with a lot of money or only those in poverty (Cllr. Ams.).

### **Government vs. society-oriented policy-making**

- *I also assess the policy development process regarding social rent based on whether it is directed from the government towards the citizen, or conversely, more directed from society towards the government. How would you define this in your city, and to what extent is participation and collaboration from society possible in shaping the social rent policy?*

In Amsterdam, the new housing vision places an extra focus on the input and participation of citizens. However, it should be noted that, even though there is a significant amount of policies from the perspective of the citizen, there is also difficulty in achieving certain results because the ambitions are often high and can therefore encounter resistance. The social character of the city of Amsterdam is reflected in the way policy is made from the citizen's perspective (Mun. Ams.). In Amsterdam, the district administrations play a strong role in creating policy from the community's perspective (TA. Ams.).

In Rotterdam, citizen participation is a part of policy-making, but not necessarily a significant part. The municipality holds the view that the housing vision has already been democratically legitimized by the city council. However, the plan for future housing visions is to approach this differently and place more emphasis on collaboration with citizens and other relevant parties (Mun. Rot.). For the next housing vision, participation is a key topic. A specialized agency was involved to assist the municipality, and they collaborated with various parties in the city (Cllr. Rot.). A report on citizen participation in the past also revealed that the Rotterdam municipality scored poorly in this aspect (HA. Rot.).

The interviewee states that there is, on paper, a lot of input from citizens and tenant representation in Amsterdam. There is a challenge with the representativeness of the tenant representation. However, the interviewee also emphasizes the participative nature of Amsterdam's approach, especially in the



creation of housing visions (HA. Ams.).

### **Result vs value-oriented policy making**

- *I assess another variable in the policy development process. Specifically, whether the policy is more results-oriented or, on the other hand, more focused on creating added value (value-oriented). How would you define this in your city?*

The municipality of Amsterdam primarily regards itself as value-driven, explaining this from an Amsterdam ideal of pursuing the perfect world. There is a strong focus on involving tenants and other stakeholders, but the municipality is also willing to impose certain measures from a specific value perspective. Striving for high standards regarding norms and values can sometimes hinder results. Additionally, compared to Rotterdam, a more result-oriented perspective could also be beneficial for Amsterdam (PA. Ams.). It is also stated that while policy documents often appear value-driven, in practice, the approach can be very result-driven, sometimes even at a micro-level (HA Ams.).

According to the tenant association, the municipality of Amsterdam displays both value-driven and result-driven approaches in their policy-making. It is somewhere in between. An example of this is the placement of flexible housing units. This is, on one hand, a value-driven policy, but in its execution, there is also a strong result-driven approach (TA. Ams.).

While Amsterdam operates with city districts that have more influence on governance and perhaps are closer to the citizens, this is not done in the same way in Rotterdam. This might indicate the differences between the two cities concerning result and value orientation in policy (PA. Rot.).

One interviewee mentions that while they engage with policy advisors in Rotterdam, there's a noticeable intuitive distance. The focus seems to be more on the execution and tangible outcomes, indicating a more result-oriented approach (TA. Rot.).

## 8. Explaining performance agreements differences

After presenting the interview data in chapter 7, this final chapter has the objective to unfold how variations between the performance agreements can be related to the differing municipal policy context and social housing policy. To conduct this analysis, the results from the previous four chapters are used, where the findings in the policy and policy chapter are related to the performance agreements through the findings from the interviews. An overview of these results is shown in Figure 29. The interviewees are referred to in the same manner as in the previous chapter, as is elaborated on in Table 9.

As a guideline for this chapter, the same structure is followed as the chapter in which the differences in the performance agreements were detailed. For this explanatory analysis, it is firstly delved into the identified relationships with the procedural differences, affordability differences, availability differences, and quality differences. Subsequently, an overview of the identified relationships is provided, after which an attempt is made to abstract the essence and main connections from it. In some cases, a connection can also be made between the municipal policy context and municipal social housing policy. This is not part of the scope of this thesis and is therefore not included in the analysis.

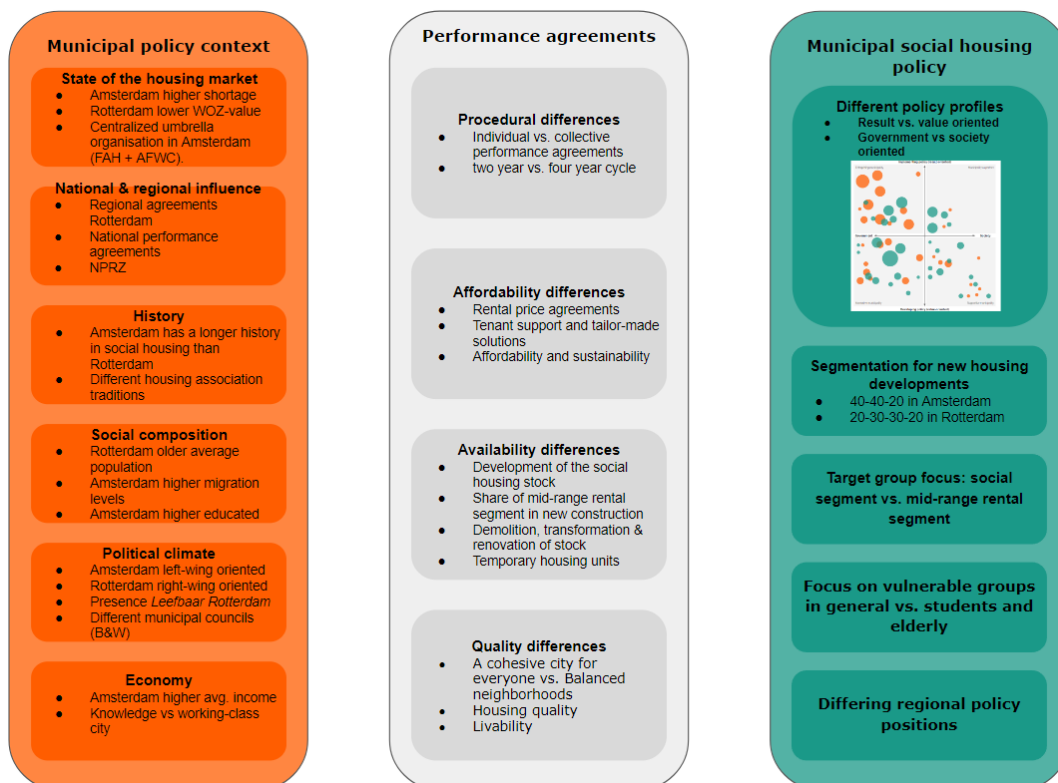


Figure 29. Overview of research results from previous chapters (Source: Author).

## 8.2 Procedural differences

### Manageability vs. continuity in agreement duration

Rotterdam opts for a shorter agreement duration, allowing for more steering and evaluation opportunities. If the agreements are only in force for two years, there are equally regular opportunities for adjustments (Mun. Rot). On the other hand, a longer agreement provides more continuity and certainty for all stakeholders because the policy is less volatile (Mun. Ams.). Regularly re-evaluating the agreements means that there are

better opportunities to adjust the content of the agreements to a rapidly changing policy environment, which is characteristic within the municipal-political policy cycle (HA. Ams.). The downside of shorter agreements is that the housing associations are not always sure of their position. For this reason, in Amsterdam, there is already talk of setting an agreement for ten years in the future. In this way, the housing associations have a clearer understanding and can thus create more continuous long-term policy (Mun. Ams.).

There are pros and cons to both options. However, it is evident that the choice made regarding the duration of the agreement aligns with the found policy character of both municipalities. In Amsterdam, the perception is that it is established in consultation for a longer period, while Rotterdam seeks more steerability in the performance agreements. Amsterdam approach in this sense is regarded as more pro-active and assertive by the involved parties, according to the interviewees. A striking detail in this is that Amsterdam also endorses this by naming them "*Samenwerkingsafspraken*" instead of performance agreements (TA. Ams.).

Regarding the policy context from a socio-political perspective, this difference surprisingly deviates from the initial expectation. Amsterdam, a social and left-oriented city, would be expected to aim for more governmental control in the performance agreements, or at least more so than the more liberal and

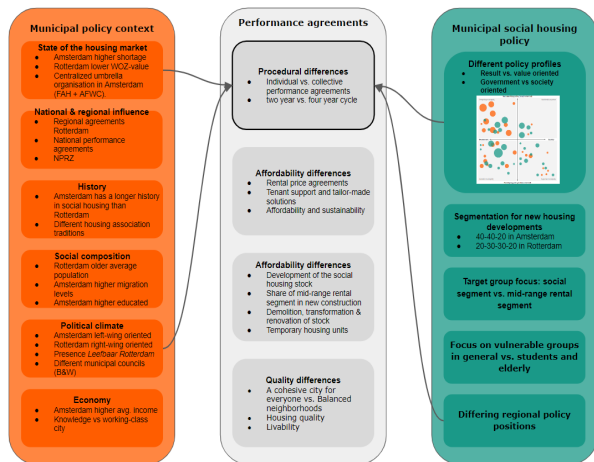


Figure 30. Source: Author

right-oriented Rotterdam. However, in practice, it is the other way around. It is true that the implementation of the agreements in Rotterdam is more market-oriented, as opposed to a collaboration perspective between stakeholders in Amsterdam. This aspect does align with the expectation from the municipal context (Mun. Ams.; Mun. Rot.).

### **Individual vs. collective agreements**

As mentioned earlier in the report, Rotterdam chooses to make ten individual agreements, while Amsterdam approaches it collectively. Several reasons can be identified for this from a policy and context perspective.

