



# Rotterdam World City: fixed direction, new ambitions

Programme for International  
and European Activities  
2009-2010



ROTTERDAM WORLDPORT WORLD CITY ROTTERDAM WORLDPORT WORLD CITY

# Rotterdam World City: fixed direction, new ambitions

**Programme for International and  
European Activities 2009-2010**

**“I am a citizen of the  
world, my homeland is  
everywhere”**

Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus,  
Erasmus of Rotterdam

# Foreword

International and European procedures are having an increasingly direct impact on the public. Thanks to our port, our history of enterprise, our business mentality and international orientation, Rotterdam is a significant city both nationally and internationally. But that also means that we must remain alert at all times. Only by promptly anticipating and responding to developments in the world can we further strengthen our international position.

For this reason, the municipal council considers it desirable to approach Rotterdam's international and European activities in an integrated and structured way. To make this clear and transparent, a Programme for International and European Activities 2009-2010 (PIEA) was drafted, bearing the title 'Rotterdam World City: fixed direction, new ambitions'. This title expresses the fact that Rotterdam will, in the first place, be continuing on its chosen path, internationally speaking. Continuity and the use of effective and tried-and-tested networks are a precondition for achieving results, particularly with international contacts.

Nevertheless, we must make even better use of our capabilities in the coming years. Herein lies our most important task. New ambitions need to be formulated if we are to position and profile Rotterdam in the right way on the international stage. Co-operation and consolidation; these are the new keywords. Being proactive, creative, courageous and innovative. In the PIEA 2009-2010, this is translated into a clear policy framework. A future-oriented approach that leads to tangible results and will increase Rotterdam's strength as an attractive, multifaceted metropolis.

ing. A. Aboutaleb  
Mayor of Rotterdam



# Table of contents

## I. Main features and action points

## II. Clarification

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Background and function
- 1.2 Structure

### 2. The role of Rotterdam in the international arena

- 2.1 Variation in roles, distinct priorities
- 2.2 World-class player, main role player and team player

### 3. Economy and port as starting point

- 3.1 International relations from an economic-geographic perspective
- 3.2 Germany, trading partner number 1
- 3.3 Stars of economic growth: Brazil, Russia, India, China and Turkey
- 3.4 'Business as usual': United States and United Kingdom
- 3.5 Insight into 'high potentials'

### 4. Profile and position through themes

- 4.1 International relations from a themed perspective
- 4.2 Climate and energy
- 4.3 Water
- 4.4 Participation for all Rotterdammers: social cohesion and participation
- 4.5 Daring and allure in art, culture and sport
- 4.6 Themed years and months

### 5. Rotterdam in the world, the world in Rotterdam

- 5.1 International relations: from countries of origin to special partnerships
- 5.2 Countries with which there is a special bond

### 6. World City with many relationships

- 6.1 International relations: making functional use of a broad network
- 6.2 Inter-city relations

### 7. Brussels is the capital of Rotterdam

- 7.1 The European Union and decentralised authorities: administrative relationship evolving
- 7.2 Networks: strengthen position and learn from each other
- 7.3 European priorities for Rotterdam
- 7.4 Making optimum use of European instruments

### 8. Organising the execution

- 8.1 Different roles: joining forces in Rotterdam
- 8.2 Steering, coordination and instruments

# I.

# Main features and action points

## Main features

### 1. Programme for International and European Activities (PIEA)

Rotterdam wants to further strengthen its international position. For this reason, the municipal council is approaching Rotterdam's international and European activities in an integrated and structured way with the Programme for International and European Activities 2009-2010 (PIEA). The title of this programme is 'Rotterdam World City: fixed direction, new ambitions'. This title expresses the fact that Rotterdam will, in the first place, be continuing on its chosen path, internationally speaking.

### 2. Function of PIEA

The main function of the Programme for International and European Activities 2009-2010 is: to create a transparent policy framework with priorities, thereby improving coordination between Rotterdam's various activities.

### 3. World-class player, main role player, team player

Rotterdam is an international world-class player when it comes to port economics, industry, logistics and maritime affairs. The port of Rotterdam aims to be best, the cleanest, most sustainable and safest port.

Rotterdam is an international main role player when it comes to the approach to social problems, among other things. Within the European Union, Rotterdam has made a name for itself in the field of urban development, but also with policy on participation and safety.

When Rotterdam is not playing a main role player, the city takes part as a 'team player' in the networks or projects of other cities. This way Rotterdam remains up to date on international developments and responds quickly to new initiatives and changing circumstances.

### 4. Economy and port as starting point: BRICT

For Rotterdam, the economic motive is the predominant one when initiating and maintaining international relations. For this reason, Rotterdam gives priority to

Germany and the so-called BRICT countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and Turkey). City links with Cologne, Shanghai and St. Petersburg play an important role here. International relations with the United States and the United Kingdom will be continued.

### 5. Knowing which countries and cities will become of interest

Existing markets and relations are maintained, new markets are explored. A clear picture is obtained of the countries and cities (high potentials in terms of economic growth) with which Rotterdam will enter into new co-operative relationships in the coming decade.

### 6. Profile and position through focus on themes

In addition to selecting priority countries and cities from an economic-geographic perspective, Rotterdam also chooses to enhance its profile and position by being internationally active and successful on a number of specific themes.

The most important of these are climate and energy, water, social cohesion and participation (within the context of which the ambition to be 'intercultural leading city' is fleshed out in more detail), art & culture and sport. On the basis of an integrated approach, Rotterdam is establishing an ever-stronger relationship between priority countries and cities on one hand and substantive priority themes on the other, thereby making the efforts even more productive in terms of overall results.

### 7. From countries of origin to special partnerships

For years now, Rotterdam has maintained international relations with countries and cities with which large groups of Rotterdammers have a special bond because they, their parents, grandparents or other family members were born there. Up to now, these countries were often referred to by the term 'countries of origin'. In Rotterdam, this mainly involves Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles and Cape Verde. From now on, Rotterdam will speak of countries and cultures with which there is a special connection ('special partnerships').

Wherever possible, in the coming years, an increasing emphasis will be placed on the economic aspects of these relationships too, as well as on Rotterdam's priority themes.

### **8. City relationships: it is about the content and the significance for the city**

A metropolis like Rotterdam maintains friendly relations with many other cities around the world. Within the context of these relations too, increasing emphasis is being placed on the economic aspects of the relationships, as well as on Rotterdam's priority themes.

With a number of sister cities – such as Shanghai, Cologne and St. Petersburg in particular – Rotterdam has intensive contacts; other cities might not bear the title of sister city, but they are important partners in specific areas. It is a question of the content, not the name of the co-operative relationship. For this reason, Rotterdam will not be entering into any new sister city relationships. With respect to cities which have no direct link with Rotterdam's priority areas or themes, restraint will be exercised in the coming years.

### **9. Brussels is the capital of Rotterdam**

The European Union has a major influence on Rotterdam policy, both directly and indirectly. Rotterdam wants to:

- play a strong role in the European arena, in order to influence EU policy and regulations as much as possible;
- make use of the opportunities provided by European networks and subsidy programmes in an effective and efficient manner.

The starting point for Rotterdam is that the big cities of Europe must take the initiative themselves if they want to talk directly with decision-making European bodies about important dossiers. It is therefore very important to take part in strong European city networks.

### **10. Priority areas of concern within European Union**

Rotterdam chooses priority areas of concern within the EU, whereby:

- the municipality is able to take responsibility for the approach to the problem;
- the subject involved is a decisive factor in good urban development.

This means that Rotterdam must pay particular attention to the European dossiers in the field:

- economic development, knowledge economy and infrastructure;
- the environment, climate, energy and water;
- social cohesion, participation, youth and safety.

### **11. European subsidies**

Rotterdam is adopting a more forceful approach when it comes to attracting European funding. The provision of information on potentially interesting subsidy programmes is to be improved. The non-physical sector requires more attention. A one-stop-shop for knowledge relating to European subsidies will provide assistance in preparing for applications.

### **12. Co-operation with trade and industry, social organisations and knowledge institutes**

Rotterdam can only achieve the set ambitions if there is good co-operation with trade and industry (such as the Port of Rotterdam Authority), social agencies and organisations and other authorities both at home and abroad. There is coordination in the international-economic field in the so-called Vierhoek (Quadrangle). Full advantage is taken of opportunities for mutual co-operation.

The municipality of Rotterdam is intensifying co-operation in the field of international relations with knowledge and scientific institutions in the city and region. Even closer collaboration will be established with Erasmus University in particular.

### **13. Organisation within Rotterdam**

The Municipal Executive is directing policy on international relations. At the heart of the implementation is the Rotterdam Development Corporation, the Chief Marketing Officer and the departments of Social Affairs & Employment, Youth, Education & Society, Art & Culture, and Sport & Recreation. The departments of Spatial Planning & Housing and Public Works are also active on the European and international stage.

The Administrative Department is responsible for the successful strategic coordination of the policy on international and European relations. An important advisory body is the Rotterdam International Advisory Board, part of the Economic Development Board Rotterdam.

### **14. About the city, by the city: branding and hosting**

The strategy developed in 2008 for Rotterdam's international signature, 'Rotterdam World Port, World City', will be the focus, right across the municipality, for Rotterdam's branding in the coming years. The accompanying 'brandbox', which is available in various languages, plays an important role here.

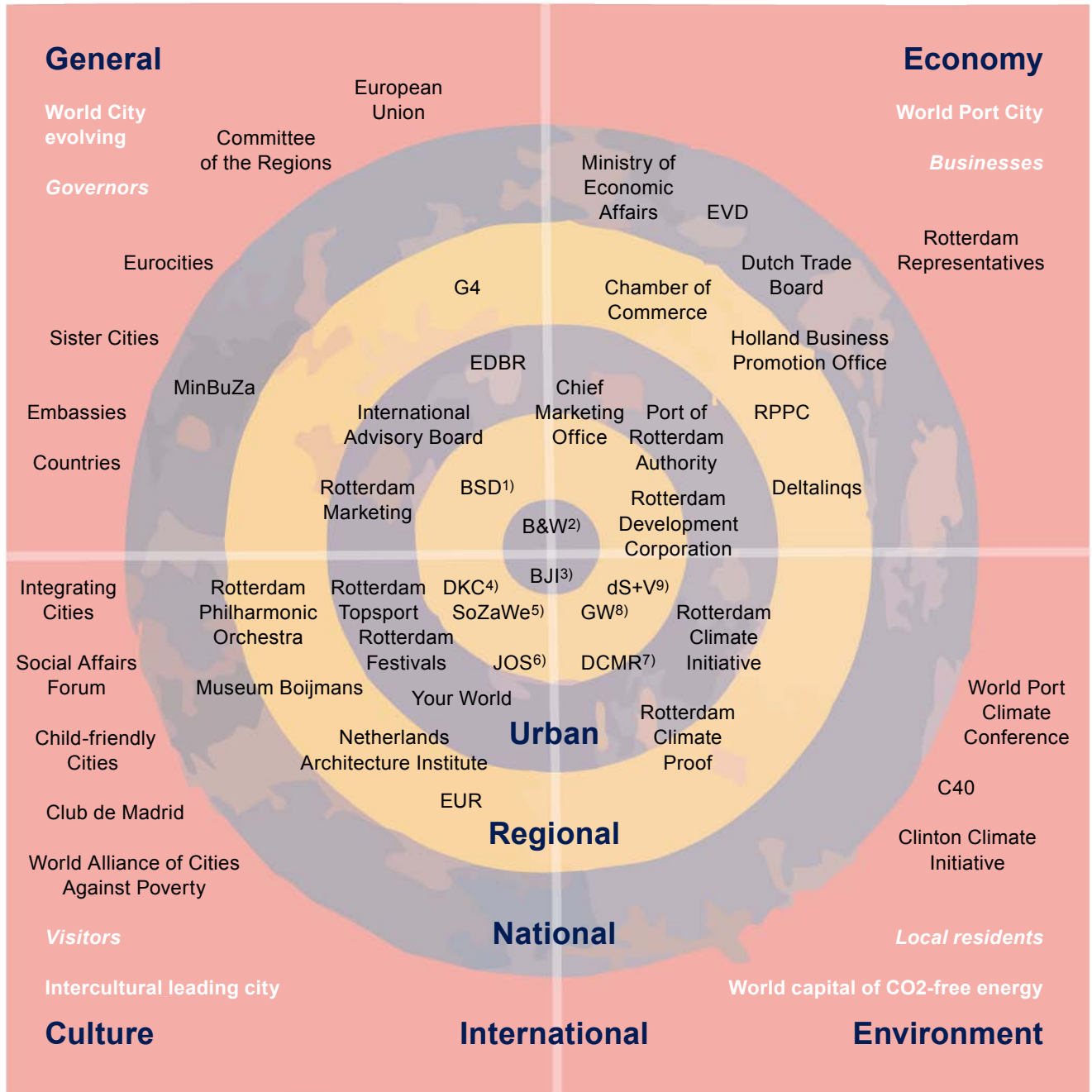
Excellent hosting is one of the keys to successful international relations. Excellent hosting means that for companies, their employees wishing to settle here, foreign students et cetera, 'the red carpet' is rolled out as quickly as possible. The Rotterdam Expat Desk serves an important function here. Hosting is also relevant when it comes to receiving delegations from abroad and large international conferences.