There is a greater presence of umbrella organizations in Amsterdam. Rotterdam does not have an umbrella organization for tenant associations. *Maaskoepel*, unlike the AFCW, is not solely focused on Rotterdam (HA. Rot.). Thus, the institutional (policy) context in Rotterdam is less conducive to making collective agreements. However, Rotterdam does intend to possibly approach the process of developing the performance agreements collectively in the future (Mun. Rot.). A joint reaction on the current performance agreements by all tenant associations in Rotterdam also displays this trend (TA. Ams.). This underscores a move towards more collective efforts in the performance agreements in Rotterdam. While the municipality's approach was very directive before, there has been a positive shift towards collaboration and mutual support in recent years (HA. Rot.).

The collective approach in Amsterdam aligns with the city's more community-oriented policy character compared to Rotterdam and the greater presence of umbrella organizations in the policy process concerning the social housing sector.

The individual agreement set in Rotterdam has the advantage that housing associations can be better individually assessed for compliance with the agreements. If an agreement set is collectivized, the housing associations can also accuse one another of wrongdoing, thereby hindering progress. This is also recognized as a problem in Amsterdam, and for that reason, efforts are being made to improve individual accountability of each housing association for future agreements.

## 8.2 Affordability

The choices regarding affordability are all of a political nature and are therefore dependent on the political climate. In the various agreements made concerning affordability, the left-right political division in both cities is evident. The policy officer from the housing association in Amsterdam even indicates that affordability is one of the aspects in which the agreements excel, as rent development is more conservative than is legally allowed, benefiting the residents (HA. Ams.). In the case of Rotterdam, this does not come forward as a strength. Limited financial resources of the housing associations is named as the foremost reason for this (HA. Rot.).

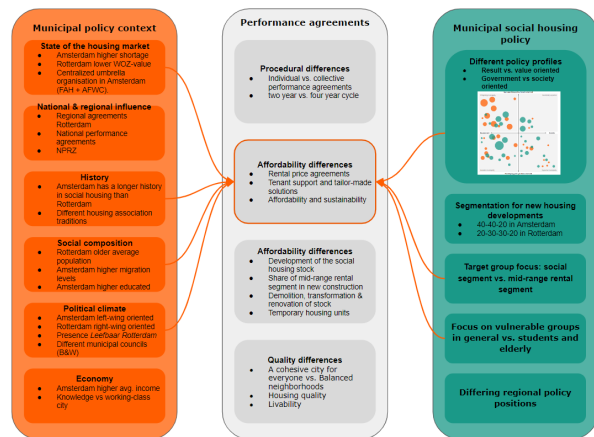


Figure 31. Source: Author

### Rental price agreements

In Amsterdam, a limit has been agreed upon for the maximum rent increase, a so-called rent cap. The fact that this has been established in the performance agreements is largely due to the efforts and influence of the centralized tenant association (Mun. Ams.). They strongly advocated for it (TA. Ams.). In Rotterdam, a similar measure is absent. One of the reasons mentioned for this is the absence of a centralized tenant association (HA. Rot.). In the case of Rotterdam, a connection is made with the mid-range rental segment by not including specific rent price arrangements for the social segment, and then subsequently add these for the mid-range rental segment (Cllr. Rot.). The tenant feedback is not always taken into account in Rotterdam, as shown in a lack of rental price agreements (TA. Rot.). This is in accordance with the more enterprising, government-oriented policy making of the city. Amsterdam on the other hand, even introduced additional rent reductions for specific low-income households (Mun. Ams.) , underscoring its socially oriented policy character.

### Tenant support and tailor-made solutions

Both cities approach tenant support and tailor-made solutions for renters differently, with Amsterdam offering financial assistance and Rotterdam focusing

on prevention (Mun. Ams; Mun. Rot.). This aligns with the difference in policy character between the two cities, as has been highlighted before.

Furthermore, previous results showed that Amsterdam puts more effort into supporting vulnerable groups in a broader sense. This also reflects how both performance agreements address this topic. An example of this is that Amsterdam specifically reserves housing units for victims of the *Toeslagenschandaal* (TA. Ams.), emphasizing its social ambitions.

Additionally, the extent to which tenant support is needed is highly dependent on the population. Both cities have different needs in this regard, leading to different measures in the performance agreements. This can be traced back to the different social compositions of the two cities, with Rotterdam having an older population on average with different needs for support.

### **Affordability and sustainability**

In the relationship between affordability and the sustainability of the housing stock, Rotterdam primarily focuses on new construction. For the existing stock, there are also differences between the two cities. Amsterdam faces a greater challenge due to its older and less energy-efficient housing stock. This topic is therefore considered as more pressing and challenging in Amsterdam than in Rotterdam, according to the interviewees. In addition to this finding, there seem to be relatively few differences between Amsterdam and Rotterdam when it comes to affordability and sustainability.

## 8.3 Availability differences

### Availability

In general, it can be said that Amsterdam has a greater focus on availability in the social housing segment. Apart from any normative qualifications concerning that policy, it is important to also consider that the waiting lists for social housing in Amsterdam are much longer than in Rotterdam. For that reason, it can be stated that there is a discrepancy in the measures concerning availability. Additionally, with regard to availability, a noticeable shift has occurred in Amsterdam. There have been less sales of social rental homes and to better maintain the availability of social rental housing (Mun. Ams.).

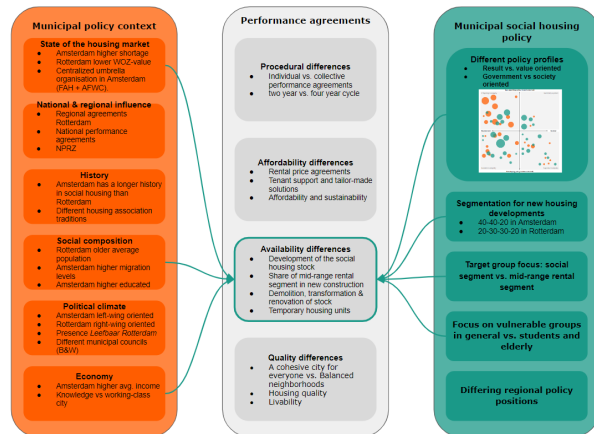


Figure 32. Source: Author

### Development of the social housing stock

In both cities, the development of the social housing stock, has a dependency on the segmentation for new developments, as well as the target group focus. Here too, the policy profile concerning social housing shows a much stronger result-oriented approach in Rotterdam, compared to a value-oriented perspective in Amsterdam with a larger focus on the social housing segment. However, the tenant association in Amsterdam indicates that the municipality could take more control over this process, as the threat of too much influence from the housing associations arises in recent years (TA. Ams.). Also, the councilor points out that Amsterdam has a reputation for being a forward-thinking and socially-focused city. They emphasize the necessity of preventing the city from becoming a place solely for the affluent or exclusively for those in poverty and will therefore remain to have a strong focus on the social housing segment (Cllr. Ams.).

### **Share of mid-range rental segment in new construction**

In this policy measure, Rotterdam's focus on the middle segment also appears once more. Especially in comparison to a much lower share of mid-range rental units in new construction in Amsterdam. This is part of an effort in Rotterdam to change the social composition with the aim of moving closer to Amsterdam in terms of average income on a socio-economic level. The city of Rotterdam denies that this is an active policy; however, the analyzed policy documents paint a different picture. Additionally, the housing association in Rotterdam also states that the product for housing the middle segment in Rotterdam is largely lacking, and that it therefore makes sense from that perspective for the city to pursue this policy (HA. Rot.). However, this does come at the expense of the social segment, especially in comparison to Amsterdam, as the presented figures also demonstrate.

### **Demolition, transformation & renovation of social housing stock**

Amsterdam has a demolition rate of net-zero, due to the demolition-new construction replacement regulation. From a social housing policy perspective, this also shows the more value-oriented policy of the city compared to Rotterdam. Housing associations in Rotterdam are uniquely affected by the context of comparatively low property values, leading to a constrained capacity for investment in for maintenance and renovation of their stock, particularly in contrast to Amsterdam. Moreover, there are neighborhoods in Rotterdam where social housing units are highly concentrated, impacting the (enhancement of) livability in these properties (HA. Rot.). The respondent from the tenant association highlights that the municipality once suggested strongly reducing the number of social rental homes in the future, opposed to just focusing on a different segment (TA. Rot.).



## 8.4 Quality differences

In the differences regarding quality, there is a consistent link between the different policy profiles of both cities. In Amsterdam, the focus on quality is towards value creation, while this is less prevalent in Rotterdam. Additionally, the focus on a specific target group frequently recurs in the agreements concerning quality in both cities, according to the interviewees. There is also a difference in the housing quality and the livability aspect between the social housing segment of both cities due to a different historical context of the social housing sector.

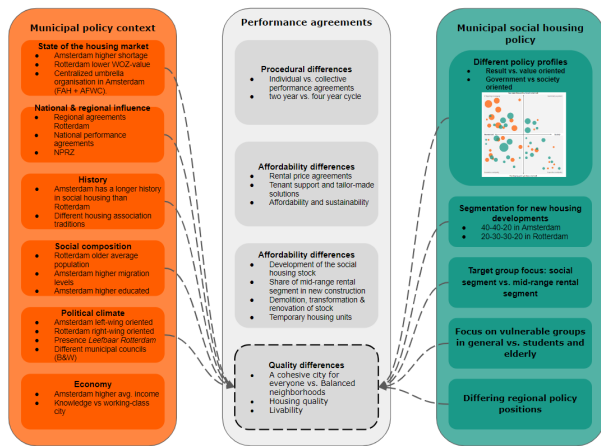


Figure 33. Source: Author

The pursuit of more balanced neighborhoods originates from the local political party *Leefbaar Rotterdam*. Furthermore, this aspect is also dependent on the social composition within the cities, which can contribute to understanding the different policy decisions.

### Housing quality

Distinctions in policy regarding housing quality can be related to several factors. A difference is evident in the opportunities to make improvements to houses due to the limited investment capacity of some housing associations in Rotterdam (Mun. Ams.; Mun Rot.). Additionally, the national performance agreements play a significant role in this.

A difference can be observed in how input from the residents is taken into account regarding the quality of the housing. In Rotterdam, the residents have often provided feedback about housing quality aspects in the formulation of new performance agreements, but do often feel not listened to in this process (TA. Rot). In Amsterdam, input provided by the FAH is seriously taken into consideration and has led to amendments in the performance agreements in the past (TA. Ams.).

National performance agreements were established in response to the landlord levy, and they hold significant sway due to the mandatory requirement to address EFG-labels by 2028, with the threat of sanctions for non-compliance.

In Amsterdam, this presents a considerable challenge in relation to maintaining the quality of its social housing stock, given the average construction year of the social housing stock (HA. Ams.; Mun. Ams.).

Furthermore, the Metropolitan Region Amsterdam (MRA) housing deals influence the joint-agreements on housing quality throughout the region. However, this influence manifests more through collaborations between governments and municipalities, rather than through stringent agreements (Mun. Ams.).

### **Livability**

In terms of livability, there is a difference in the regional policy positions between Amsterdam and Rotterdam, with Amsterdam seeking more regional collaboration in the context of policy making regarding livability. Additionally, this is also influenced by how both cities address their vulnerable groups differently.

Rotterdam has a larger number of relatively poor neighborhoods with a high number of social housing units, especially in Rotterdam Zuid (HA. Rot.). These neighborhoods face greater challenges regarding livability compared to Amsterdam, and they are also more difficult to improve in terms of livability. Additionally, there are relatively few measures included in the Performance Agreements regarding this issue (Mun. Rot.). Rotterdam is attempting to enhance livability; however, the city is facing a high rate of middle-income residents relocating to the surrounding municipalities (Mun. Rot.).

On the other hand, Amsterdam also faces challenges in its South-East area, which has relatively large amounts of social housing. Special agreements have been made regarding the sale of social rental homes specifically to attract higher-income residents to these disadvantaged neighborhoods (Mun. Ams.).

## 8.5 Explanations for differences in performance agreements

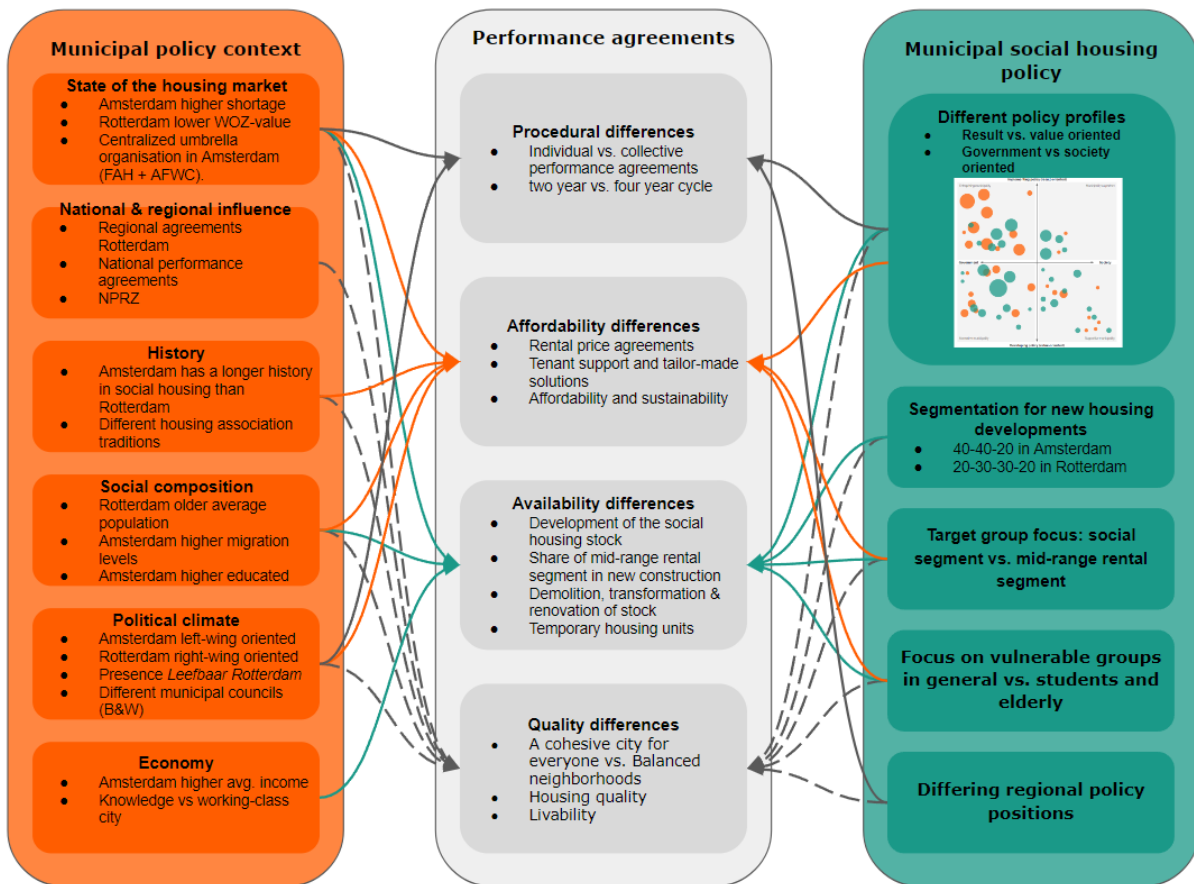


Figure 34. Overview of established connections between policy context, social housing policy and the performance agreements (Source: Author).

Figure 34 provides an overview of all identified connections in the previous sections. It shows how the policy-context (left) and municipal social housing policy shows a variety of relations between the differing performance agreements (middle). It shows many connections, which do not provide a clear image yet. However, a pattern starts to emerge and a number of overarching aspects can be abstracted from this based on the analysis. The section below therefore elaborates on these returning aspects that contribute to explaining the differences in performance agreements. These are visualized in Figure 31 as well.

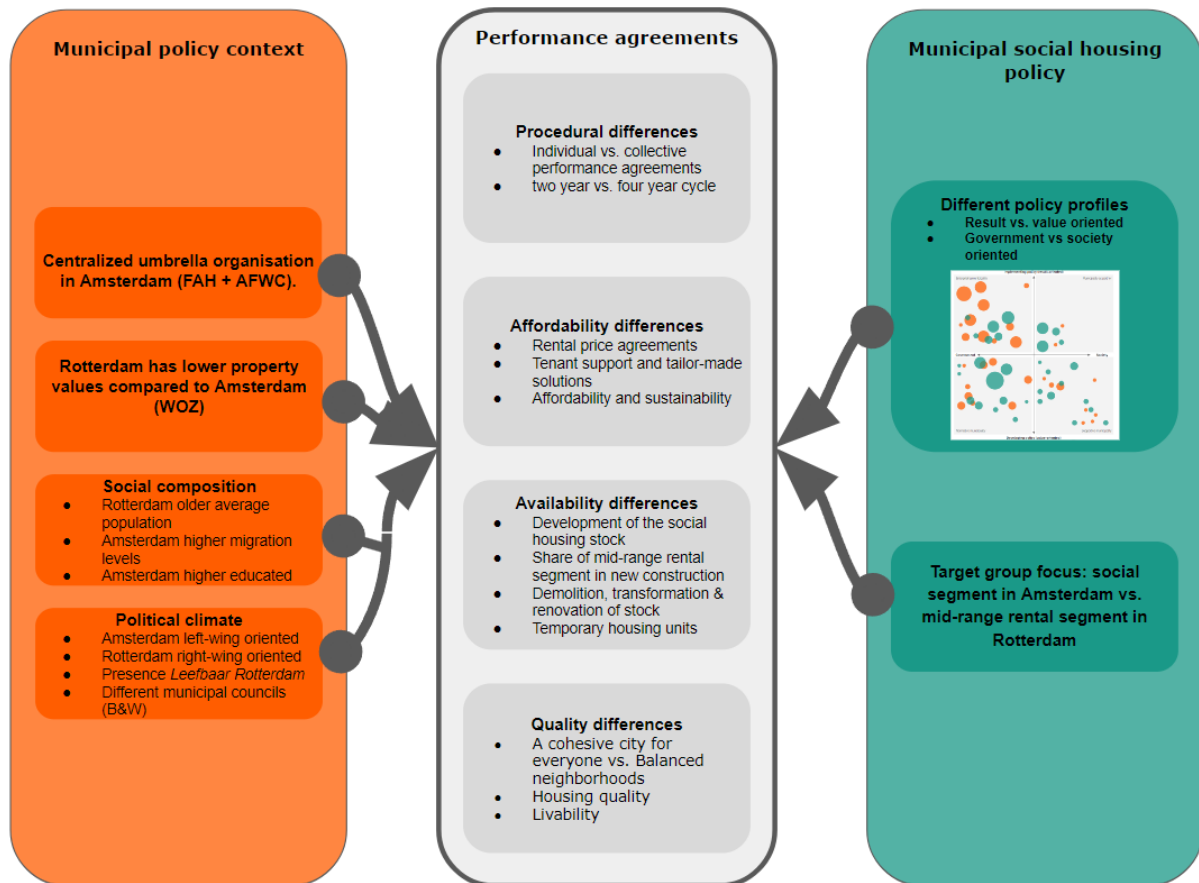


Figure 35. Overview of most important relations that contribute to explaining performance agreement differences (Source: Author).