### **15. Quality management of international function**

Rotterdam acknowledges the importance of a high quality international function within the municipality. Officials who are charged with duties in the field of international relations must possess specific competencies. Education and training are made available. Within Rotterdam, there is an active International and European network, coordinated by the Administrative Department.

# European and international action programme

Primary stakeholders and objectives



1) Administrative Department

2) Municipal Executive

3) Administrative, Legal and International Affairs Department

4) Department of Art and Culture

5) Social Affairs and Employment Department

6) Youth, Education and Society Department

7) Environmental Protection Agency Rijnmond

8) Public Works Department

9) Spatial Planning and Housing Department



## Action points

1. Rotterdam's strategy with respect to Germany, China and Brazil will be continued in 2009-2010. With respect to India, Russia and Turkey, the strategy will be detailed further in a specific approach, in 2009.
2. In 2009-2010, Rotterdam will do more to make its contribution to the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai a success.
3. In 2009, Rotterdam is organising a 'Brazilian summer', with the focus on cultural exchange and enhanced economic co-operation.
4. In 2009, an analysis will be made of existing relations with the US and the UK, on the basis of which an indication will be given, in a plan of action, of where opportunities for further intensification and improvement lie.
5. In the first half of 2009, the possibilities for closer co-operation with knowledge and research institutes – including Erasmus University – will be mapped out.
6. From 2009 onwards, an annual report will be drawn up on current developments with respect to 'high potentials': countries and cities which might offer interesting leads for (more) co-operation with Rotterdam.
7. In 2009-2010, Rotterdam will remain closely involved in the further development of social policy in major European cities and relevant EU policy, such as that to be discussed at the third meeting of Integrating Cities in Berlin in 2009, and with the activities of the Social Affairs Forum of Eurocities.
8. Rotterdam aims to become 'Intercultural leading city'. In order to achieve this, Rotterdam's vision on this will have to be fleshed out further in the coming years and implemented in concrete activities, in such a way that the ambition is also recognised and acknowledged by the people of Rotterdam.
9. Rotterdam will be European Youth Capital in 2009, and will make every effort to anchor the notion of 'youth capital' structurally in the European policy. In the context of Youth Capital, a wide-ranging programme of events, conferences, exhibitions etc. will be organised, and visited by many young people from countries all over the world.
10. Rotterdam is a member of the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty (WACAP). This is a global network of cities, part of the UN organisation UNDP, whose objective is to fight poverty at the local level. Every two years, the WACAP organises a big international conference. Rotterdam will host the conference in 2010.
11. In 2009 – in line with the Cultural Plan 2009-2012 – a programme 'Internationalisation' will be available in connection with the policy on culture.
12. In the coming years, Rotterdam will put even more effort into organising major sporting events. In 2010, Rotterdam will organise the Grand Départ of the Tour de France. Rotterdam also hopes to play an important role in the organisation of the FIFA World Cup in 2018 and the Olympic Games in 2028. In relation to the Olympic Games in London in 2012, Rotterdam will serve as 'Gateway to the Games'.
13. At the beginning of 2010, a Rotterdam strategy on renewed co-operation with the 'special partnership' countries of Morocco, Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles and Cape Verde will be completed.
14. In 2009, Rotterdam will have completed an analysis on the status of current links with other cities. On this basis, further decisions will be made on what shape the co-operative relationships will take..
15. In 2009, Rotterdam's lobbying strategy in Brussels will be further enhanced, for example by increasing Brussels-inclusive thinking in the Rotterdam organisation. A specific programme will be developed to this end.
16. In 2009, Rotterdam will deploy a specific toolkit, which was developed by Rotterdam in a European context for the benefit of local authorities, to involve the public more directly in European activities.
17. In 2009, practical guidelines will be issued to assist the Rotterdam organisation in looking into and obtaining European subsidies.
18. In 2009, the role Rotterdam's municipal districts could play in the implementation of the PIEA will be mapped out, together with these municipal districts.
19. In the coming years, intensive use will be made of Rotterdam's brand signature 'World Port, World City' and the accompanying brandbox when developing and managing international relations.
20. In 2009, the approach to international acquisition and 'hosting' will be further enhanced, partly on the basis of the recommendations made on the matter by the Economic Development Board Rotterdam (EDBR) at the end of 2008.
21. In 2009, Rotterdam will get a revamped City Portal on the web. This site will contain fast, easily-accessible and complete information – in various languages – about Rotterdam's international relations.
22. In 2009, a Masterclass will be organised to support and improve the international function within the municipality of Rotterdam. A toolkit for civil servants with international duties will also be developed.
23. From 2010 onwards, Rotterdam will publish an international and European annual report on the activities of the previous year.

# II. Clarification



# 1.

# Introduction

## 1.1

### Background and function

Rotterdam is a city with an international character. It enjoys a strong reputation throughout the world: a city with an unmistakable trading mentality that gets business done quickly and is not afraid to try something new.

This profile is very important to Rotterdam's competitive position and must be utilised to the full. Strong, sustainable economic development is a top priority, after all. We want to retain and expand our mainport position. To attract new companies and people to our city and keep them there. To become an even more powerful metropolis.

An important aim of maintaining international and European relations is therefore to contribute towards the achievement of Rotterdam's economic ambitions. The fact is that there is a clear relationship between effective international relations on the one hand and sustainable economic growth on the other.

At the same time, Rotterdam is also home to 580,000 citizens of 174 different nationalities. About 45% of Rotterdam's inhabitants have their roots in countries other than the Netherlands. Rotterdam is the youngest city in the country. Almost a third of the population is younger than 28. Young people think in international terms.

This is also where opportunities lie for further enhancing Rotterdam's profile as a metropolis. One thing that attracts international investors is an environment in which the combined strengths of various nationalities and cultures are visible and tangible in a positive way.

Not only economic motives play a role in maintaining international relations based in Rotterdam, but also the exchange of knowledge, co-operation in the social or cultural field and the staging of (sporting) events.

These motives are sometimes an extension of economic interests. Sometimes, however, it is also a question of the separate importance of the quality of life and social environment in Rotterdam (for example improving social relations) or of improving the quality of Rotterdam's administrative organisation (learning from other countries and cities).

Maintaining international and European relations often means building up, maintaining and continuing broad networks of relationships. Against this background, the Programme for International and European Activities 2009-2010 (PIEA) has the following three functions:

1. The PIEA makes the policy on international relations and the accompanying activities *more transparent*. The PIEA can provide inspiration both within and beyond the municipal organisation and thereby further enhance the effect of Rotterdam's international and European policy.
2. The PIEA sets the *priorities* for the coming years and thereby a *policy framework* for the council and top civil servants. It is impossible to keep tabs on everything and know what's going on all over the world. The priorities are determined to an important degree by the current Municipal Executive objectives and ensuing policy documents, plans and programmes. Effective international relations can support or accelerate the achievement of the goals set.
3. With the increased transparency, the PIEA has better opportunities for *coordinating* international and European activities right across the municipality. This coordination is important, for instance, when preparing international working visits.

The PIEA does not provide a comprehensive enumeration of all Rotterdam's international and European activities.

## 1.2

### Structure

Following the introduction, *Chapter 2* provides a brief description of the roles Rotterdam plays internationally:

- *World-class player* when it comes to port economics and maritime affairs.
- *Main role player* on specific themes, such as social policy, safety, the environment and architecture.
- *Team player* to reckon with in other areas of policy.

*Chapter 3* is about the use of Rotterdam's international relations to benefit the interests of the economy and port.

*Chapter 4* provides a description of the themes on which Rotterdam wishes to play a main role internationally.

*Chapter 5* covers the international relations which Rotterdam maintains with countries and cities with which large groups of Rotterdammers have a special bond because they, their parents, grandparents or other members of their family were born there. Rotterdam therefore also has a special connection with these countries, the so-called special partnerships.

*Chapter 6* looks in more detail at the fact that Rotterdam has an expansive city network throughout the world, which is put to functional use in achieving its international policy goals.

*Chapter 7* describes how the relationship between the European Union and the decentralised authorities is developing strongly. Europe is becoming increasingly aware of how much it needs local government, both to make the policy as workable and sustainable as possible outwardly and to enforce the policy and bring Europe closer to the people.

*Chapter 8* outlines how the implementation of the activities described will take shape.

A picture of aims and priorities as included in this programme says a lot about Rotterdam's ambitions in the field of international relations. However, the great involvement of people who bear responsibility for this says even more. For this reason, quotes from a number of these people are included. It becomes clear that we are talking about more than just a professional involvement here: Rotterdam has their *hearts*, precisely *because* it is a metropolis with ambitions. Ambitions which are achieved together!



# 2.

# The role of Rotterdam in the international arena

## 2.1

### Variation in roles, distinct priorities

Rotterdam's policy with respect to international relations and the associated priorities are determined partly by the fact that Rotterdam plays various different roles on the international stage.

At one time, it is that of world-class player, another time as main role player and then again as team player. Each role makes its own demands in terms of preparation, execution and level of ambition. Because that is all part and parcel of the Rotterdam Approach: seeing opportunities and then making use of these in a realistic way.

Rotterdam maintains many relations with cities and city networks throughout the world. This usually involves both administrative and official relations.

Whenever practical for administrative reasons, Rotterdam also maintains relations with national governments. Even if there are few contacts as yet with a country, region or city, but it would be desirable to build these up in the future, relationships are frequently established initially (often hand in hand with the Central Government or with other big cities) via national governments.

The contacts and efforts vary from country to country, from city to city, from theme to theme and from situation to situation. The approach to, the intensity and the form of maintaining international relations can also differ. In some countries, periods or situations, the role of Rotterdam municipal council is essential in building a bridgehead or managing partnerships or bonds of friendship. In other cases, businesses easily find their own way.

The call for the municipality of Rotterdam to take part in international activities is increasing all the time. Precisely because relations at the international level

often have to be built up and maintained over a longer period, it is even more vital to be critical when entering into new relations.

In a geographic sense, relation management with Germany and the countries with rapidly developing economies – Brazil, Russia, India and China (the so-called BRIC countries) and Turkey – enjoys *top priority*.

Top priority from a more thematic perspective is based on the topic Climate and energy, among other things.

In its various roles as world-class player, main role player and team player, Rotterdam does what is necessary to achieve these top priorities and the other aims of its international policy.

## 2.2

### World-class player, main role player and team player

#### World-class player

Rotterdam is a world-class player when it comes to port economics, industry, logistics and maritime affairs. The port of Rotterdam is no longer the largest in the world, but does aim to be the best (the cleanest, most sustainable and safest port).

Consolidation and expansion of the port's position as gateway to Europe are very important here. It is essential to strengthen the knowledge economy and services. The co-operation between the municipality of Rotterdam and the Port of Rotterdam Authority, other businesses and related representative organisations is intensive and close.

### Main role player

At both the international and European level, Rotterdam is known as a modern and innovative city. Internationally, there is a lot of interest in the Rotterdam approach to social problems. Within the European Union, Rotterdam has made a name for itself in the field of urban development, policy on participation and integration, safety, but also when it comes to traffic and transport and energy and environmental policy.

This profile of Rotterdam is also largely related to the effort of Rotterdam's administrators, officials, experts from the business world and social organisations in international networks. In various policy fields, Rotterdam is regularly called on to share knowledge, experience and expertise. That creates opportunities, but also obligations.

Rotterdam also presents itself as a main role player when it comes to organising and facilitating conferences and (sporting) events resulting from the Executive's priorities and current events. Optimum use is made of international contacts and networks here.

### Team player

Globalisation brings with it the need to view all policy fields in an international perspective too. However, this does not mean that Rotterdam aims to lead the international field in every area of policy. It is necessary to set priorities. When Rotterdam is not a main roleplayer, the city takes part as a 'team player' in the networks or projects of other cities. In this way, Rotterdam remains up to date on international developments and can respond quickly to new initiatives, changing circumstances and priorities.

As one of the biggest cities in the Netherlands, Rotterdam co-operates in virtually all fields within the European Union in the context of the G4 (4 largest cities in the Netherlands). As one of the medium-sized cities in Europe, Rotterdam co-operates with other European cities in order to know about the new developments and to compare its position.



# 3.

# Economy and port as starting point

## 3.1

### International relations from an economic-geographic perspective

When choosing to maintain international relations with certain countries or cities (the geographic perspective on maintaining international relations), the economic motive is predominant.

The port of Rotterdam wants to be the cleanest, most sustainable and safest port. In the Port Plan 2020, a number of ambitions are set out for improving the international appeal of the port and city. Rotterdam wants to be a sustainable port and also – as an extension of this – an important energy port. The development of alternative sources of energy and the establishment of chains of energy and raw materials are key here. Energy-related commercial activity is thereby also a target for international acquisition. The transition from crude oil as a basis for generating energy to other forms of energy also affects Rotterdam directly. All activities surrounding energy-related commercial operations together constitute an economic growth sector for Rotterdam.

In addition to this, Rotterdam is focusing primarily – internationally speaking – on two other growth sectors, i.e. the medical sector and the creative industry.