### 8.5.1 Municipal policy context factors

#### Social composition and political climate as basis for differences

The differences in political climate and social composition between the two cities serve as the foundation for many policy choices and relevant contextual factors, which then manifest in the outcomes of the performance agreements.

The policy focus on vulnerable groups in general in Amsterdam versus on students and the elderly in Rotterdam can be related to this. Both cities have fundamentally different demographic compositions, with Rotterdam's population being significantly older on average. This results in different agreements regarding the protection of vulnerable target groups, whereas the relatively large group of elderly residents in Rotterdam have specific needs and desires within the social housing sector (TA. Rot.).

Additionally, the political climate in both cities is comparatively so distinct that almost all variations in the performance agreement can in some manner be

related to it. This comes forward from the interviews and is also manifested in the different policy profiles of both cities. Amsterdam's politics are characterized by a social, left-wing oriented approach with a large representation of parties such as *PVDA* and *GroenLinks* in the municipal council. On the other hand, in Rotterdam the right-wing oriented council encompasses substantial representation by the local political party *Leefbaar Rotterdam* and the liberal *VVD*. This also reflects on the composition of the council of Mayor and Alderman and its pursued policies, influencing both cities' social housing sector. With this, the political climate ultimately has a strong influence on the content of the performance agreements.

### **Influence of umbrella organizations**

Another recurring theme in the discussion is the impact of umbrella organizations, with Amsterdam showcasing a higher level of activity from these entities for both housing associations (*AFWC*) and tenant associations (*FAH*). Analyzing the results, this emerges as one of the key differences between the two cities, playing a significant role in shaping policy-making within the local triangle and subsequently influencing the performance agreements.

In Amsterdam, the *FAH* engages directly with the municipality (TA. Ams.), establishing a stark contrast with Rotterdam, where tenant associations often feel like third-class parties despite having legal equality within the local triangle (TA. Rot.). This situation is further complicated by the municipality's tendency to propose draft offers of performance agreements in the absence of an umbrella organization (HA. Rot.), a responsibility that legally falls on the housing associations according to the Housing Act of 2015.

It is important to highlight that the *Maaskoepel* in Rotterdam does not suffice as an umbrella organization for housing associations, as it is tasked with serving the interests of the entire region. Housing associations in Rotterdam are hesitant to make collective performance agreements due to a prevailing fear that "*the weakest link determines the pace*" (HA. Rot.). An umbrella organization could potentially alleviate these concerns, fostering trust among housing associations, as it has a similar result in Amsterdam (TA. Ams.;Mun. Ams.).

The joint response from all tenant associations in Rotterdam to the latest performance agreements also indicates a shift towards a more collective process

within the performance agreements, potentially paving the way for a collective umbrella organization for tenants in the future.

This shows how the absence of umbrella organizations for both housing associations and tenant associations influences the manner in which these parties are able to participate and co-produce in the formulation process of performance agreements.

### **Financial capabilities of housing associations**

Another contextual factor that influences the process and contents of the performance agreements are the lower property values (WOZ) in Rotterdam compared to Amsterdam, which leads to a discrepancy between the financial capabilities of housing associations between the two cities. This is the result of a lower revenue from the sale of the housing stock. The sale of this inventory is crucial for housing associations in order to make new investments (Mun. Rot.; HA. Ams.). The average WOZ value of a social housing unit in Rotterdam is 214,000 euros, compared to 324,000 euros in Amsterdam. This is particularly evident in the neighborhoods with a high proportion of social housing units, which further impacts the livability and potential improvements that can be made to the properties. The housing associations in Rotterdam have to navigate these financial constraints while striving to meet the housing needs of the community (HA. Rot.).

This also has implications for the performance agreements, as there are often fewer opportunities in Rotterdam to fulfill the objectives of the involved stakeholders. The housing associations need to balance their financial capabilities with the expectations set in the performance agreements, which can sometimes lead to tensions (Mun. Rot.; HA. Rot.; Ta. Rot.). Additionally, this means that certain additional investments that contribute to quality in terms of livability or sustainability are often more concretely defined and more feasible in Amsterdam. Furthermore, in Amsterdam, due to the collective nature of the agreements, housing associations have the opportunity to support each other in fulfilling the collective agreements (Mun. Ams.; TA. Ams.).

## **8.5.2 Municipal social housing policy factors**

### **Differing policy characters**

One of the most prominent trends that has consistently surfaced throughout this thesis is the contrasting policy characters of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, especially regarding social housing. Amsterdam's policy context and social housing policy emphasize tenant welfare and broader inclusivity, while Rotterdam has a more result-oriented scope that aims at policy making from the perspective of the municipality. This is also evident in regional policy, where Amsterdam adopts a more collaborative approach towards its relevant stakeholders, and Rotterdam seeks concrete agreements with peripheral municipalities in order to achieve its social housing ambitions.

Rotterdam behaves more like the enterprising municipality from the New Public Management perspective, in contrast to Amsterdam, which is positioned more in the middle, as demonstrated by the policy analysis. This stems from the political differences between the two cities, with Rotterdam being right-liberal and Amsterdam being left-social. This, in turn, is reflected in the policies implemented, which are a manifestation of the council of Mayor and Aldermen.

Additionally, a shift in policy is visible in Rotterdam. The municipality indicates a desire to collaborate more in the future, and the other parties from the local triangle also endorse this (Mun. Rot.; HA. Rot.; TA. Rot.). Conversely, in Amsterdam, there is an effort to potentially moderate ambitions in the future, making them more achievable both in implementation and in the creation of performance agreements within the local triangle (Mun. Ams.).

In summary, it can be stated that the interviews reveal that Amsterdam is seeking a leading role in ambition and value creation (Public Administration & Societal Resilience), while Rotterdam focuses primarily on a leading role for more efficient collaboration (New Public Management).

### **Focus on the mid-range rental segment in Rotterdam**

Additionally, one of the factors that strongly influences the performance agreements regarding social housing, and distinguishes the two cities from each other, is the focus on the mid-range rental segment in Rotterdam. In doing so, the municipality of Rotterdam aims to pursue the '*bredeschouderpolitiek*' (broad-shoulder policy) and thereby differentiates itself from Amsterdam. For

new developments, this comes down to less focus on the social rental segment and more on the mid-range rental segment in Rotterdam (800 social vs. 1000 mid-range) compared to Amsterdam (2500 social vs. 275 mid-range). This is a political policy choice as a result of differing political climates and over the last twenty years, the influential local party *Leefbaar Rotterdam* played an important role in this trend (HA. Rot.).

This difference is also evident in the policy objectives related to segmentation (20-30-30-20 vs. 40-40-20). Amsterdam also has objectives related to the middle segment, but they are not nearly as dominant as in Rotterdam. Moreover, in Amsterdam, these objectives have little implications for the social housing segment.

In this context, it should be noted that comparatively, the demand for social housing in Amsterdam is also higher, based on the average waiting time for a social housing unit (156 months in Amsterdam vs. 84 months in Rotterdam). In Rotterdam, this shortage is therefore less significant, which can partly explain why Amsterdam continues to maintain a stronger focus on the social housing segment. Additionally, this policy choice also reflects a difference in ideals in protecting vulnerable target groups between liberal Rotterdam and social Amsterdam, as previously explained (HA. Ams.; HA. Rot.).



## 9. Conclusion and discussion

The primary objective of this research was to explain the differences in municipal performance agreements between Amsterdam and Rotterdam, particularly from a perspective of policy context and municipal social housing policy. Through a comparative analysis, this study has aimed to demonstrate to what extent a connection was present. In order to develop a better understanding of this phenomenon, a number of steps were taken.

Firstly, The policy-context differences in affordable social housing between Amsterdam and Rotterdam were researched by. Nationally, Rotterdam feels a stronger influence, especially from the Nationaal Programma Rotterdam-Zuid. Regionally, Rotterdam prefers binding agreements, while Amsterdam values collaboration. Amsterdam boasts a richer social housing history, a higher stock, and centralized housing groups like the FAH. Conversely, Rotterdam's emphasis on social housing is more recent, with a rise in Niet-DAEB stock and reliance on the broader Maaskoepel. Demographically and economically, Amsterdam is younger and knowledge-oriented, while Rotterdam is older and working-class, with political leanings influenced by the local Leefbaar Rotterdam party.

Secondly, the differences in municipal social housing policy were examined using municipal policy documents. The analysis revealed distinct policy profiles: Rotterdam adopts a result-oriented approach, emphasizing government-driven policy development, while Amsterdam leans towards a value-oriented strategy, fostering policies from a societal viewpoint. Specific distinctions include Amsterdam's commitment to preserving and expanding social housing, contrasting with Rotterdam's focus on the mid-range rental sector. Rotterdam targets specific vulnerable groups like students and the elderly, while Amsterdam adopts a holistic approach, addressing vulnerability city-wide. Regionally, Amsterdam collaborates within the Metropoolregio Amsterdam, whereas Rotterdam seeks tangible regional agreements for equitable social housing distribution.

Following, a comparative analysis of the municipal performance agreements was performed. Amsterdam, operating on a four-year cycle, emphasizes long-term planning, affordability, and city cohesion. Rotterdam, on a two-year cycle, prioritizes flexibility, neighborhood balance, and early tenant interventions. While Amsterdam sets clear targets for affordability and

sustainability, Rotterdam leans on broader guidelines from the Woonvisie 2030. Both cities focus on housing availability, but their strategies differ: Amsterdam focuses on preservation and inclusivity, while Rotterdam emphasizes adaptability and neighborhood solutions. Notably, both cities' agreements often lack concrete objectives, leaning more towards intent and plans. Stakeholder interviews further illuminated the background and nuances of these agreements.

Finally, the results of in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders were used to analyze how these differences in performance agreements between the two cities can be explained. The conducted interviews contributed to the findings from the document analyses. The stakeholders from both cities provided relevant insights by offering a more holistic understanding of the social housing sector in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

In conclusion, the results demonstrated that, regarding the differing contents of the performance agreements in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, both the municipal policy context as well as the social housing policy are considered to have a fundamental and relevant role in explaining these differences. While both Amsterdam and Rotterdam operate under the same national Housing Act, their distinct policy contexts and social housing policies have led to notable differences in their performance agreements.

From a perspective of policy context the cities' distinct social compositions and political climates lay a foundational role, with Amsterdam being a socially, left-wing oriented city and Rotterdam a liberal right-wing oriented city. Amsterdam focuses on a broader range of vulnerable groups contrasting with Rotterdam's emphasis on students and the elderly. The influence of umbrella organizations is markedly different in the two cities, shaping the dynamics within the local housing triangle and subsequently affecting the performance agreements. Financial capabilities, affected by property values, also play a crucial role, creating disparities in the housing associations' ability to meet community housing needs and stakeholders' expectations.

On the social housing policy front, the contrasting policy characters of Amsterdam and Rotterdam are evident, which are a result of differing political climates. Amsterdam's approach is characterized by a focus on tenant welfare and inclusivity (PA & SR), while Rotterdam adopts a more result-oriented, efficiency-driven approach (NPM). The focus on the mid-range rental segment is

a distinctive feature of Rotterdam's policy, aiming to balance the housing market but creating a divergence in the cities' approaches to social housing.

In summary, the differences in performance agreements between Amsterdam and Rotterdam can be attributed to their unique social compositions, political climates, the influence of umbrella organizations, financial capabilities of housing associations, contrasting policy characters, and a specific emphasis on the mid-range rental segment in Rotterdam.

It is important to recognize the limitations of this study. The research focused on explaining potential differences without providing a normative framework on the correctness of the results. While this approach offers a balanced perspective, future research could delve into the implications of these differences, especially in the context of broader housing trends in the Netherlands. Further limitations have been extensively discussed in the reflection in Appendix B.

The absence of an umbrella organization for tenant associations in Rotterdam, as highlighted in the analysis, presents an opportunity for further research. Understanding the implications of such an absence on social housing policy-making and municipal performance agreements could provide deeper insights into the municipality's social housing landscape.

When looking back to the current tools from the literature for assessing performance agreements as provided by *VNG* and *SVWN* guidelines, this study proves that the aspects of affordability, availability and quality are a useful tool for laying out the performance agreements. However, purely assessing and comparing based on these elements does not provide a complete understanding of the underlying situation. This study has demonstrated how outlining the multi-level policy context and evaluate the social housing policy using the framework by Van der Steen et. al (2014) can provide additional insight into the background of the performance agreements and the social housing sector in a certain municipality. For this reason, the methodology used could also be of useful application for the guidelines of the *VNG* or as an evaluation tool by the *SVWN*. Additionally, the same methodology could be used in all other Dutch municipalities, with the other major cities in the Randstad, namely Utrecht and The Hague, being a relevant option for further research.

The literature also elaborates on how both cities fall under the same legal umbrella of the Housing Act of 2015. However, this does not mean that the social housing sectors in both are in the same situation. An example illustrating this is how different property value propositions (WOZ) place the Housing Associations in both cities in completely different financial situations, thereby providing them with different capacities to operate within this umbrella. Additionally, it becomes apparent that this legal equality of the tripartite in the local triangle is interpreted differently. In Amsterdam, there is a search for mutual cooperation from a perspective of equality, while in Rotterdam, the municipality takes more of a leading role towards the housing associations, after which the tenant associations often have to join in later as a third party. This aligns with the findings from the differing policy characters, where Rotterdam exhibits a New Public Management type of governance, and Amsterdam pursues a more value-driven policy (Public Administration and Societal Resilience).

The absence of an umbrella organization for tenant associations in Rotterdam, as highlighted in the analysis, therefore presents an opportunity for further research. A centralized umbrella organization for tenants could possibly improve on the equivalency of stakeholders within Rotterdam's local triangle. Further understanding the implications of this absence on social housing policy-making and municipal performance agreements could provide deeper insights into the municipality's social housing landscape.

As The Netherlands still faces a (social) housing shortage and discrepancies between social housing developments in Amsterdam and Rotterdam remain intact, the importance of this research remains present today. By gaining a better understanding of the performance agreements in both cities, this thesis aimed to contribute to the scientific debate on this relevant issue.

## 10. References

- Aalbers, M. B., Loon, J. V., & Fernandez, R. (2017). *The financialization of a social housing provider*. *International journal of urban and regional research*, 41(4), 572-587.
- ABF Research. (2022, 6 februari). *Het statistisch woningtekort nader uitgelegd*. <https://abfresearch.nl/publicaties/het-statistisch-woningtekort-nader-uitgelegd/>
- Aedes (2022, 25 mei). *Wat doen woningcorporaties in Nederland?* <https://www.werkenwonen.nl/woningcorporaties/>
- Aedes. (2022b, juni 22). *Provinciale staten en sociale huisvesting*. Geraadpleegd op 19 februari 2023, van <https://aedes.nl/politiek/provinciale-staten-en-sociale-huisvesting>
- Aedes Datacentrum (2022, 25 mei). *Wat doen woningcorporaties in Nederland?* <https://www.werkenwonen.nl/woningcorporaties/>
- AFWC (2022). *Over AFWC - Afwc* <https://www.afwc.nl/over-afwc/organisatie/over-afwc#/>
- Beekers, W. P. (2008). *Het bewoonbare land: Geschiedenis van de volkshuisvestingsbeweging in Nederland*.
- BIN Nederland. (2017). *Rijk aan gedragsinzichten: editie 2017*. Den Haag: Ministerie van Economische Zaken en Klimaat
- Blaikie, N., & Priest, J. (2019). *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*. Wiley.
- Boelhouwer, P. (2018). *De woningmarkteffecten van de woningwet*.
- Boelhouwer, P. (2020). *The housing market in The Netherlands as a driver for social inequalities: proposals for reform*. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 20(3), 447-456.
- Van Bortel, G., Gruis, V., Nieuwenhuijzen, J., & Pluijmers, B. (2019). *Affordable Housing Governance and Finance*. London and New York: Routledge.
- CBS (2022). *Gemeentelijke gegevens (Amsterdam en Rotterdam)*. retrieved on 1 februari 2023, van <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/>
- Delgado, M. (2017). *Social work with Latinos: Social, economic, political, and cultural perspectives*. Oxford University Press.
- Deuten, G. J., & de Kam, G. R. W. (2005). *Weten van renderen: nieuwe wegen om het maatschappelijk rendement van woningcorporaties zichtbaar te maken*. SEV.
- Ekkers, P. (2006). *Van volkshuisvesting naar woonbeleid*. Den Haag: Sdu uitgevers.
- Elsinga, M., & van Bortel, G. A. (2011). *The future of social housing in the Netherlands*. In *Social housing across Europe* (pp. 98-115). La documentation Francaise.
- Elsinga, M. G., Hoekstra, J. S. C. M., Hof, A. J. C., van der Leij, E. G., & van Rijn, E. (2014). *Literatuurstudie Parlementaire Enquête Woningcorporaties*.

- Engel, H. (2005). *Randstad Holland in kaart. OverHolland, 2*, 23-44.
- Federatie van Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels. (2023, March 14). *Thuis - Federatie Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels*. Federatie Amsterdamse Huurderskoepels. <https://www.fah.nu/#>
- Fenger, M., Kip, T., & van der Veen, R. (2022). *Tien jaar beleid voor werk en inkomen in Rotterdam: een terugblik. Waardevol aan het werk in Rotterdam*, edited by Dekker, Fabian, Menno Fenger, and Maarten van Kooij, 47-67.
- Gemeente Rotterdam (2022). *Nationaal Programma Rotterdam Zuid | Begroting Rotterdam 2022*. Begroting Rotterdam 2022. <https://www.watdoetdegemeente.rotterdam.nl/begroting2022/paragrafen/nationaal-programma-rotte/>
- Gemeente Rotterdam (2023). *Prestatieafspraken woningcorporaties*. Gemeente Rotterdam. <https://www.rotterdam.nl/prestatieafspraken-woningcorporaties>
- Grondwet, Artikel 22, lid 2. (2022, 01 november). Retrieved from <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0001840/2022-11-01/0>
- Heylen, K. (2016). *In en uit de sociale huisvesting*. De dynamiek in kaart gebracht.
- Hoofnagle, C. J., van der Sloot, B., & Borgesius, F. Z. (2019). *The European Union general data protection regulation: what it is and what it means*. *Information & Communications Technology Law*, 28(1), 65-98.
- Hoekstra, J. (2017). *Reregulation and Residualization in Dutch social Housing: a critical Evaluation of new Policies*. *Critical Housing Analysis*, 4(1), 31-39.
- Houard, N. (Ed.) (2011). *Social Housing across Europe*. La documentation Française, Paris
- Intres, M. (2022, June 28). *Bijna € 150 miljoen van Rijk voor bereikbaar maken nieuwbouw in MRA - metropoolregioamsterdam*. Metropoolregioamsterdam. <https://www.metropoolregioamsterdam.nl/bijna-e-150-miljoen-van-rijk-voor-bereikbaar-maken-nieuwbouw-in-mra/>
- Jong, R. de (2013). *De balans verstoord. Een rapport over de corporatie-sector ten behoeve van de parlementaire enquête woningcorporaties*. Den Haag: Aedes (in opdracht van Aedes).
- Jongbloed, B. W. A., Kaiser, F., van Vught, F., & Westerheijden, D. (2022). *Het experiment Prestatieafspraken: een terugblik*. *TH&MA*, 29(5), 28-32.
- Kemeny, J. (1995). *From public housing to the social market, rental policies in comparative perspective*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Koffijberg, J.J. & De Bruijn, J.A. (2021) *Dynamiek in de lokale driehoek*, Geraadpleegd van: <https://www.svwn.nl/>
- Koffijberg, J.J. (2021) *Het functioneren van de 'lokale driehoek' op basis van uitgevoerde visitaties*. Geraadpleegd van: <https://www.svwn.nl/>
- Maaskoepel (n.d.). *Wat wij doen*. <https://www.maaskoepel.nl/maaskoepel/wat-wij-doen>