In the past decades, the scale of goods flows over the world has increased sharply. The reasons for this include the economic growth of countries in Asia and Eastern Europe. The port of Rotterdam plays an important role in the processing of these goods flows when it comes to markets in the European hinterland and as a transit port. The competitive battle between cities is currently concentrated globally on the knowledge and service economy in particular. It is not only a question here of separate cities, but primarily also metropolitan regions such as the Randstad. The future of mainport Rotterdam is of strategic importance for the future competitive

---

**Mark Harbers, Vice Mayor for the Economy, Port and Environment:**

“Further commercial international profiling is crucial for the healthy economic development of the Rotterdam region. In addition to our ambition to attract international companies, we as a city would like to see the well-educated employees of these companies settling here. In the period ahead, we will therefore be focusing on providing more services for the international business community and on facilitating expats as optimally as possible, in order to further enhance Rotterdam’s international appeal for foreign workers.”

---

---

**Ivo Weekenborg, Director Economy,  
Rotterdam Development Corporation:**

“Rotterdam is the city of ‘the daughters’”. There are 340 foreign companies operating from Rotterdam. Together, they provide 12,000 jobs. Their parent companies are distributed throughout the world. But Rotterdam is more than a city of goods and subsidiaries. We also have a strong international reputation as a city of architecture, with many internationally renowned firms of architects, urban planners and leading institutes. Rotterdam companies are also going international and now have a joint total of 1100 subsidiaries abroad.”

---

**Jan Willem Oosterwijk, Chair Board  
of Governors, Erasmus University  
Rotterdam:**

“At home in the world – this is the motto of our university, taken from Desiderius Erasmus. We are a strong, international university, rooted in the port and trading city of Rotterdam. The city and region form our academic workplace, here we generate high-calibre knowledge on (metropolitan) issues, in such fields as entrepreneurship, healthcare, sustainability, logistics, integration and safety. Knowledge that is among the best in the world and that attracts many researches, lecturers and students from abroad every year – more than 3,000 in 2007! But knowledge alone is not the key to happiness; we are working on an attractive campus – and city – for our guests, so that they feel at home in our world.”

position of the whole Randstad. Rotterdam enjoys a unique position here, at the interface of two spatial-economic networks: the Randstad and the delta area of the Rhine and Scheldt.

In the policy document ‘Randstad 2040’, the Dutch Cabinet set out its vision on the matter. Rotterdam is closely involved in a number of ‘Randstad Urgent’ projects, such as the Container Transferium, Stadshavens and Maasvlakte II. The further development of the Metropolitan Region Rotterdam-The Hague will also receive attention in the coming years.

All these developments present Rotterdam and its partners in the business world with major challenges. The government – both municipal and national – plays an important role here. Rotterdam Development Corporation plots the strategic course for the economic development of the city and directs the implementation of the measures involved relating to, for example, infrastructure, urban development, accessibility and services. An effective approach to international acquisition is also very important here. The activities are focused on the product/market combinations and geographic areas where a high chance of success is anticipated.

In addition to this, it is extremely important to fully exploit the presence of the knowledge and scientific institutions in Rotterdam or the region (such as Delft University of Technology) in Rotterdam’s international relations, in connection with promoting the knowledge economy. The co-operation with Erasmus University Rotterdam will be further intensified in the coming years.

For international investors and knowledge migrants, favourable conditions in terms of services and the administrative burden are also very important. In 2008, the Economic Development Board Rotterdam issued recommendations regarding the way in which international acquisition has been shaped in Rotterdam. Rotterdam now also has an expat desk. In addition, Rotterdam supports and encourages international education in the city.

When achieving the objectives in the international port economics and maritime field, the municipal authority works closely with the Port of Rotterdam Authority, the Rotterdam business community and Rotterdam knowledge institutions, such as Erasmus University. There are intensive contacts with the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce, the Rotterdam Port Promotion Council (RPPC) and Deltalinqs, the organisation that represents the joint interests of the logistics and industrial companies in Rotterdam’s port and industrial area. Rotterdam’s international economic activities are coordinated in the so-called Vierhoek (Quadrangle) (also see Chapter 8).

In addition to this, the Holland Business Promotion Office (HBPO) was launched in 2006, partly on Rotterdam’s initiative. The purpose of this office is to draw international attention to the commercially strong regions and sectors of the Randstad as a whole. This integrated



approach to the international business community reinforces the Randstad's international competitive position.

At the national level, coordination mainly takes place in the Dutch Trade Board, which is chaired by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

When prioritising international relations, the municipal council bases its decisions to an important degree on the analyses of the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce, the Port of Rotterdam Authority and Rotterdam Development Corporation – and thereby indirectly on the interests of various market parties. These analyses are also tested against the policy of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, among others.

## 3.2

### Germany, trading partner number 1

On the basis of broad-based analyses, Germany is and is set to remain Rotterdam's most important economic partner. The Port of Rotterdam Authority, Chamber of Commerce and entrepreneurs are focusing more and more on Germany. The joint contacts are reflected in a varied action programme for Germany.

Rotterdam promotion in Germany is broad in character: Rotterdam as the port of Germany, as business location for German companies ('Standort Rotterdam'), as trading city, as attractive destination for German tourists, as innovative municipality and as cultural centre. Important partners in Germany for Rotterdam tend to be cities such as Cologne, Dresden, Dortmund, Duisburg, Hamburg and other German ports. Rotterdam's leading partner in relations with Germany is the Port of Rotterdam Authority, as the most interested party.

In October 2008, the '3. Deutsch-Niederländisches Wirtschaftsforum' was held in Cologne, the theme being logistics and transport. Entrepreneurs from both cities are invited to this conference, one of the aims being to show entrepreneurs what opportunities are available for sustainable business. The next 'Wirtschaftsforum' will be held in Rotterdam in 2010.

Furthermore, there is a lot of knowledge sharing between Rotterdam and various German cities. For example, there is an ongoing exchange of information on social projects between the Social Affairs and Employment Department and its partner organisation in Cologne and a project on Living Together in the City was recently concluded.

---

#### **Roland Wondolleck, Director Rotterdam Airport:**

"The presence of a regional airport is one of the most important business location factors for internationally oriented companies, institutions and government agencies. Rotterdam Airport is of elementary importance, both directly and indirectly, to the business climate in our city and region, and it therefore makes an important contribution to economic developments, prosperity and employment. Access by air is also a critical success factor for the further development of incoming overnight tourism in and around Rotterdam."

---

#### **Hans Goedhart, Director Spatial Planning and Housing Department (dS+V):**

"As dS+V, our focus is mainly on the spatial and urban renewal of Rotterdam. We are building on the city and society. On places where people can live, work and spend their leisure time. In short: on Rotterdam's progress. On every front, therefore also in the international field. In everything we do, we think about the importance for the city and our residents. Rotterdam forms an international stage. It offers people and businesses space and inspiration. To trade, exchange, learn and compare. Everyday reality and crucial for the further development and international positioning of Rotterdam."

---

#### **Hans Smits, CEO Port of Rotterdam Authority:**

"Our ambition is for Rotterdam to become the global centre of port innovation. We are striving to create a sustainable, fast, safe, attractive and clean knowledge port. Together with our partners, we ensure that Rotterdam remains the European port. Germany is an important player here, because Rotterdam is 'the biggest port in Germany'. The German and Dutch economies are closely intertwined."

---

### 3.3

## Stars of economic growth: Brazil, Russia, India, China and Turkey

### BRIC or TRIC

What the four countries alluded to in the abbreviation BRIC all have in common is the potential to change the world economy with their high growth figures, large exports of products and raw materials and the scale of their economies.

Sometimes reference is also made to TRIC. In this case, Turkey takes the place of Brazil and the shared criterion is the high growth figure. Rotterdam chooses to focus its international contacts on all five rapidly-growing economies: Brazil, Russia, India and China plus Turkey, thus BRICT. Naturally, we will keep a keen eye on what impact the current worldwide economic crisis is having on these countries.

With respect to the so-called BRICT countries, the policy on acquisition and customer relation management determines specific, distinct targets in the field of acquisition. Rotterdam aims to increase the European market share for throughput in the port from and to the BRICT countries.

Rotterdam is doing its utmost to establish a strong position for Rotterdam and the other cities of the Randstad within the national agenda with respect to the BRICT countries. In this connection, there is close collaboration, for example in the Dutch Trade Board, with the Ministries of Economic Affairs and Foreign Affairs.

### Brazil

Brazil is very important when it comes to the supply of raw materials to the rest of the world and is therefore the departure point for some interesting cargo flows. Although there are still significant regional differences and inequalities in income, the country has already progressed from capital importer to capital exporter. Brazilian companies are expanding and investing abroad: in China, elsewhere in Latin America, but also in North America and Europe. With its population of almost 180 million, the country is the giant of South America, with the state of São Paulo as its economic *powerhouse*, and the metropolis of the same name as nerve centre. The city of São Paulo is also member of the Large Cities Climate Leadership Group, the C40. The major port is Santos, located in the same state.

A good relationship with Brazil as one of the BRICT countries is vital. For years, Brazilian exports such as iron ore and fruit have been heading to our port. There are also lots of opportunities when it comes to attracting new companies to our city, now that Brazilian firms are focusing their attention on abroad. The relationship consists of a range of port and trade contacts, cultural contacts and acquisition files. In addition to this, there

are increasing administrative and political contacts with a number of cities and regions important to Rotterdam.

There is plenty of interest from the business community for new contacts in various sectors (metal, oil and gas, logistics), as a result of such factors as the emergence of Brazil as an exporter of ethanol and other biofuels. In the cultural field, the co-operation will be expressed in a large-scale cultural event based on Brazil, which will be held in the summer of 2009. For 2010, a tour by Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra – including a visit to Brazil – is in the pipeline.

There are close links with the port city of Santos, the most important port in Latin America. In September 2006, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two cities.

Rio de Janeiro is the second economic and cultural centre of the country and is also the home base of some of the port of Rotterdam's major clients, and the centre of the Brazilian oil industry. Other important economic centres in the country are the cities of Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte. There are also links with the federal state of Pernambuco. In November 2007, a MoU was signed in Rotterdam with the governor of this state. The area is home to the potentially important port Suape and has historic links with the Netherlands.

### Russia

The Netherlands is one of the largest investors in Russia. Dutch exports to Russia have been increasing steadily in the past few years. This is mainly a question of machinery and transport equipment, various agricultural products and chemical products.

From Russia, the export of oil, gas and other raw materials and the import of many luxury goods contribute towards the growth in trade with the Netherlands.

Rotterdam and St. Petersburg have been co-operating since time immemorial. In the past, various co-operation protocols were signed. The relationship is based on active port-economic relations and limited co-operation in the cultural and urban sense. In 2009, the sister-city relationship between Rotterdam and St. Petersburg will have existed for 25 years. To mark this, a fitting programme will be devised.

St. Petersburg is the second economic, cultural and political centre of the country. For the port, the 'secret capital city of Russia' and its patchwork quilt of municipal, provincial, federal and private ports is important, mainly in the sectors oil and gas and containers. In the coming years, the Port of Rotterdam Authority will play a central role in enhancing relations with Russia. Attention will also be paid here to the administrative contacts with the capital Moscow.

## India

India is currently one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The Netherlands is one of the major investors in India. The Agency for International Business and Cooperation (EVD) of the Ministry of Economic Affairs estimates that exports to India could increase by between 5 and 10% a year to 2040.

There are great opportunities for Dutch, and thus also Rotterdam, companies in such sectors as ICT, biotechnology and logistics. The infrastructure, which is not yet optimal, is a sticking point on the one hand, but at the same time offers many possibilities for improvement and contracts for Dutch firms.

The Port of Rotterdam Authority has already been advising the Indian government for some time on the development of the country's ports. In 2007, for instance, the Port Authority conducted a study into the expansion plans of 12 important ports in India for the Indian Ministry of Transport. Based on the study, the Port Authority is in a good position vis-à-vis knowledge about cargo flows in and around the subcontinent.

India is a market with complex laws and regulations, in both the private and public domain. The design of the administrative organisation makes special demands on the way in which effective relationships can be built up with Indian authorities. However, the dynamism of the Indian economy creates plenty of opportunities for attracting interesting Indian companies to Rotterdam by means of a well thought out acquisition policy. Administrative effort and co-operation with small and medium-sized enterprises will reinforce this policy.

## China

It goes without saying that economic relations between China and Europe are of great importance. Whereas Rotterdam is the 'Gateway to Europe', our sister city Shanghai is the 'Gateway to China'. Shanghai has overtaken Rotterdam as the largest port in the world, which only serves to underline the importance of intensive contacts even more. If Shanghai grows, we grow with it. More than a third of all containers arriving in Rotterdam come from China.

In 2008, the Rotterdam Commercial Representative Office (RCRO) in Shanghai celebrated its 20th anniversary. In this period, the organisation assisted more than 2000 Dutch companies with their operations in Shanghai and adjoining areas.

Rotterdam also has a so-called China Desk; this organisation is a collaboration between public and private parties and serves a pivotal role for (potential) Chinese investors.