- Metropoolregio Amsterdam (2023). *Over de Metropoolregio Amsterdam - metropoolregioamsterdam*. (2023, July 18). Metropoolregioamsterdam. <https://www.metropoolregioamsterdam.nl/over-mra/>
- Ministerie van Algemene Zaken. (2022, October 28). *Beleid ruimtelijke ordening*. Ruimtelijke Ordening En Gebiedsontwikkeling | Rijksoverheid.nl. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/ruimtelijke-ordening-en-gebiedsontwikkeling/beleid-ruimtelijke-ordening>
- Ministerie van Algemene Zaken. (2023, 9 januari). *Wat is het verschil tussen een sociale huurwoning en een huurwoning in de vrije sector?* Rijksoverheid.nl. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/huurwoning-zoeken/vraag-en-antwoord/wat-is-het-verschil-tussen-een-sociale-huurwoning-en-een-huurwoning-in-de-vrije-sector>
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2017). *Lokale en regionale woonvisies. Een onderzoek naar de inhoud en het ontstaansproces van woonvisies in de periode 1 juli 2014 - 1 oktober 2016*. Geraadpleegd van: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/>
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2019). *Evaluatie van de herziene Woningwet*. Den Haag: Min. BZK.
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties. (2022, 11 januari). *BZK: nieuwe wetten en wijzigingen per 1 januari 2022*. Nieuwsbericht | Rijksoverheid.nl. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2021/12/23/bzk-nieuwe-wetten-en-wijzigingen-per-1-januari-2022>
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2022a). *Nationale Woon- en Bouwagenda*. Den Haag: Min. BZK.
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2022b). *Nationale prestatieafspraken*. Geraadpleegd van: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/>
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties. (2023, 10 februari). *Het statistisch woningtekort nader uitgelegd*. Home | Volkshuisvesting Nederland. <https://www.volkshuisvestingnederland.nl/onderwerpen/berekening-woningbouwopgave>
- Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat. (2022, 25 mei). *Verantwoording \scheiding DAEB/niet-DAEB in de jaarrekening*. Actuele informatie Autoriteit woningcorporaties | Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport (ILT). <https://www.ilent.nl/onderwerpen/actuele-informatie-autoriteit-woningcorporaties/nieuwsberichten-aw/verantwoording-scheiding-daeb-niet-daeb-in-de-jaarrekening#:~:text=24%2D1%2D2019%20Sinds%202018,scheiding%2C%20of%20voor%20verlicht%20regime>
- Mulder, K., Blonk, A. F., Kemper, A., & Holt, D. (2021). *Betaalbaar wonen in Noord-Holland*. In Rebel Strategy & Development bv. REBEL. Geraadpleegd op 22 februari 2023, van <https://file:///C:/Users/Joel/Downloads/Rapport%20betaalbaar%20wonen%20Noord-Holland.pdf>
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2016). *Koers 2025*. Geraadpleegd op 19 mei 2023, van [https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/volg-beleid/stedelijke-ontwikkeling/documenten/?PagClsIdt=14375833#PagCls\\_14375833](https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/volg-beleid/stedelijke-ontwikkeling/documenten/?PagClsIdt=14375833#PagCls_14375833)



- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2016a). *Programma huisvesting kwetsbare groepen*. Geraadpleegd op 19 mei 2023, van <https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/organisatie/ruimte-economie/wonen/huisvesting-kwetsbare-groepen/>
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2017). *Woonagenda 2025*. Geraadpleegd op 19 mei 2023, van <https://openresearch.amsterdam.nl/page/58802/woonagenda-2025>
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2019). *Samenwerkingsafspraken 2020-2023*. Geraadpleegd op 06 juni 2023, van [https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/784966/samenwerkingsafspraken\\_2020-2023\\_web.pdf](https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/784966/samenwerkingsafspraken_2020-2023_web.pdf)
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2021). *Omgevingsvisie 2050*. Geraadpleegd op 19 mei 2023, van [https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/1007002/0-136821\\_omgevingsvisie-2050-20211116\\_def.pdf](https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/1007002/0-136821_omgevingsvisie-2050-20211116_def.pdf)
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2022, 20 december). *Nieuwbouw 180 sociale- en seniorenwoningen in Zuidas*. <https://www.amsterdam.nl/nieuws/nieuwsoverzicht/sociale-seniorenwoning-en-zuidas/>
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2022a). *Verstedelijkingconcept 2050 MRA*. Geraadpleegd op 19 mei 2023, van <https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/organisatie/ruimte-economie/wonen/huisvesting-kwetsbare-groepen/>
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2022b). *Woningbouwplan 2022-2028*. Geraadpleegd op 19 mei 2023, van [https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/881646/2-woningbouwplan\\_2022-2028.pdf](https://assets.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/881646/2-woningbouwplan_2022-2028.pdf)
- Municipality of Amsterdam. (2023). *Volg het beleid. Wonen*. Amsterdam.nl. <https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/volg-beleid/stedelijke-ontwikkeling/wonen/>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2016). *Woonvisie 2030*. <https://www.rotterdam.nl/woonprogramma>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2017). *Beleidskader Verkoop Huurwoningen*. <https://rotterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/document/5462494/1/17bb4989>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2019). *Addendum Woonvisie 2030*. <https://www.rotterdam.nl/woonprogramma>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2020). *Samen Tegen Woonoverlast*. <https://rotterdam.notubiz.nl/document/7818372/1/19bb17967>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2021). *Wonen en Bouwen Voortgang 2021 | Voorjaarsnota Rotterdam 2021. Voorjaarsnota Rotterdam 2021*. <https://www.watdoetdegemeente.rotterdam.nl/voorjaarsnota2021/programmas/stedelijke-inrichting-en-wonen-en-bouwen/>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2021a). *Omgevingsvisie Rotterdam*. <https://www.rotterdam.nl/omgevingsvisie>



- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2021b). *Actieplan middenhuur 2021*  
<https://begroting-rotterdam-edit.acc.riviumba.com/apps/begroting2020/programmamas/stedelijke-inrichting-en-/wonen-en-bouwen/>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2021c). *Prestatieafspraken 2022-2023 gemeente, corporaties en huurdersorganisaties.*  
<https://www.rotterdam.nl/prestatieafspraken-woningcorporatie>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2022). *Wonen en bouwen | Begroting Rotterdam 2022.*  
 Begroting Rotterdam 2022.  
<https://www.watdoetdegemeente.rotterdam.nl/begroting2022/programmas/stedelijke-inrichting-en-/wonen-en-bouwen/>
- Municipality of Rotterdam (2022a). *Nationaal Programma Rotterdam Zuid | Begroting Rotterdam 2022.* Begroting Rotterdam 2022.  
<https://www.watdoetdegemeente.rotterdam.nl/begroting2022/paragrafen/nationaal-programma-rotte/>
- Municipality of Rotterdam. (2023). *Prestatieafspraken woningcorporaties.* Gemeente Rotterdam. <https://www.rotterdam.nl/prestatieafspraken-woningcorporaties>
- Nieboer, N., & Gruis, V. (2016). *The continued retreat of non-profit housing providers in the Netherlands.* Journal of Housing and the Built Environment(31), 277-295.
- NOS. (2021, 24 april). *Sociale huurwoning? In zeker een kwart van de gemeenten wacht je meer dan 7 jaar.*  
<https://nos.nl/op3/artikel/2377995-sociale-huurwoning-in-zeker-een-kwart-van-de-gemeenten-wacht-je-meer-dan-7-jaar>
- NOS. (2022, 21 juni). *Rotterdamse Tweebosbuurt gesloopt: goed voor de leefbaarheid?* NOS.nl.  
<https://nos.nl/artikel/2385983-rotterdamse-tweebosbuurt-gesloopt-goed-voor-de-leefbaarheid>
- NUL20. (2022, 15 december). *4e ronde Woningbouwimpuls: geld voor 10.000 woningen in regio Amsterdam.*  
<https://www.nul20.nl/4e-ronde-woningbouwimpuls-geld-voor-10000-woningen-regio-amsterdam>
- Overeem, H. R. (2020). *Buy-to-let: Problem or solution? A study on contrasting buy-to-let policies in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.*
- Plettenburg, S. (2018). *Local performance agreements for (social) housing policy-does it work?.*
- Provincie Noord-Holland. (2023, February 8). *Masterplan Wonen 2.0.* Provincie Noord-Holland.  
[https://www.noord-holland.nl/Onderwerpen/Bouwen\\_Wonen/beleid/Masterplan\\_Wonen\\_2\\_0](https://www.noord-holland.nl/Onderwerpen/Bouwen_Wonen/beleid/Masterplan_Wonen_2_0)
- Provincie Zuid-Holland (n.d.) *Omgevingsvisie Zuid-Holland.*  
[https://www.ruimtelijkeplannen.nl/web-roo/transform/NL.IMRO.9928.OVisie-GC09/pt\\_NL.IMRO.9928.OVisie-GC09.xml](https://www.ruimtelijkeplannen.nl/web-roo/transform/NL.IMRO.9928.OVisie-GC09/pt_NL.IMRO.9928.OVisie-GC09.xml)
- Provincie Zuid-Holland. (2023, 16 januari). *Knelpuntenpot sociale huur en middenhuur Zuid-Holland* (woningbouw). Geraadpleegd op 20 februari 2023, van <https://www.zuid-holland.nl/online-regelen/subsidies/subsidies/knelpuntenpot-soci>

ale-huurmiddenhuur-zuid-holland/

- Rijksoverheid. (2023). *Samenwerkingsverband Wonen Regio Rotterdam - Samenwerkingsverbanden -RegioAtlas brengt regionale samenwerking in kaart.* [https://www.regioatlas.nl/samenwerkingsverbanden/samenwerkingsverbanden\\_item/t/samenwerkingsverband\\_wonen\\_regio\\_rotterdam](https://www.regioatlas.nl/samenwerkingsverbanden/samenwerkingsverbanden_item/t/samenwerkingsverband_wonen_regio_rotterdam)
- Rijnmond. (2022, 25 november). *Weer de sloopkogel in Crooswijk, maar dit keer worden sociale huurders niet de wijk uitgejaagd.* <https://www.rijnmond.nl/nieuws/1581436/weer-de-sloopkogel-in-crooswijk-maar-dit-keer-worden-sociale-huurders-niet-de-wijk-uitgejaagd>
- Scholten, P., Crul, M., & Van de Laar, P. (2019). *Coming to terms with superdiversity: The case of Rotterdam* (p. 241). Springer Nature.
- SVWN. (2021). *Beoordelingskader accreditatie: accreditatiecriteria.* Stichting Visitatie Woningcorporaties Nederland.
- SvWrR. (2019). *Regioakkoord Nieuwe Woningmarktafspraken Regio Rotterdam*
- SvWrR. (2021). *REGIONALE WOONVISIE REGIO ROTTERDAM 2021-2040 Fijn wonen in een veelkleurige regio.*
- Van Bortel, G., Gruis, V., Nieuwenhuijzen, J., & Pluijmers, B. (2019). *Affordable Housing Governance and Finance.* London and New York: Routledge.
- Van Drimmelen, F. (2014). *Handboek public affairs: Een open boek over belangenbehartiging en lobbyen.* Prometheus.
- Van de Kamp, L., & Welschen, S. (2019). *Sociale cohesie in gentrificerende arbeiderswijken van Amsterdam-Noord. Beleid en Maatschappij, 46(3), 366-389.*
- Van der Meer, F.M. (2021), *Openbaar bestuur en het ambtelijk apparaat: de gevolgen van een voorwaardenscheppende staat voor de publieke dienst in een multilevel governance systeem.* Publicatiereeks overheid & arbeid nr. 51. Den Haag: CAOP
- Van der Steen, M., Scherpenisse, J., Hajer, M., van Gerwen, O. J., & Kruitwagen, S. (2014). *Leren door doen. Overheidsparticipatie in een energieke samenleving [Learning by doing. Government participation in a vibrant society]. The Hague: PBL/NSOB.*
- Van Gent, W., & Hochstenbach, C. (2020). *The neo-liberal politics and socio-spatial implications of Dutch post-crisis social housing policies.* International Journal of Housing Policy, 20(1), 156-172.
- VNG. (2023). *Handreiking prestatieafspraken.* VNG. <https://vng.nl/publicaties/handreiking-prestatieafspraken>
- VTW publicaties (2022). *Wat eraan vooraf gaat: het gemeentelijk volkshuisvestingsbeleid.* <https://vtw.nl/publicaties/handreiking/toezicht-en-prestatieafspraken/wat-eraan-vooraf-gaat-het-gemeentelijk-volkshuisvestingsbeleid/>
- Woningwet. (2020, 31 juli). Retrieved from <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005181/2020-03-14>
- Woonstad Rotterdam. (2021). *Prestatieafspraken 2022/23 - Woonstad Rotterdam, Huurdersbelang Stadswonen en de gemeente Rotterdam.*

## 11. Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview Questionnaire

Voor mijn afstudeerscriptie aan de TU Delft doe ik een vergelijkend onderzoek naar de sociale huursector in Amsterdam en Rotterdam. Om dit te toetsen vergelijk ik de prestatieafspraken in beide steden met een focus op gemeentelijke context en beleid. Hierbij kijk ik naar het perspectief van de drie belangrijkste stakeholders aangaande prestatieafspraken: de desbetreffende gemeenten, woningcorporaties en huurdersverenigingen.

Het doel van het onderzoek is om de mogelijke verschillen en overeenkomsten in de prestatieafspraken enerzijds, en de gemeentelijke beleidscontext en het sociale huurbeleid anderzijds in kaart te brengen en deze vervolgens te proberen te verklaren.

#### 1. Totstandkoming van de prestatieafspraken

*1.1 Op welke wijze bent u betrokken in het proces, in de vertaling van de woonvisie tot het maken van de prestatieafspraken en de totstandkoming hiervan? Ofwel, hoe loopt de vertaling vanuit uw perspectief tot het maken van de prestatieafspraken en waar ligt het initiatief?*

*1.2 Wie zijn de belangrijkste stakeholders in het proces? Ofwel met welke stakeholders heeft u het meest te maken gedurende het proces?*

*1.3 In Rotterdam is gekozen voor individuele afspraken met woningcorporaties in tweejarige cyclus. Amsterdam kiest voor collectieve afspraken en een vierjarige cyclus. Kunt u de keuze hiervoor in uw stad toelichten, inclusief de eventuele voor- en nadelen?*

#### 2. Inhoud van de prestatieafspraken

De respondenten krijgen de drie hoofdthema's van de prestatieafspraken in hun stad voorgelegd: betaalbaarheid, beschikbaarheid en diverse kwaliteitsaspecten.

*2.1 Wat zijn sterke punten van de huidige prestatieafspraken in uw stad of waar blinken deze in uit?*

*2.2 Wat zijn de bijzonderheden van de huidige prestatieafspraken in uw stad? Bijvoorbeeld ten opzichte van eerdere afspraken of andere precedenten zoals het beleid in andere steden.*

*2.3 Wat mist er in de huidige set prestatieafspraken in uw stad of zijn de zwaktes? Ofwel, wat heeft u niet weten uit te onderhandelen?*

*2.4 In hoeverre wordt de inhoud van de huidige prestatieafspraken gevormd door specifieke contextfactoren van de stad? Heeft u hier voorbeelden van?*

*2.5 Wat is de invloed van nationaal en regionaal beleid op de inhoud van de lokale prestatieafspraken in uw stad? Heeft u hier voorbeelden van?*

### **3. Rol van het gemeentelijke beleid**

*3.1 Wat kenmerkt uw inziens de rol of houding van de gemeente in het formuleringsproces van de prestatieafspraken? Ofwel, wat is de belangrijkste insteek of kernpunten vanuit de gemeente voor de onderhandelingen van de prestatieafspraken?*

*3.2 Zijn er in uw stad specifieke aspecten uit de prestatieafspraken die het gemeentelijk beleid m.b.t. sociale huur en volkshuisvesting in het algemeen kenmerken?*

*3.3 Tevens toets ik het proces van beleidsontwikkeling m.b.t. sociale huur aan de hand van of het gericht is vanuit de overheid richting de burger, of andersom meer gericht vanuit de samenleving richting de overheid. Hoe zou u dit in uw stad definiëren en in welke mate is er participatie en samenwerking vanuit de samenleving mogelijk in de vorming van het sociale huurbeleid?*

*3.4 Daarnaast toets ik een andere variabele in het proces van beleidsontwikkeling. Namelijk of het beleid meer resultaatgericht of anderzijds meer gefocust is op het creëren van toegevoegde waarde (waardegericht). Hoe zou u dit in uw stad definiëren?*

## Appendix B: Reflection

In this attachment, a reflection on the research process and the preliminary results is included. This has been done according to the format provided by TU Delft, which outlines the aspects it should cover. This includes a section on the research process, the results of the research, and some other prescribed components.

### Research process

#### Research design

A research design was chosen that includes a combination of document and literature study in the areas of policy context, municipal social housing policy, and a comparison of the performance agreement documents. This is then supplemented with an analysis based on empirical results from interviews with relevant and involved stakeholders. The aim of this research is whether there is a relationship, based on the interview results, between the differences in municipal policy context and the differences in municipal social housing policy on the one hand, and the differences found in the performance agreements on the other. Also, due to the exploratory and explanatory nature of the research question, which resulted from the problem statement, the most appropriate type of research for this case was thought to be qualitative.

The extensive comparative research on three aspects (municipal policy context, municipal social housing policy, and performance agreements) provides the opportunity to clearly outline these variables regarding the chosen topic and to search for connections in a holistic manner. This broad-oriented design of the research is therefore considered as a strength of the study. However, on the other hand, this broad approach also presents difficulties with demarcation. Especially in the area of policy context and the comparison of the performance agreements, this was challenging. For this reason, I adhered quite strictly to the methodology for each chapter.

In addition, the specific details of the design in relation to answering the sub-questions also had to take shape during the execution of the research, as it oftentimes turned out aspects needed to be investigated in a different manner during the research process. This is an iterative process and has ultimately formed the current research design and framework.

## **Planning**

Proper scheduling of the research process has consistently been a challenging theme throughout this process. On a personal level, I don't look back on my easiest year, and this has also manifested in my research process. I struggled to specify the scope and deliver the associated products. Especially towards this summer, things went awry, and I chose to postpone the submission by one semester. I might have been able to avoid this with a less extensive research design and better planning of the desired progress. During the start of the research semester a detailed plan was in place, but in the end, almost all components of the thesis (*read: sub-questions*) turned out to be more work than anticipated, making the plan essentially unfeasible for the progress I managed to make. On the other hand, taking more time and maintaining the research design led to an overall result that I can ultimately be proud of. If I had chosen to constrain in an earlier stage and made it more achievable for two semesters, this might not have been the case and the quality of the thesis might have been compromised.