In 2009, the relationship between Shanghai and Rotterdam will have existed for 30 years. At the basis of the relationship is an extensive co-operation protocol, which was renewed in 2008. In addition to the already existing collaborative projects in the

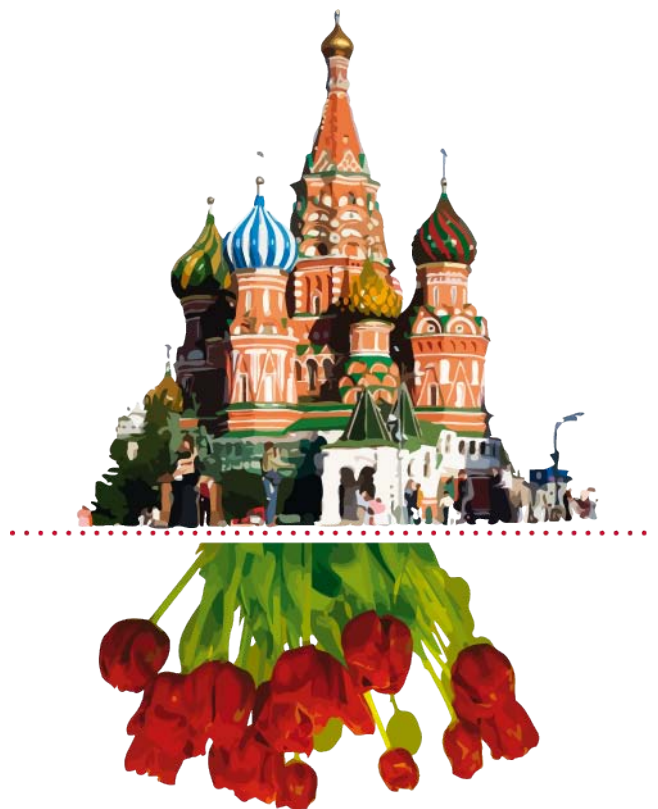
---

**Ron Baats, Manager International Business and Business Advice department, Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce:**

"Rotterdam's approach to attracting new international companies to our city must become more professional. Chinese and Indian firms wishing to set up business in the Netherlands tend to encounter serious problems. They find themselves in a completely different culture, with different laws and rules.

If Rotterdam is to bind companies to our city, it must provide a so-called red carpet welcome. The best thing would be to link special account managers directly with the companies wanting to settle here. Give them all the help they might need in sorting out the practical side of things. And continue to guide them for a long time. Even after they have set up business."

---



---

**Ulisses da Silva, General Manager  
Braskem Europe:**

“Rotterdam is an attractive business location. The city and port enjoy a central position in Europe. And Europe is Braskem’s second largest export destination. With our branch in Rotterdam, we are in a better position to serve our strategic clients in the region. In addition, Rotterdam is an extremely safe port. And that is of vital importance for a company like Braskem, the largest petrochemical company in Latin America. When serious plans emerged for a branch in the Netherlands, we first looked at Amsterdam. But I ultimately chose Rotterdam. Very consciously. I find Rotterdam more ‘business oriented’. In terms of the mentality, but also the facilities. The infrastructure is top class. Brazil is experiencing strong economic growth. Rotterdam is taking advantage of this, but the city and port could be promoted even more forcefully. I have a lot of contact with the Rotterdam Port Promotion Council (RPPC) and the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce. Together, we try to interest Brazilian companies in Rotterdam. We zoom in on its favourable location in Europe, explain how everything works in the Netherlands and how best to do business in Rotterdam. Interest in Rotterdam is starting to grow, but a lot of work still needs to be done.”

---



field of infrastructure, city planning, port co-operation, education and care for the elderly, new projects will be launched in the period 2009-2010. Extra effort will be made particularly in the following areas: culture, the environment (CO2 reduction), soil and water pollution, the creative industry and sport.

From 1 May to 31 October 2010, the ‘World Expo Shanghai China 2010’ will be held in Shanghai. Over 70 million visitors are expected. The main theme is ‘Better City, Better Life’. This World Expo 2010 provides the municipality of Rotterdam, and the business community, with an excellent opportunity to present itself extensively. Rotterdam is not only a partner in the Dutch entry to this world exhibition, but will also present itself in the so-called ‘Urban Best Practices Area’, with its own exhibition on the theme ‘Rotterdam Water City’. In September 2008, Rotterdam signed a contract of participation to this end.

### **Turkey**

In 2007, more than 45,000 people of Turkish ethnicity were living in Rotterdam, or in other words 7.8% of the population. Some of this group is still oriented towards Turkey and closely monitors developments there. Traditionally, therefore, Rotterdam’s links with Turkey have had a strong social element, as one of the ‘countries of origin’.

The accent in international relations with Turkey and Turkish cities has gradually shifted, however, from the socio-cultural field to the economic. The Turkish economy has grown sharply in recent years. Prospects for the (medium-)long term are good. The increasing, young and relatively highly educated population, in combination with the proximity of the European internal market, make the Turkish market extremely interesting for investors.

Turkey’s accession route to the European Union not only offers a general increase in trade flows, but also specific economic opportunities. Requirements relating to the environment alone result in an investment of around €50 billion, according to the Agency for International Business and Cooperation of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Furthermore, Turkey is faced with the problem of an ever-growing energy dependence. Themes like energy and water are topical in the co-operative relationship with Rotterdam; there is, for example, a collaborative project with Istanbul relating to energy.

In the burgeoning Turkish economy, the government plays an important role. This is also a significant reason for aiming at good administrative contacts with the relevant Turkish cities in the economic field too. Rotterdam played an active role during the Dutch administrative and business mission to Turkey at the end of 2008.

Rotterdam has a close co-operative relationship with the Turkish metropolis Istanbul, the financial heart of the Turkish economy. The companies established in Istanbul are responsible for more than half of Turkish imports

and exports. Istanbul also forms the literal and symbolic connection between East and West. The European Union has chosen Istanbul as European Capital of Culture 2010. Rotterdam has been asked to assist Istanbul with this.

Istanbul, like Rotterdam, plays a role in the fight against climate change, as one of the so-called C40 cities in the Clinton Climate Initiative.

Water is also an important strategic theme in Istanbul. During the summer of 2007, the city faced serious shortages of drinking water. There are plans to make improvements in the field of waste water. The largest three-yearly water event in the world, the *World Water Forum*, will be held in Istanbul in 2009. Rotterdam aims to make an active contribution during this forum.

The municipality of Rotterdam, Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce, Netuba (NetherlandsTurkey Business Association) and the business community have set up a joint trade and investment center. This *Trade & Investment Center (TIC) Turkey* provides assistance to entrepreneurs wishing to do business with Turkey. TIC Turkey will be supported by a covenant with the Turkish Chambers of Commerce in Istanbul and Izmir.

### 3.4

## 'Business as usual': United States and United Kingdom

The United States and the United Kingdom are countries with which there have always been strong economic ties. Most foreign investors in the Rotterdam economy come from these two countries.

Rotterdam maintains firm relations with the US, e.g. in the field of security policy, urban development, house construction and social policy. Last but not least, the city took part in the C40 Large Cities Climate Summit in New York organised by the C40 Large Cities Climate Leadership Group and the Clinton Climate Initiative in 2007.

There are trade missions and business contacts primarily in connection with the port, industry, logistics and cruise shipping. The contacts are spread throughout the US, focusing on Baltimore, Houston and New York.

At the moment, there are almost 400 American subsidiaries in Rotterdam. A number of these have their European head office or Benelux office in our city. The American firms are not only to be found in the port area and the chemical industry, but also in the field of finance and software products, for example.

The Port of Rotterdam Authority (represented by a 'representative' in Chicago and Houston) and Rotterdam Development Corporation maintain intensive business contacts with the US. That also applies to the education sector (such as the Rotterdam School of Management).

Good contacts with the American community in Rotterdam, the American school and other American institutions and companies are important. There is an active 'Rotterdam Chapter' associated with the American Chamber of Commerce.

In the United Kingdom, Rotterdam has had a long-standing sister-city relationship with Kingston-upon-Hull, which is closely connected to the Rotterdam-Hull ferry link. In practice, however, contacts with other British cities, such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow prove to be more frequent, mainly in connection with the 'learning organisation' motive.

Contacts between Rotterdam and London have increased in recent years, in the field of the environment (the C40), integration policy and sport. Possibilities for closer co-operation in organising events are being investigated.

### 3.5

## Insight into high potentials

In order to retain its international competitive position and wherever possible improve it, Rotterdam must invest continually in its international relations. Existing markets and relationships are maintained and expanded, new markets must be explored. Attention must also be paid to international economic and financial developments, such as the current credit crisis and expectations about economic recession.

Against the background of the developments outlined in connection with Germany and Russia, a number of countries in Eastern Europe are also potentially interesting. Cities in Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia offer possible opportunities for international relations with Rotterdam. There are already sister-city and partnership relations with Gdansk, Prague and Bratislava. It is important, in the coming years, to get a clear idea of the extent to which Rotterdam will have to tighten such bands so that it is prepared for future developments.

In addition, a number of *pre-emerging economies* can be detected, spread over all the continents (sometimes developing countries or ex-developing countries with relatively smaller economies), which are doing extremely well and provide plenty of opportunities for our business community. Sometimes they are countries with which international relations do not seem logical at first sight.

Things can develop quickly, however. Investment funds are very alert to this and advise companies to pay particular attention to these economies. In Africa, such countries as Mozambique, Angola and South Africa offer interesting economic opportunities; in South America, the main countries to look out for are Chile and Panama.

In the Far East, the so-called Asean countries are where the opportunities lie: for example Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam. The United

---

**Brian D. Atkins, Director American International School of Rotterdam:**

“The City of Rotterdam provides an excellent platform for the international community to build their businesses and fully participate in their expatriate lives. As an international school, fully vested in the City, we experience Rotterdam as a City that focusses it’s energy on delivering solutions, providing an open and inclusive decision making process and having a deep commitment to supporting it’s investors and inhabitants. As a city of just under a million people, Rotterdam is still able to deliver personal and intimate services to the business and residential communities. As educators, operating in an international environment, AISR values the commitment that Rotterdam has to supporting our work as we strive to educate children to be highly motivated, well balanced, global citizens.”

---

Arab Emirates (including Dubai) are also interesting, particularly as potential investors.

For Rotterdam, it is also important here to keep well informed and act accordingly: see the opportunities and use them. Regular research into the importance of international developments for Rotterdam and the Rotterdam economy is necessary.



# 4.

## Profile and position through themes

### 4.1

#### International relations from a themed perspective

In addition to selecting priority countries and cities based on an economic-geographic perspective, Rotterdam also chooses to reinforce its profile and position by being internationally active and successful on a number of specific themes. The most important of these are climate and energy, water, social cohesion and participation, art and culture, and sport. The challenge for the coming years, with respect to maintaining international relations, is to establish more of a connection between Rotterdam's chosen priority countries and cities on the one hand and the more substantive priority themes on the other, so that the overall result of international relations is greater, thanks to an integrated approach.

Moreover, Rotterdam regularly positions itself at the centre of international interest by organising themed years or periods, related or not to the above-mentioned priority themes.

### 4.2

#### Climate and energy

Rotterdam feels very involved in the climate and energy issue and wants to profile itself further internationally as world capital of CO2 free energy. This ambition has a major international dimension and promotes sustainable economic development.

It is partly on the basis of this vision – in accordance with the recommendations of the Rotterdam International Advisory Board (IAB) in 2006 – that the *Rotterdam Climate Initiative* was set up. Internationally, Rotterdam is one of the cities associated with the Large Cities Climate Leadership Group (the C40) and the Clinton Climate Initiative. There is co-operation with such cities as

Shanghai, Houston and London. Rotterdam has adopted a leading role here, resulting, among other things, in the organisation of a World Port Climate Conference in Rotterdam in 2008.

Due to the many port activities, Rotterdam is one of the world's major urban polluters when it comes to CO2. Rotterdam accepts its responsibility and is endeavouring to halve its CO2 emissions by 2025, compared to 1990.

In order to achieve this, various national and international activities are being developed. The Rotterdam Climate Initiative has devised an ambitious and extensive long-term action programme to achieve the set goals.

### 4.3

#### Water

Following on from its recommendations on the environment and energy, the International Advisory Board Rotterdam in 2007 issued advice to the municipal council on the theme Water.

Rotterdam must become a water knowledge city. It is essential that Rotterdam makes changes to take into account the consequences of climate change and effective and ambitious water management provides many economic opportunities.

Erasmus University and other educational and research institutions in the region together possess a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the field of water management, which could be of great use to other countries and regions throughout the world that are struggling with water surpluses or shortages. In this way, Rotterdam can play a pioneering role when it comes to solving global water problems.

The municipal council has endorsed the advice of the IAB. A programme entitled *Rotterdam Climate Proof* has now been drafted, with a focus on water management.

---

**Ruud Lubbers, Former prime minister, Chair of the Rotterdam Climate Initiative and Chair of the International Advisory Board Rotterdam:**

“Born and bred in Rotterdam, the city that attracts and excites me. And inspires me to work so enthusiastically on its behalf. All over the world, I come across Rotterdam and Rotterdammers; and the world comes together in Rotterdam. Clever choices and an energetic approach are vital if we are to maintain and enhance the international character of our city. The proverbial Rotterdam ‘rolled-up sleeves mentality’ has brought us a long way. The biggest task at the moment is to find the right balance between economy and ecology: to allow our urban and port economy to grow whilst showing respect for man and the environment. Rotterdam’s ambitious climate objectives are of national and international importance. And the fact that we in our city do not talk about these things but actually tackle them is Rotterdam’s continuing strength.”

---

**Jan van den Heuvel, Director DCMR Environmental Protection Agency Rijnmond:**

“The development of a liveable and safe environment runs like a thread in what we do. We carefully guard the environmental space in our region and are allied to the Rotterdam Climate Initiative. Together with the municipality of Rotterdam, the Port of Rotterdam Authority and Deltalinqs, DCMR Environmental Protection Agency Rijnmond works to clean up Rotterdam’s climate. Our aim is to have reduced CO2 emissions on Rotterdam territory by 50% in 2025, in comparison with 1990 levels. DCMR is asked regularly to share its knowledge abroad. At the request of the European Commission, we devise workshops and knowledge assessments both within and beyond Europe.”