## **Research results**

### **Results of the different analyses**

Overall, the preliminary results of the study show helpful results in gaining insights in the main research question, by means of establishing connections between the comparatively assessed documents through the supplementation of the interviews. These results can further be reassessed (reflect on the preliminary analysis after P4) to see if more relationships between the municipal context (SQ1) + the municipal social housing policy (SQ2) and the differences in performance agreements (SQ3) can be learned from the interviews (SQ4), in order to finalize the report towards the P5. The in-depth interviews and my own document analysis worked well together to provide (at least partial) answers to the main research question.

Regarding the outcomes of the performance agreement chapter, it was challenging to compare them side by side because the performance agreements had different procedures and slightly different setups. The chosen framework was carefully adhered to in order to counteract this, and the limitations of this comparison were acknowledged.

### **Difficulties with data-collection**

When considering context, it was challenging to define what to include and what not to. I tried my best to follow the chapter's structure from the methodology and carefully weigh what belongs in it and what doesn't. Ultimately, you see that the national and regional parts don't appear very frequently in the final analysis. On the other hand, it was deemed essential to follow the multi-level governance framework, and it is impossible to predict how relevant those results will be in advance.

In the policy chapter, there were few difficulties with data collection.

To compare the performance agreements, a document from each city has been searched for where the entirety of the performance agreements was incorporated. In Amsterdam, due to the collective nature of the agreement set, there were no difficulties with this. In Rotterdam, it was different because the agreements there were made with individual housing associations. This initially posed a problem for the data collection of this chapter, as manually compiling all individual agreements into an overview is an impossible task within the scope and timeframe of this thesis. Eventually, after several attempts at different departments within the Rotterdam municipality, I received a council letter in which the agreements with all individual housing associations are bundled into an overview.

Finding interviewees wasn't always straightforward. I had set up a framework of eight desired respondent types, with four from each city. Each of these respondents had a different role within the process of the performance agreements. Filling these interview 'categories' sometimes proved challenging. Especially on the side of the municipality in Amsterdam, both in the case of a councilor and the policy officer regarding performance agreements, it was hard to even get in touch with them. Once the interviews were ultimately set, they proceeded as planned.

### **Limitations**

One of the limitations of this research is due to the qualitative nature of the analysis and the results. The results provide a broad overview of the policy making process regarding performance agreements, but based on the document and policy analysis, it cannot necessarily be assessed which city performs better. This is also not in line with the objective of exploratively outlining the differences

without setting standards. As a result, the findings are subject to personal interpretation, although the approach has been described as accurately as possible.

Another limitation of this study is the sample size. eight interviewees provide a snapshot of the situation and highlight objective aspects, but they might still be biased in some way. The only way to prevent this would be to expand the research group, which is not feasible in this thesis. In the end, the respondents were carefully selected, and the problem statement was thus viewed from multiple stakeholders' perspectives.

Lastly, another limitation of this comparative study is the difference of used definitions. Both cities might use different terminology for certain aspects, which can complicate the comparison. An example of this is how a municipality defines its social stock.

## **Other components**

### **Relation between topic, track and master programme**

The master's track in Management in the Built Environment (MBE), which aims to give students the knowledge and abilities to successfully analyze and manage complex projects within the built environment, has core objectives and competencies that are closely aligned with the chosen research topic. Housing governance is an interdisciplinary field that draws on expertise from many disciplines, including that of MSc AUBS. The topic, which centers on housing-related municipal policy, is appropriate for the Chair of Housing and Governance. In turn, this chair plays an important role within the MBE track.

### **Social and scientific relevance**

The development process and formulation of performance agreements have only been anchored in this manner within the institutional system (local triangle) since 2015. For this reason, it can be argued that broadly researching its implementation and evaluating it in this way is scientifically relevant. This is especially true when considering the societal importance of the social housing sector. There is still relatively little research on the policy implementation of this system and its connection to municipal policy and its policy context.



### **Ethical considerations**

The use of data (interview results) that, when traceable to a specific individual, could be considered sensitive, especially since some of the respondents were critical of their own organization. For this reason, full anonymization of the interviewees' input for the results was promised up front, for them to be able to speak without restraint. Additionally, in accordance with the guidelines of TU Delft, a Data Management Plan was established to ensure this.

### **Transferability**

The transferability of the research results centers on their exploratory nature when it comes to housing governance, particularly within the framework of performance agreements. The findings could be considered by other municipal governments, or parties involved in the performance agreements. The inclusion of diverse stakeholders, as reflected in the interview data, and the depth of their insights, especially those critical of their own organizations, contribute to the research's comprehensiveness.

### **Utilization potential**

The results not only provide an intriguing insight into the differences between the two cities, but the identified relationships also offer a more general perspective on how a certain type of policy and context influences the performance agreements. This, along with the associated methodology, could potentially be used and replicated in other Dutch municipalities. Additionally, the research might be useful for professionals involved in performance agreements, municipal housing policy, and social housing policy in a broader sense.

## Appendix C: Data Management Plan

### Plan Overview

*A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline*

**Title: Different cities, different social housing? A comparative case study on the performance agreements in the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam from a perspective of policy-context and municipal policy.**

**Creator:** Joes de Klein

**Affiliation:** Delft University of Technology

**Template:** TU Delft Data Management Plan template (2021)

#### **Project abstract:**

The Netherlands has faced a significant housing shortage for years, with a deficit of over 300,000 dwellings. This shortage is prevalent in both the owner-occupied and rental sectors, particularly in social housing. With national average waiting times of seven years, and up to twenty years in major cities, the issue is pressing. Housing associations, governed by the national Housing Act of 2015, play a crucial role in providing affordable housing to vulnerable and low-income groups. However, there is a noticeable discrepancy in the social housing development policies between Rotterdam and Amsterdam. This research aims to understand the differences in the municipal performance agreements of these two cities, considering both municipal context and policy. The study delves into the municipal policy context, policy differences at the municipal level, and a comparative policy analysis of the performance agreements in both cities. Through in-depth interviews, the research seeks to explain the variations in the performance agreements from the perspective of municipal context and policy. The findings reveal that both the municipal policy context and the social housing policy play a fundamental role in explaining the differences in performance agreements between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Despite operating under the same national Housing Act, the cities' distinct social compositions, political climates, and financial capabilities have led to notable differences in their agreements. Amsterdam's approach is characterized by a focus on tenant welfare and inclusivity, while Rotterdam adopts a more result-oriented, efficiency-driven approach, with a specific emphasis on the mid-range rental segment. The influence of umbrella organizations and the absence of a centralized tenant association in Rotterdam also contribute to the disparities. This study contributes to the understanding of municipal performance agreements in the context of social housing, providing insights that could be useful for policy development and evaluation. The methodology used in this research could also be applied to other Dutch municipalities, offering a comprehensive framework for analyzing social housing policies and performance agreements.

**ID:** 134082

**Start date:** 05-09-2022

**End date:** 01-11-2023

**Last modified:** 22-09-2023

## **I. Data description and collection or re-use of existing data**

### **4. How much data storage will you require during the project lifetime?**

- < 250 GB

## **II. Documentation and data quality**

### **5. What documentation will accompany data?**

- The methodology for data collection and a summary of the findings from the data.

## **III. Storage and backup during research process**

### **6. Where will the data (and code, if applicable) be stored and backed-up during the project lifetime?**

- OneDrive
- The researcher also holds a physical back-up of the data during the project's lifetime, in case anything happens to the data on the drive. This back-up will be deleted after the project has been finished

## **IV. Legal and ethical requirements, codes of conduct**

### **7. Does your research involve human subjects or 3rd party datasets collected from human participants?**

- Yes, a total of 8 interview respondents

### **8A. Will you work with personal data? (information about an identified or identifiable natural person)**

- No

### **8B. Will you work with any other types of confidential or classified data or code as listed below? (tick all that apply)**

- No, I will not work with any confidential or classified data/code

### **9. How will ownership of the data and intellectual property rights to the data be managed?**

The datasets underlying the published papers will be publicly released following the TU Delft Research Data Framework Policy. During the active phase of research, the researcher from TU Delft will oversee the access rights to data (and other outputs), as well as any requests for access from external parties. They will be released publicly no later than at the time of publication of corresponding research papers.

## **V. Data sharing and long-term preservation**

### **26. What data will be publicly shared?**

- All data (and code) produced in the project

The data and results from the interviews are completely anonymized and summarized in the empirical results section of the thesis. The anonymized written transcriptions of the interviews can be requested from the researcher.

**28. How will you share your research data (and code)?**

- All data will be uploaded to 4TU.ResearchData

**30. How much of your data will be shared in a research data repository?**

- < 100 GB

**31. When will the data (or code) be shared?**

- At the end of the research project

The processed data, in the form of the results chapter, will be shared in the repository at the end of the project.

**32. Under what licence will be the data/code released?**

- CC0

**VI. Data management responsibilities and resources**

**33. Is TU Delft the lead institution for this project?**

- Yes, the only institution involved

**34. If you leave TU Delft (or are unavailable), who is going to be responsible for the data resulting from this project?**

- Thesis supervisors or the coordinator of the graduation laboratory (MBE-department, Faculty of Architecture).

**35. What resources (for example financial and time) will be dedicated to data management and ensuring that data will be FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-usable)?**

4TU.ResearchData is able to archive 1TB of data per researcher per year free of charge for all TU Delft researchers. We do not expect to exceed this and therefore there are no additional costs of long term preservation.