---

During the World Water Forum in Istanbul in 2009, Rotterdam will make an active contribution. At the World Expo in 2010 in Shanghai, Rotterdam will have its own exhibition area based on the theme ‘Rotterdam Water City’ (also see Chapter 3). Co-operation agreements in the field of water management were renewed with sister city Jakarta in 2008.

## 4.4

### Participation for all Rotterdammers: social cohesion and participation

Rotterdam is known internationally as a city with an active social policy and progressive initiatives in such areas as participation, dialogue, citizenship, etc. Key themes here are that all Rotterdammers take part in and feel part of the city. Projects such as the ‘Islam debate’ and ‘People make the city’ are still attracting plenty of attention and respect abroad. Rotterdam wishes to profile and position itself further along these same lines, as a city that leads the way in participation and intercultural policy. Rotterdam wants to demonstrate intercultural leadership. The city deals proudly and self-confidently with the different cultures and the 174 nationalities to which the city is home. Rotterdam is (initiated by the Social Affairs and Employment department) a main European player in the social field, particularly when it comes to fighting poverty, policy on the homeless and help with debt problems.

In 2006, the International Advisory Board advised Rotterdam municipal council to take up the theme Intercultural Leadership and to make even more use of it internationally. By nurturing the diversity in the city, Rotterdam could be even more successful on the international stage.

This idea runs like a thread through the policy of the current municipal council, in the social policy, in the education policy, in the employment policy, in the recreation policy, etc. In the field of international relations, there are a number of examples of ambitions relating to the theme ‘All Rotterdammers take part in and feel part of the city’. Intercultural leadership plays an important role here.

#### Integrating Cities

An initial example is the conference *Integrating Cities*, held in 2006 on the initiative of Rotterdam, together with the European Commission and Eurocities. This initiative has now evolved into an annual conference to enhance the dialogue between major cities and the European Union regarding the big city as a meeting place of different cultures and ways of life. Integration is a hot item for the whole European community. It is therefore important that cities continue to inform, encourage and



inspire each other. *Integrating Cities* and the concept of the *Rotterdam Process* that developed as a result, are of eminent importance if European policy in the field of integration and participation is to be better coordinated with urban practice.

In 2007, *Integrating Cities II* was held in Milan. Here, Mayor Opstelten signed the Integrating Cities Milan Declaration, also on behalf of Eurocities. The declaration was also signed by the Mayor of Milan, Mrs Letizia Moratti and Mr Frattini, vice-president of the European Commission. This covenant contains agreements between the European cities and the European Commission on improved co-operation when developing integration policy. The following *Integrating Cities* will take place in Berlin in spring 2009.

### Social Affairs Forum

Another example of international profiling on the theme social cohesion and participation is Rotterdam's involvement with the Social Affairs Forum of Eurocities. Eurocities is the interest group of large European cities, which was set up in 1986 in Rotterdam and in which Rotterdam has always played a prominent role. These efforts are translated into information, influence, contacts and involvement in new policy developments and knowledge-sharing projects. Through active participation in the Social Affairs Forum, Rotterdam is closely involved in influencing policy and in subsidy projects in the social domain within the European Union. The members of the Forum work closely together in such areas as social inclusion and the fight against poverty.

### Rotterdam European Youth Capital

In 2009, Rotterdam is European Youth Capital. Investing in young people means investing in the future and that definitely applies in Rotterdam: Rotterdam is the youngest city in the Netherlands. Almost a third of the population is younger than 28.

Rotterdam expects to start a new European tradition of Youth Capitals and will also make every effort to anchor this structurally in European policy. Many cities have already shown an interest in the initiative and in November 2008 it was announced that Turin (sister city of Rotterdam) would take over the baton from Rotterdam in 2010.

The Youth Capital has a strong European dimension. Events with a European element will be given a prominent place in the programme. This could include various sports championships for young people, but also concerts, exhibitions and conferences.

### Leadership for shared societies

In the autumn of 2008, the worldwide conference *Global Forum on Shared Societies: Leadership for Intercultural Dialogue, Diversity and Social Cohesion* was held in Rotterdam. The conference was organised in co-operation with the municipality of Rotterdam and the Club de Madrid, an organisation of current and former

---

### Rik Grashoff, Vice Mayor for Participation and Culture:

“Rotterdam has the ambition to be ‘Intercultural leading city’. In order to achieve this, our vision on the subject will be fleshed out in more detail in the coming years, and implemented in the form of concrete activities, in such a way that the ambition can also be recognised and acknowledged by the people of Rotterdam. At the moment, we are not showing enough leadership. Co-operation with other European cities could assist us in this.”

---



---

**Mart Toet, Director Social Affairs & Employment:**

“Rotterdam is fascinating. A beautiful, challenging city. But also a city of people – after all, they are what makes the city. Hard-working people, white people and coloured people. Rotterdam is proud of all the multicultural values we have in the city. Rotterdam is also a city with another face. And that is what my department is working on. Re-empowering people who are not functioning properly. Making sure that they speak better Dutch, making sure that they start to participate in society, in one way or another, making sure that the gap in the labour market between the demand for highly-trained personnel and the supply of poorly-educated is closed, making sure that facilities are created for improving the quality of life, making sure that hopeless situations related to poverty and debt are tackled. Social Affairs and Employment knows that this social task involves many partners; you cannot do it alone. We need other municipal departments, but also private partners, the national government and Europe. One for the concrete approach, the other for targeted regulations to encourage us to do the right things. Ultimately, we have one target in mind and that is to increase the social quality in this city!”

---

**Steven van Eijck, Chair Governing Board Youth Capital 2009:**

“Investing in young people means investing in the future. Rotterdam will be Youth Capital of Europe in 2009. With this approach, Rotterdam can distinguish itself from other initiatives relating to youth policy. This working method is also expected to have a considerable impact internationally. Actually, you can already see that happening. Many European cities are showing an interest in our initiative.”

---

world leaders. Fired with inspiration, statesmen/women, administrators of world cities, academics and opinion leaders debated the question of how leadership can contribute to social cohesion and participation in urban areas in particular.

The Club de Madrid set out ten commitments with which a shared society must comply: locating responsibility, creating opportunities, monitoring structures, ensuring the legal framework, reducing economic disadvantages, a good physical environment, a good educational system, encouraging a shared vision, promoting respect and reducing hostility. One of the results of the conference was a Call to Action, to promote leadership with respect to social cohesion and shared societies. In 2009 and 2010, this will be elaborated further.

### **WACAP conference**

Rotterdam is a member of the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty (WACAP). This is a global network of cities, part of the UN organisation UNDP, whose objective is to fight poverty at the local level. Knowledge sharing plays an important role here. Every two years, the WACAP organises a large international conference. Rotterdam has been asked to organise the conference in February 2010. The theme then will be sustainable development. Organising the conference is a good opportunity to link up with the European Year against Poverty, planned for 2010. The Social Affairs and Employment department is heading the project for Rotterdam.

## **4.5**

### **Daring and allure in art, culture and sport**

#### **Art and culture**

Rotterdam has an international reputation in the field of art and culture. The ambition is to further improve this position in the coming years. This calls for new investments. For artists and organisers of cultural events and activities, Rotterdam is an increasingly interesting hub in the global art world. As a result, the accent in Rotterdam's international cultural policy for the coming years will be mainly on strengthening relations with other cultural hotspots inside and outside Europe. Worldwide, the contacts of both large and small Rotterdam cultural organisations are utilised for exchanges between Rotterdam artists and their counterparts from other parts of the world. Rotterdam adopts the position of a city in which the social engagement of art and creative entrepreneurship can flourish. In line with the Culture Plan 2009-2012, a programme 'Internationalisation' has been developed.

The cultural and social characteristics of a city can serve to support economic relations. Research shows that the

presence of cultural facilities is an important factor in the choice of business location.

The unique and innovative architecture in Rotterdam has already achieved world fame. In keeping with this is the *International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam*, an event that brings together knowledge and experience in the design disciplines (architecture, urban development and landscape architecture) from all over the world in Rotterdam and presents it to a large audience.

In 2007 – when attention was paid throughout the year to modern and innovative architecture in Rotterdam, in connection with the themed year *Rotterdam City of Architecture* – the third edition of this Biennale was held.

Festivals are an important way of expressing art and culture in Rotterdam. The ambition behind *Rotterdam Festivals*, with an even wider and more international programme, is for Rotterdam to become even more well-known as a festival city – both nationally and internationally. In order to achieve this, investments will be made in improving what is on offer, with innovative and high-profile events, and in enhancing the quality and marketing strength of these events. Events which attract people to the city and which can encourage them explore more aspects of the city.

Rotterdam Festivals supports professional organisers and cultural institutions which are capable of organising a high-quality festival or event in Rotterdam. Rotterdam already offers a well-balanced range of festivals, with a summer programme that attracts visitors from far beyond the city limits and a number of top events in other periods of the year, such as the International Film Festival Rotterdam, North Sea Jazz and the Gergiev Festival. Rotterdam has also made a name for itself internationally with intercultural festivals such as Dunya and the Summer Carnival.

## Sport

Rotterdam also has a good international reputation when it comes to sport. Rotterdam Topsport plays an important role in this. The mission of Rotterdam Topsport is to position Rotterdam, both at home and abroad, as a leading city of sport, in which the sports infrastructure and organisational capacity are developed to the full. The city of Rotterdam has a lot to offer the sporting world in that sense. Rotterdam Topsport has set itself the goal of improving the sports climate in Rotterdam even further. It does this in close co-operation with the municipal authority, local, national and international sports organisations, the business community, educational institutions and the media.

Recurrent events such as the Concours Hippique International Officiel in Kralingse Bos (this, the largest outdoor equestrian event in the Netherlands, was held for the 60th time in 2008), the Fortis Marathon Rotterdam (the biggest event in the Netherlands, held in 2008 for the 28th time, with a history of 3 world records) and the ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament in Ahoy (in 2009 for

---

### Jan Raes, Former Director Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra:

“The Rotterdam Philharmonic very clearly plays the role of ambassador for the city. That is particularly noticeable when we are abroad. With our performances, we set developments in motion and build bridges in the field of culture. We serve as a kind of lever. The orchestra is made up of 13 or 14 different nationalities. In that sense, it reflects Rotterdam. What particularly strikes me personally is the great fondness Rotterdammers show for the Rotterdam Philharmonic. It is a collective feeling, a sort of irrational love that penetrates all levels of the population. I think that’s wonderful. I never experienced anything like that in Belgium. There is a huge sense of connection with the orchestra. We would never be able to finance our tours abroad without subsidies and support from the municipality of Rotterdam, as well as the business community and other parties. The other side of the story is that we are very important when it comes to marketing the Netherlands and Rotterdam. The Rotterdam Philharmonic is a top-class orchestra and our performances abroad attract many dignitaries. That is also why businesspeople and administrators regularly travel with us.”

---

### Sjarel Ex, Director Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen:

“According to research, a mature, international range of provisions in the field of art and culture is one of the most important factors for highly educated personnel and businesses from abroad when deciding where to settle. The creative sector can provide such a lot of extra turnover and new impulses. Just look at Antwerp. There they have put the emphasis on fashion for the past 20 years. The economic impact is phenomenal. Rotterdam could do this too. We have so much talent here. And we have so much to offer as a city.”

---

---

**Ole Bouman, Director The Netherlands Architecture Institute:**

“Internationally, the municipality of Rotterdam is busy creating a clear profiler for itself. As a leading international institute for architecture, the NAI is an important hub in a worldwide network of art and knowledge institutions. And our ambitions extend much further than this. We want to develop into an important matchmaker, bringing together knowledge in the field of architecture, culture and the construction industry. That could be very good for Rotterdam.”

---

**Stef Oosterloo, Director Art and Culture department:**

“Rotterdam is an international, cosmopolitan city. A city that is characterised by openness and tolerance. Rough, raw, but beautiful. That is how Rotterdam is known abroad, in the cultural field. We have an excellent reputation. Thanks to our creative climate, but also because Rotterdam also has a lot to offer architecturally. That’s wonderful, of course. But we must remain vigilant. Because increasing numbers of cities are upping the stakes in terms of art and culture. To put it more strongly, if Rotterdam doesn’t invest wisely in our city’s cultural life, then we will lose our status as ‘the place to be’. I recently visited Berlin and my eyes were popping. In Berlin, there is a surplus of real estate. Also, a lot of money is invested there in popular culture. I believe that the vehicles of culture in Rotterdam, and by this I also mean the universities, the conservatories and the media, need to work together more on a shared cultural identity. And Rotterdam must show some guts when it comes to culture!”

---

the 36th time) justifiably have a very important international element.

In past years, sporting events like the Volvo Ocean Race, Bavaria City Racing and the Red Bull Air Race have also attracted a lot of attention internationally.

Rotterdam makes use of its international relations partly to make sure that internationally significant sporting events are held in Rotterdam. For instance, Rotterdam will be organising the Grand Départ of the Tour de France in 2010. Rotterdam also wants to play an important role during the FIFA World Cup in 2018 and the Olympic Games in 2028. In addition, Rotterdam will serve as ‘Gateway to the Games’ during the London Olympic Games in 2012.

International sporting events in Rotterdam can make an important contribution to the city’s internationally oriented economic development.

## 4.6 Themed years and months

Internationally, the city’s profile and position can also be improved by focusing a large number of activities in the city on a particular theme for a given period of time (a year or shorter, for example a month). Such a themed year or month is usually accompanied by a targeted publicity campaign at home and abroad. Here too, the challenge is to make connections with (other) priority themes for Rotterdam, such as climate and energy, or priority international relations, such as those with Germany or the BRIC countries, within the context of a themed year or month.

Rotterdam has put itself on the map with such themed years as Rotterdam Capital of Culture 2001, European Capital of Sport 2005 and Rotterdam 2007 City of Architecture.

In 2009, Rotterdam is *European Youth Capital* for a whole year. An ambitious programme has been developed, which will draw a lot of international attention to Rotterdam.

In mid-2009, a large-scale cultural event based on Brazil (*Brazilian Summer*) will also be held in Rotterdam. It seems logical to link up here with the Rotterdam European Youth Capital programme.

It is important to connect up, wherever possible and appropriate, with themed years organised by other authorities or international organisations. Examples of this include:

- in 2009, the *European year of creativity and innovation*. The European Commission wants to promote the economic growth of the creative industry. In 2009, it wishes to pay extra attention to the contribution education and culture can make towards developing innovation and creativity. This seems to link up nicely with the priority which the municipality



of Rotterdam gives to the creative industry as well as with Rotterdam European Youth Capital 2009;

- in 2010, the *European year against social exclusion and poverty*. Rotterdam has build up a good name for itself within the European Union as a laboratory for new policy and projects in these areas. This provides some good opportunities for distinguishing Rotterdam as a leading intercultural city. In 2010, Rotterdam will also host a major UN conference organised by the WACAP (World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty). This global network of cities forms part of the UN organisation UNDP, and its objective is to combat poverty at the local level.

---

**Hans den Oudendammer, Director Rotterdam Topsport:**

“Rotterdam’s international image is a huge help to us in attracting important international sporting events to Rotterdam. A city without important international contacts doesn’t stand a chance. Rotterdam Topsport reaps the benefits of Rotterdam’s international policy! 2008 Champions Trophy, the World Championships Judo 2009, World Championships Artistic Gymnastics 2010, World Championships Table Tennis 2011, etc.”

---

# 5.

# Rotterdam in the world, the world in Rotterdam

## 5.1

### International relations: from countries of origin to special partnerships

#### Continuity in relations

In Chapters 3 and 4 of this programme, Rotterdam's priorities in the field of international relations for the coming years are set out. Extra investments are made in the relevant relationships.

In addition, effective existing relations, which have been built up through the years, will be perpetuated. These relations can be differentiated into:

- relations with the so-called countries of origin, which will be looked at in more detail in this chapter;
- relations with various cities and city networks throughout the world, which will be looked at in more detail in Chapter 6.

However, in the coming years, an increasing emphasis will be placed, wherever possible, on economic aspects of the relations as well as on Rotterdam's priority themes.

#### Countries of origin

For years, Rotterdam has maintained international relations with countries and cities with which large groups of Rotterdammers have a special bond because they, their parents, grandparents or other family members were born there. Up to now, these countries have often been referred to as 'countries of origin'. In Rotterdam, this mainly involves *Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles and Cape Verde*.

As increasing numbers of young Rotterdammers were not themselves born in these countries, although their parents, grandparents, etc were, it would seem more correct to drop the term 'countries of origin' and speak of countries and cultures with which there is

a special connection and sense of solidarity due to the presence of these target groups – the so-called special partnerships. These partnerships can bring together a variety of Rotterdam's policy aims: economic development, intercultural leadership, the internationalisation of art and culture, integration and participation, etc.

In the course of time, the economies of these countries have developed at an increasing pace, so that they can now also be classed as 'middle income countries'. As a result, the traditional development assistance relations are changing into more equal relationships all the time. Wherever possible, Rotterdam wants to make use of its good relations with these countries of origin for mutual economic development and expand them into special relationships.

In the context of Rotterdam's co-operative domestic relations with the cities Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht (the G4), it has been established that further coordination of activities relating to the above-mentioned countries in the coming years could have added value.

## 5.2

### Countries with which there is a special bond

For the time being, Rotterdam chooses to maintain or further develop special partnerships with the governments of countries which were hitherto referred to in Rotterdam policy as 'countries of origin'. As mentioned above, this means Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles and Cape Verde. If, in the future, the population of Rotterdam is shown to contain comparable large groups of people from other countries, it would be reasonable to extend the policy to include these countries too.



### Turkey

In 2007, more than 45,000 people of Turkish ethnicity were living in Rotterdam, or in other words 7.8% of the population. Traditionally, therefore, Rotterdam's links with Turkey have had a strong social element, as one of the 'countries of origin'.

As indicated in Chapter 3, the focal point of international relations with Turkey will shift more and more to economic development. There are good contacts between Rotterdam and Istanbul and Izmir. Istanbul is one of the larger cities involved in the C40 Climate Change programme and is, like Rotterdam, active with respect to the international theme 'Water'.

### Morocco

The economy of Morocco is growing steadily. Partly as a result of the establishment of special economic zones, foreign investments in this North African country have increased sharply. Furthermore, tourism in Morocco is flourishing, as a result of which the service sector is starting to develop. The Moroccan economy is currently highly liberalised, due partly to the free trade agreement with the European Union, according to which the trade barriers with the EU will have to have been removed by 2010.

In Rotterdam, the Moroccan community is young and growing. At the moment, 6.4% of the population of Rotterdam is of Moroccan ethnicity and this percentage is expected to rise to 8.5% by 2025. Many Moroccan Rotterdammers attach great importance to strong bonds with Morocco and appreciate the fact that Rotterdam council takes the trouble to find out more about this important migrant group.

In terms of the relationship with Morocco, Rotterdam will aim for a combination of socio-cultural and economic co-operation. This could mean, for example, co-operation

---

**Arnout Nuijt, Programme Manager  
International relations, Administrative  
Department:**

"Relations with Rotterdammers' so-called countries of origin are changing very rapidly. In the old days, often seen as developing countries where the municipality of Rotterdam 'did' projects, we can now say that all of our five countries of origin have become middle-income countries with which the Dutch government is phasing out development assistance. To put it even more strongly, companies in these countries are developing so fast that it is becoming increasingly interesting for their counterparts in Rotterdam to do business with them. We are also seeing more and more investment in our city by these former countries of origin. It is now up to Rotterdam to make use of the good relations to attract even more investments by presenting itself as a platform in the Netherlands and Northwest Europe for the international vanguard of the business community in Surinam, Cape Verde, the Antilles, Morocco and Turkey."

---

in the field of youth-related problems, safety/security, climate and energy (including alternative (solar) energy).

With annual growth of 6%, due to Morocco's role as *gateway to Africa*, the Dutch business community is showing increasing interest.

Casablanca (population of 3.5 million) is our partner city in Morocco. This economic capital of the country, has an important port. Considering the rapid growth of Casablanca and the prevailing water shortage, one thing Rotterdam will focus on in its relations with Casablanca is its expertise in the field of water management.

Rotterdam also has a number of co-operative links with Casablanca in the field of outdoor space as well as art and culture.

### Surinam

In Rotterdam, some 10% of the population have family links with Surinam. In 2007, Rotterdam and Surinam signed a new, four-year co-operation agreement. The relationship consists of eight concrete collaboration projects relating to the transfer of knowledge and experience by municipal departments, cultural exchanges, police and fire service and trade relations. In 2010, in good time, an evaluation of the implementation of the agreement will be prepared, whereby recommendations relating to co-operation after 2011 will be drafted.

---

**Piet Boonman, Former City Security Officer Antilleans, Safety Department:**

"I believe it's necessary to co-operate with the Netherlands Antilles and Curaçao in particular. Because the problems with Antillean youth here are connected to future prospects on Curaçao itself. The municipality of Rotterdam is making an active and positive contribution to the development of Curaçao. This includes the launch of such projects as the UNA Chair in Youth and Education of Antilleans, paying particular attention to criminality, and, thanks to the municipality of Rotterdam, Worldinternship has been able to develop the pilot Knowledge for Curaçao. There is also the student mediation project by the Relief foundation on Curaçao, which collaborates with De Meeuw foundation in Rotterdam. It involves a method for teaching young people social skills in the form of student mediation. Last but not least, Rotterdam helps the Curaçao Police Force (KPC) in recruiting officers, due to the shortage of officers with the KPC."

---

**Aad Meijboom, Chief Constable Rotterdam-Rijnmond Police**

"Nowadays safety and security means, on the one hand, an increase in scale and, on the other, a decrease in scale: due to the European and international strategic position of our region, we are very much concerned with forms of cross-border crime. A network that operates throughout the world is vital here. As the population of Rotterdam has become so diverse, local policing is changing in our neighbourhoods. Partly through co-operation with partner forces in the main countries of origin of Rotterdam's population, we are investing in multicultural police expertise and the strengthening of networks within the ethnic communities of the Rotterdam-Rijnmond region."

---

In Surinam, there is direct collaboration with the government (the Ministry of Planning and Development Co-operation), due to the fact that there are no municipalities in Surinam, but districts with limited powers. However, there is – within the context of the municipal agreement – structural co-operation between the municipal district of Hoogvliet and the district Marowijne.

In the relationship with Surinam, there is close co-operation with Amsterdam and The Hague, VNG (Association of Netherlands Municipalities) International and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Although the Rotterdam business community sees only limited economic potential in Surinam, Rotterdam will support activities geared towards stimulating trade and investment contacts wherever possible.

**Netherlands Antilles (Curaçao)**

For Rotterdam, a good inter-administrative relationship with the Netherlands Antilles, and Curaçao in particular, is very important. In the context of the relationship with Curaçao, solutions are being sought to the problems many young Antilleans get themselves into in Rotterdam. In this connection, Rotterdam chairs the Dutch group of 21 so-called Antillean Municipalities. Rotterdam plays a pioneering role here and coordinates co-operation with the Netherlands Antilles. In that context, there is also a frequent contact with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Housing, Spatial Planning & the Environment and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities to coordinate their agendas. In 2005, Rotterdam adopted the Action Programme Integrated Approach to Antilleans, which runs until 2009.

The co-operation between Curaçao and the municipality of Rotterdam particularly concerns the themes work, education and safety/security. The co-operation is based on technical support, advice and knowledge sharing. Rotterdam is home to around 20,000 Antilleans.

**Cape Verde**

Contacts with Cape Verde rely on the existence of some 16,000 Rotterdammers with a Cape Verde background. Cape Verde itself is a country with a population in the region of around 500,000 and it has a very modest economy.

Rotterdam has direct contact with the government of Cape Verde. In 2003, a first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Cape Verde Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Assistance.

The current relationship actually consists of a limited exchange of knowledge and experience with the two largest Cape Verde municipalities, co-operation involving the police and judiciary and a number of cultural activities. Rotterdam is also represented in the bilateral government consultations regarding the phasing out of Dutch development co-operation with Cape Verde.



The country's further advance towards the EU is one of the themes here.

In 2008, there was a combined visit to Cape Verde by the Chief Public Prosecutor and the Chief Constable of the Rotterdam-Rijnmond Police. Increasing cross-border crime between the two countries and some concern about rising crime among Cape Verdean Rotterdammers has led to more intensive co-operation in this area.



# 6.

## World City with many relationships

### 6.1

#### International relations: making functional use of a broad network

A World City like Rotterdam maintains friendly relations with many other cities around the world. In addition to Rotterdam's priorities in the field of international relations for the coming years, as described in Chapters 3 and 4 of this programme, and as well as the countries with which Rotterdam has a special bond due to large groups of its population, effective relations will also be continued with other cities – anywhere in the world – and city networks in the coming years.

As already stated in Chapter 5, however, in these relations too, increasing emphasis is being placed on the economic aspects, as well as on Rotterdam's priority themes.

With the relations and relationships Rotterdam maintains in the world, the following distinction can be made:

- a structural, intensive relations with countries and/or cities which are in line with the geographic or thematic priorities;
- b relations of a long-term nature with (other) cities, whether or not as part of a network, with which agreements are made about co-operation in specific areas;
- c relations and contacts with cities which are related to or follow on from a specific topical event (such as a visit or the organisation of a conference, or an event in the field of art or sport, for example);
- d other relations with cities which are based mainly on some form of co-operation in the past.

Within Rotterdam's large international network, current practice is such that contacts are made on the basis of functionality, that is to say their practical benefits for the city. The designation sister city or partner city must also be seen against this background. With a number

of sister cities – for example Shanghai, Cologne and St. Petersburg in particular – Rotterdam has intensive contact; other cities – such as Berlin, London and Santos – do not bear the title of sister city but do play an important role in Rotterdam's network and are definitely important collaborative partners in specific areas. The content – and thus not the title – of the co-operative relationship and the practical benefits for Rotterdam are therefore of prime importance.

### 6.2

#### Inter-city relations

##### 'Sister-city relationships' and all manner of city links in an historic perspective

In Rotterdam's policy with respect to inter-city relations – as with many other Dutch municipalities – a number of historic phases can be differentiated.

In the 1940s and 1950s, friendship between nations was the motive behind maintaining international relations and entering into town-twinning relationships. In this context, Rotterdam linked up with such cities as Hull, Basel, Oslo, Liege, Esch-sur-Alzette in Luxemburg, Cologne, Lille and Turin.

In the 1970s and 1980s, municipal authorities began to feel more (politically) involved with the situation in countries with a different political system, as well as with the situation in developing countries. Based on such motives as justice, solidarity, democracy and human rights, contacts were made with cities in Nicaragua, South Africa and a large number of cities in Eastern Europe, like Gdansk, Constanza, Bourgas and St.Petersburg.

In this same period, Rotterdam also established links with Shanghai, Jakarta and Havana, among other cities. The co-operative relationships were characterised by a high level of involvement and assistance-for-free on

Rotterdam's part. The resulting good administrative relations definitely helped to provide a gateway for Rotterdam businesses there. Rotterdam also established links with Baltimore and Osaka.

The number of city links mushroomed during this period: from 10 in 1969 to 30 in 1992. Rotterdam distinguishes itself in this way from other Dutch cities, which tend to have no more than 3-5 relationships. This is probably related to Rotterdam's policy – certainly in the seventies and eighties – as a world city, of deciding quite quickly to sign co-operation agreements. The growth of the port and port-related commercial activity has always been intensively encouraged, and in many different ways, by Rotterdam municipal council. This also included entering into relationships with authorities abroad.

In 1991, Rotterdam officially established new city links for the last time (with Prague, Bratislava, Budapest and Durban).

From the nineties onwards, the accent shifted more and more to multilateral co-operation in the context of European and global city networks. The motives for co-operation are increasingly influenced by the independent interests of the city (both economic and social), global themes such as sustainable development, climate and energy, and improving quality through knowledge sharing (also see Chapters 1 and 2 of this programme).

### Practical approach

Through the years, Rotterdam has established many city links, co-operation agreements and other international agreements. Some relationships are perfectly in line with Rotterdam's current priorities, such as those with Cologne, Shanghai, St. Petersburg and Istanbul.

Rotterdam chooses to approach this fact in the most pragmatic way possible. For the time being, no new formula 'sister-city relationships' will be entered into. Instead, Rotterdam is continually alert to opportunities for co-operation with other big cities, whether or not in the context of European or worldwide city networks.

Rotterdam makes sure that it is involved with such a broad international network of cities that a 'list of candidates' can always be drawn up of similar cities, which could co-operate well with Rotterdam in a particular area. Generally speaking, Rotterdam will try to show restraint in the coming years when it comes to entering into new forms of co-operation with cities with which a less active co-operative relationship exists and which do not have a direct link with Rotterdam's priority areas or themes.

Cities with which Rotterdam maintains important links and which have not yet been mentioned are Antwerp, Jakarta and Osaka. With *Antwerp*, there are co-operative relationships in the cultural field, among others; with *Osaka* and *Jakarta*, it is a question of broad co-operation relating to the economy, trade, water management, art and culture, etc.

---

**Jon Bloomfield, Lecturer in Local Government Studies at the University of Birmingham:**

"Rotterdam is shifting from traditional town twinning to more concentrated partnership activity. This practical co-operation is labour intensive and is very reliant on the commitment and engagement of staff within the other city. Such a concentrated approach is only possible with a limited number of cities. Rotterdam must grasp the nettle and decide on its partner city priorities. I think a selection of four partnership cities would be recommendable."

---



There is already a long-standing relationship with the prefecture of Osaka. This dates back to 1970, when the Osaka Merchandise Center, now the International Business Office of Osaka, was set up in Rotterdam. In December 2007, Rotterdam City Hall hosted the kick-off for celebrations surrounding 150 years of diplomatic relations (in 2008) between the Netherlands and Japan and 400 years of trading relations between the two countries in 2009.

Both of these occasions provide opportunities to promote Rotterdam even more among the Japanese business community, with targeted business events.

Rotterdam has been collaborating with partner city *Jakarta* in various projects since 2005. The 'Inter-city Co-operation' is based on working together and sharing knowledge. Indonesian partner organisations are advised and trained by colleagues in Rotterdam.

In spring 2005, a 'Terms of Reference' document for the period 2005-2007 was signed in Rotterdam, geared towards training courses in museum management. In 2008, renewed co-operation agreements were made in the field of water management.

The Port of Rotterdam Authority also maintains good relations in Jakarta/Indonesia and regularly organises port seminars in Jakarta.

### Standing by partners in times of need

In a number of cases, Rotterdam has provided emergency aid during exceptional circumstances to cities and/or countries with which it has a relationship. Following natural disasters in Turkey (1999 earthquake in Gölcük), Surinam (floods in 2006) and Indonesia (floods in 2007), Rotterdam provided emergency aid in various ways and helped with the reconstruction. In this area, there is coordination with the allied relief organisations, the other major cities and with the national government.

In the future, Rotterdam will pursue this same approach in similar circumstances.



# 7.

# Brussels is the capital of Rotterdam

## 7.1

### The European Union and decentralised authorities: administrative relationship evolving

#### Objectives

'Brussels is the capital of Rotterdam' is a quote from Prof. Rinus van Schendelen, professor of Political Science at Erasmus University Rotterdam. This statement expresses very succinctly how vitally important it is for a city like Rotterdam to adopt a good position vis-à-vis the European Union (EU). The European Union has a great impact, both directly and indirectly, on Rotterdam's policy.

The approach to relations with the European Union has various features:

- *to play a strong role in the European arena*, in order to be able to *influence* EU policy and regulations as much as possible;
- *to make use of* the opportunities provided by European networks and subsidy programmes in an effective and efficient way.

In order to go as far as possible towards achieving these aims, it is necessary to be up to date on developments within the European Union, so that you can respond optimally to them. This endeavour to be informed runs like a thread through all contacts with the EU.

Optimum knowledge of EU policy and regulations (at an early stage) is also essential to ensure that, within Rotterdam, all action and regulations are 'Europe-proof', so that any disadvantages and damage as a result of failing to implement European legislation on time or act in contravention of the same, are avoided.

Within the context of the Rotterdam Judicial Quality Management Programme, the EU working group of the lawyers' platform coordinates and enhances expertise in the field of European law. Up to now, the EU working group has focused mainly on legislation covering state support and competition law, but is expanding this field to include all relevant EU laws and regulations. Coordination regarding European tenders is the responsibility of the Public Works Department.

#### Broadening and flattening

Rotterdam has a long history of contacts within the European Union. Originally, these were geared mainly towards acquiring European subsidies for projects in the field of urban development and modernisation, later shifting more and more towards networks and influencing European decision making across a broader area.

Traditionally, only limited attention is paid to cities at the European level. Slowly but surely, however, there is growing awareness that it is sensible, for various reasons, to involve the decentralised authorities in more European dossiers (*'broadening'*). Since 1989, Rotterdam has been paying structural attention to European developments.

In order to strengthen the position of local authorities within the EU structurally, the European Committee of the Regions was created by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. The Committee represents the local and regional authorities in the European decision making process. Since its inception, the Mayor of Rotterdam has been a member of the Committee. As a result, Rotterdam has been able to exert an influence on European urban policy, safety and integration policy, among other things.

In addition to the awareness that decentralised authorities must be closely involved in European policy, there has also been clear evidence in recent years of a change in relations between local authorities, national

governments and international organisations such as the European Union. Whereas in the past international organisations conducted their business almost exclusively with national governments, there is general recognition nowadays of the fact that the different levels of administration desperately need each other (*flattening or multi-level governance*).

Local authorities need Europe, but Europe also needs the local authorities. European policy must be expressed partially via the municipalities. But the municipalities also play an important role in promoting European citizenship. As they are closer to the people, they are in an ideal position to inform citizens about Europe and to mobilise citizen participation.

The starting point for Rotterdam is that the large European cities must *take the initiative themselves* when it comes to discussing important dossiers directly with the European Commission. Strong European city networks are therefore very important.

### Rotterdam's answer: develop own initiatives selectively

An example of a trendsetting initiative is the way in which Rotterdam tackled the rapporteurship of Mayor Opstelten for the Committee of the Regions in the Commission for Constitutional Affairs, European Governance and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice in 2005. The rapporteurship led to a recommendation by the Committee of the Regions to the European Commission and the European Parliament with respect to the so-called 'The Hague Programme, the partnership for European renewal in the field of freedom, security and justice'.

Whereas earlier recommendations by the Committee mainly emphasised the fact that more account needed to be taken of the position of local authorities in all fields, Mayor Opstelten's report chose 1) to make a distinct selection of topics, which touch on specific responsibilities of the local authorities and 2) to make concrete proposals for action to be taken by the local authorities *themselves*.

It is particularly important to focus on involvement with those topics and problems which can actually be tackled at the local authority level at a time when the positive trends (for local authorities) of *broadening and flattening* are increasing within the European context. Rotterdam does not consider it opportune for local authorities to form opinions on foreign politics or developments in community criminal law.

It is essential to take action oneself to show the EU and national governments what is actually going on in the big cities and how solutions are being sought. In this way, best practices can be developed jointly.

Rotterdam also wishes to take initiatives in the field of communication about the EU. The policy adopted up to now with respect to 'reconnecting Europe to the people' has not proved a great success. As local and regional authorities are close to the people, they can experience

directly how their citizens are turning away from the European Union to an increasing degree.

As chair of the Commission Objective 2009, a working group of the Committee of the Regions, a report was drafted in 2008, under the leadership of Mayor Opstelten, with the purpose of – partly with a view to the European elections in 2009 – providing the members of the Committee with more possibilities for communicating with their citizens about Europe. One result was the development of a practical 'toolkit', with such building blocks for improved communication as a) the organisation of political debates (in 2009 in Rotterdam, for instance, a Council Debate on the EU will be organised), b) the launch of a website on which the public can find out, very easily, which projects are being undertaken in the city using European funds, and c) the implementation of benchmarks in relation to turn-out figures for the European elections.

### Step forward with new European Reform Treaty

In the relationship with the EU, Rotterdam works closely with Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, as the G4.

Within the Netherlands, central government has also taken a number of initiatives to increase the involvement of the provincial and municipal authorities in European policy. These initiatives take on extra weight in the light of the new European Reform Treaty (Lisbon, October 2007).

In addition to modifications of European decision making procedures and provisions relating to the EU institutions, the Treaty contains various references to the role and position of the local authorities. In the Treaty, the principle of local and regional self-government is established for the first time. In this way, local and regional authorities form part of the European Union administrative structure. The Treaty also states that the EU may not take any action in areas where regional and local authorities are more adept (part of the subsidiarity principle).

In one of the Protocols attached to the Treaty, it states that decentralised authorities and their umbrellas will, in the future, be consulted more often by the European Commission when it comes to regulations. The national parliaments can apply a subsidiarity test to proposals from the EU. This allows them to assess whether or not the execution of the proposal is taking place at the correct level of government. Should a parliament believe this is not the case, an objection can be lodged with the European Commission. Henceforth, the Committee of the Regions has the right to lodge an objection with the European Court of Justice about violations of the subsidiarity principle or of the right to be consulted.

It is therefore extremely important that the Dutch government (central, provincial and municipal governments jointly) makes sure that these notions also become reality. Rotterdam will make out a case for this and continue on its chosen path.

At the moment, Rotterdam is of the opinion that the big cities' involvement in the preparation of Dutch standpoints is not yet *inventive and effective* enough and

that the big cities are often not seen as serious partners by central government in relation to the EU (for example in relation to requests for ESF subsidies).

## 7.2

### Networks: strengthen position and learn from each other

Within the European Union, it is extremely worthwhile to operate in the context of city networks. Roughly speaking, they serve two purposes:

- together, to strengthen the position vis-à-vis the European institutions, as well as the national governments involved, and to make constructive contributions;
- to learn from each other through benchmarking, the exchange of best practices, the establishment of information networks, etc.

Participation in relevant European networks is vital. The best way of travelling the road from Europe-consciousness to influencing and lobbying is by taking part in networks and, together with peers from other European cities and Europe-experts, estimating importance and influence. The same applies, for that matter, to co-operation with European research institutes and agencies.

With respect to the Netherlands, Rotterdam works closely with Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, as the G4. In Brussels, the most important lobby dossiers are divided up and monitored. The G4 draw up an annual work plan, whereby the current areas of concern are established.

Eurocities – the association that represents the interests of large European cities – was, as mentioned earlier, founded in 1986 in Rotterdam. Rotterdam has always played a prominent role in this network and wants to continue to do so.

Another network in which Rotterdam performs an important role is Euricur (the European Institute for Comparative Urban Research, part of Erasmus University Rotterdam). Euricur forms the heart of a large network of cities. Euricur's main aim is to encourage fundamental international research into subjects which are of strategic importance to cities.

---

**Rinus van Schendelen, Professor of Political Science at Erasmus University Rotterdam:**

“Brussels is the capital of Rotterdam. That’s where the European laws and regulations that overrule our Government Gazette originate. A number of departments within the municipality of Rotterdam, including Rotterdam Development Corporation, the department of Spatial Planning and Housing and the department of Social Affairs and Employment, are very much aware of that. They have more or less mastered the European game by looking in depth at relevant developments, dossiers and subsidies. That proves very fruitful. You must be able to smell European opportunities and threats in advance and steer on the basis of your own agenda or shortlist. In my opinion, far too few departments and directorates operate in this way at the moment. Whilst it is so decisive for Rotterdam’s future that we know how the European game must be played and act accordingly.”

---

**Paul Hoop, Coordinator International Affairs, Youth, Education and Society Department (JOS):**

“We are active in several networks both within and beyond Europe. For instance, JOS is chair of the Eurocities working group on Education. Here we swap specific knowledge and experience with cities. We also do that with our partners and sister cities. The aim of all this is to improve our own policy and to put Rotterdam on the European map as effectively and as forcefully as possible.”



---

**Nico Tillie, EU Coordinator  
Department of Spatial Planning and  
Housing:**

“Rotterdam is a multicultural, international city. We must make sure that we know exactly which developments are under way. That is only possible by establishing contacts in other cities and sharing experience. Networks are very useful and valuable in that respect. Also when it comes to acquiring subsidies. A good example is the INTERREG programme, a European Union initiative for the harmonious and sustainable development of the European area. Via this programme, the EU provides subsidies every year to creative, innovative collaboration projects. We are very much behind this. As a department, we have learned to think and act more in a European context. As a city alone, you are not very strong in Brussels. However, if you are associated with a network of cities, you have a considerably better chance of being heard. Or of influencing the policy of the European Commission.”

---

**Coordinator International and EU  
Affairs, Administrative Department:**

“In the past few decades, cities have experienced massive internationalisation. There is a trend towards increasingly multilateral city relations, from project-based co-operation to structured networks. European, but also increasingly more global. Cities are taking the initiative more often, whilst national authorities are reticent or cautious. This trend will continue in the coming decades, I’m sure of that. Cities are also the first to be confronted with the problems and the opportunities. The climate initiative is a good example of a worldwide problem that demands an international approach, where cities can make all the difference. It’s fantastic to work for a city that leads the way internationally and wants to continue to do so.”

---

## 7.3

### European priorities for Rotterdam

Rotterdam chooses priority areas of concern within the EU on the basis of the following criteria:

- is Rotterdam capable of taking responsibility for the approach to a certain problem;
- is a subject a decisive factor in good urban development.

In addition to this, when selecting European areas of concern, Rotterdam seeks to link up with broader international priorities. This means paying particular attention to European dossiers in the field of:

- economic development, knowledge economy and infrastructure;
- environment, climate, energy and water;
- social cohesion, participation, youth and safety.

The following points can be added to this list:

- sustainable urban development;
- active contribution during European themed years;
- communication;
- general dossiers which touch on the policy freedom of decentralised authorities, such as the European Services Directive and the Protocol on Services of General Interest.

## 7.4

### Making optimum use of European instruments

#### Aim

Naturally, it is very important that Rotterdam makes optimum use of the opportunities provided by the European policy instruments. The European subsidy programmes are therefore receiving plenty of attention within the Rotterdam organisation, as of old.

Much European policy is executed by means of subsidies, varying from subsidies to combat disadvantage (regional policy, European Social Fund and suchlike), development and research (innovation, technology funds) to pilot projects and knowledge sharing.

With all European subsidies, knowledge sharing plays an important role. Attracting European funding therefore not only means extra money, but also, and more importantly, the chance to acquire knowledge and contribute one’s own experience to further policy development.

#### Structural funds

Up to now, the most active use of European resources has been made in connection with the theme ‘urban development’. The *European structural funds* are therefore the major source of EU subsidies for cities.



In the past years, Rotterdam has received around €5 million a year for the big cities policy. Over a period of twenty years, Rotterdam has built up the necessary experience and expertise in lobbying for, attracting and managing these resources. Rotterdam has established a good reputation in Brussels with the projects on which and the way in which the contributions are spent. People speak about the European 'success dossier' of Rotterdam.

Partly as a result of this, Rotterdam was asked to serve as Management Authority for the Operational programme 'Opportunities for West (Randstad)' for the period 2007-2013.

In this programme, €310 million is available for the four big cities and the four Randstad provinces (G4 and P4). Over €50 million of this is available for projects in Rotterdam, as described in the Operational programme 'Opportunities for Rotterdam'.

Although the implementation phase has only just got under way, preparations for the post-2013 structural funds period have already begun. Rotterdam is playing a prominent part in discussions on the future of the structural funds (mid-term review, cohesion report).

That also applies to the topical discussion on the review of the total EU budget for the period starting in 2013. There is close collaboration here with other members of the G4 and Eurocities.

### Other important subsidy instruments

Other examples of Rotterdam's success in attracting European resources involve the URBAN II programme (approx. €9 million for the approach to neighbourhoods, including Oude Noorden) and INTERREG. INTERREG is a European subsidy scheme within which parties from several countries co-operate in projects relating to urban and regional development. Projects are implemented by partners from at least two different countries and – if they meet all criteria – 50% or 75% of the costs are reimbursed by the European Union.

The European funding for INTERREG comes from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which is provided by the Member States. The money is spent on the best-quality projects, irrespective of which country initiates such a project. In Rotterdam, the Port Authority, for example, has successfully acquired INTERREG funds and the project 'Revitalisation of Spaanse Polder' was partly funded from this programme.

In 2008, Rotterdam again successfully appealed to Urbact (part of the Urban programme) and INTERREG, partly in connection with the organisation of Rotterdam European Youth Capital .

On the basis of the so-called PROGRESS programme, Rotterdam is receiving €542,000 from the European Commission to exchange knowledge relating to the participation of disadvantaged groups (the project 'Connections'), together with other cities and in the context of Eurocities. Here – and in various other comparable projects – the department of Social Affairs and Employment plays an important role..

### Approach

It is widely known that (successfully) applying for European subsidies is a complex matter. This success is related primarily to good networks and an excellent feel for what considerations the recipient of the request will take into account.

Rotterdam has built up a good tradition here, of which the city can rightfully be proud. The physical sector in particular has plenty of experience in attracting subsidies. Virtually no use is made of the various aid structures which have by now been developed by government authorities or market parties.

Nevertheless, the Rotterdam approach to attracting subsidies can be strengthened further. On the one hand, this can be done by improving the provision of information on potentially interesting subsidy programmes across the board. More attention should be paid to the non-physical sector here. On the other hand, it can be done by setting up a knowledge office for European subsidies, whereby Rotterdam's departments can be supported when preparing for an application. In 2009, a practical handbook on European subsidies will also be published. Awareness of the fact that attracting subsidies is mainly a question of good networks and a sensitivity to European relationships plays a crucial role here.

---

#### Max Jeleniewski, Programme Manager Structural Funds (Rotterdam Development Corporation):

"With the aid of European subsidies, our city can invest more in economic opportunities. Thanks to the structural funds, it's possible to give certain projects, such as those relating to old districts, public space and the knowledge economy, an extra boost in terms of both quality and quantity. As a result, we as a city can generate more local employment and reinforce social integration. The European rules relating to eligibility for funding are not complicated in themselves. They are just extremely strict. In that connection, a good organisation is of vital importance. With projects, try to keep everything as transparent as possible and follow the rules to the letter."

---

# 8.

# Organising the execution

## 8.1

### Different roles: joining forces in Rotterdam

When executing Rotterdam's policy on international relations, the main thing is that the municipality of Rotterdam can only achieve the set ambitions if it co-operates effectively with the business community, social institutions and organisations and other authorities at home and abroad.

Opportunities for mutual co-cooperation are utilised to the full. Many Rotterdam departments and civil servants make a direct or indirect contribution to effective and efficient policy with respect to international relations.

#### Administrative effort

The Municipal Executive sets the policy and is responsible for executing it adequately. Within the Executive, the Mayor is responsible for coordinating municipal policy on international relations. The Mayor initiates, directs and takes care of the necessary coordination.

In addition to the Mayor, a number of Vice Mayors are also highly involved in international issues, by virtue of the content of their portfolios, also in relation to Rotterdam's priorities. This mainly involves the Vice Mayor for the Economy, Port and Environment, the Vice Mayor for Participation and Culture and, in the field of sport, the Vice Mayor for Finance, Sport and Public Space.

As for the other aldermen, however, international and European relations are demanding their attention more often and more intensively all the time.

Rotterdam is striving for political representation, both structurally and systematically, in international and European networks in all policy fields relevant to Rotterdam. The departments are developing and

maintaining an international and European network strategy to this end.

Every year, an overview is drawn up of all international working visits by the Mayor and Vice Mayors. At the beginning of 2010, this will be combined, for the first time, with a (broader) report on Rotterdam's activities in the field of international and European relations.

#### Involvement of the council

The Programme for International and European Activities (PIEA) makes the policy and the accompanying activities more transparent for all involved both within and beyond the municipal organisation. It can inspire people and thereby further enhance the effect of Rotterdam's policy.

The creation of the PIEA makes possible a focused discussion between the administration and the council on the priorities set. This will serve to increase support for the policy on international relations.

The involvement of Rotterdam council in the city's international efforts has always been considerable. This can be seen from the working visits made by council members to Brussels and to countries and cities with which Rotterdam has close links. For example, the Presidium of the current council paid a successful visit to Shanghai in 2007, whereby the ties between Rotterdam and Shanghai were further strengthened.

#### Activities of municipal districts

In principle, Rotterdam's international relations are taken care of by the central administration. This means that, generally speaking, municipal district councils do not directly maintain international relations or develop any international policy.

In a letter dated 7 January 2003 and addressed to the municipal districts, it was confirmed that local councils could only maintain direct external relations with other administrative bodies if the interests is exclusive of the municipal district, or its inhabitants, were involved in this

relationship. In 2009, further consideration will be given to how these agreements can be clarified further.

Practical experience over the past few years has provided a number of examples of municipal district activities with the approval of the Municipal Executive, which fit well within the set central frameworks. There is, for example – within the context of an agreement between the municipality and Surinam – structural co-operation between the municipal district of Hoogvliet and the district Marowijne (also see Chapter 5). With the implementation of this co-operation, there is good coordination with the central administration.

Considering the desire for optimum co-operation when implementing the programme at hand, the role the municipal districts can play will be mapped out in more detail, in conjunction with the municipal districts, in the period ahead.

### Municipal departments

Virtually all municipal departments are involved directly or indirectly with Rotterdam policy on international relations. Within this context, the Administrative Department – the General Affairs division, Administrative, Legal & International Affairs department (BJI) – has a general coordinating role. For instance, BJI took the initiative of co-operating with the other departments to develop a Programme for International and European activities, BJI provides other departments with general working methods and instruments, ensures that the concern-wide network functions well and advises and assists the Municipal Executive in implementing the policy. From 2010 onwards, BJI will also draft an annual report on the implementation of the Programme for International and European activities. To fulfil these tasks, BJI has as its disposal professionals with specialist insight and experience in the field of international relations.

In addition to the Administrative Department, international duties in the economic field are also focused on the Rotterdam Development Corporation (OBR), particularly when it comes to international economic policy, international acquisition of companies and the acquisition and use of European subsidies in the field of urban development.

Highly intertwined with the tasks of the OBR is the organisation of the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO). The CMO has prime responsibility for Rotterdam City Marketing, the brand policy and brand management of the city of Rotterdam in a directing role. The aim is to strengthen the brand Rotterdam and improve its national and international image, in order to attract more (international) visitors, companies, residents and students to the city and to keep them there. This is being achieved through the development of city marketing activities with a focus on co-operation and partnerships. Steering is by the City Marketing Staff, chaired by the Vice Mayor for the Economy, Port and Environment.

Of great importance for Rotterdam is to have a successful international policy, particularly in the international-economic field, is the strategy for Rotterdam's international signature, as presented in

2008 by the CMO. This brand strategy indicates how, via control over Rotterdam City Marketing, a joint approach to the city marketing activities is guided in the right direction. In the coming years, 'Rotterdam World Port, World City' will be the focus of branding Rotterdam, right across the municipality. The accompanying 'brandbox', which is available in several different languages, plays an essential role here.

In addition to the more economically oriented departments, there are important European and international tasks in the social field for the departments Social Affairs & Employment, Youth, Education & Society and the Municipal Health Service, as well as in the field of international aspects of art, culture and sport for the departments Art & Culture and Sport & Recreation. The Social Affairs & Employment Department is responsible for coordinating European activities in the social field. This department also drafts an annual plan 'Europe and partner cities policy' covering its particular field.

The Department of Spatial Planning and Housing is extremely active in an EU context and has a number of specific international co-operative relationships. The same applies to the Public Works Department. Furthermore, in some co-operative relationships, the specific (technical) expertise of the Public Works Department is deployed. Pubic Works and – partly by order of Rotterdam – the DCMR, the Environmental Protection Agency Rijnmond, also play an important role in international activities relating to climate, the environment, energy and water.

All municipal departments must have a coordinator of European and international affairs.

### Partners in co-operation

As already described in previous chapters, Rotterdam works closely with many companies, organisations and agencies in realizing the policy with respect to European and international relations. The most important of these include:

- the Port of Rotterdam Authority
- the Rotterdam Port Promotion Council (RPPC)
- the port business association Deltalinqs
- the Chamber of Commerce
- Erasmus University Rotterdam
- the Environmental Protection Agency Rijnmond (DCMR)
- Rotterdam-Rijnmond Police
- the Rotterdam Marketing foundation
- the Rotterdam Festivals foundation
- the Rotterdam Topsport foundation
- many art and cultural organisations, such as Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra.

Coordination of Rotterdam's international economic activities takes place in the so-called Vierhoek (Quadrangle), in which a number of the above-mentioned organisations are represented (see section 8.2 below).

Within the government, there is close co-operation with the other cities of the G4, i.e. Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht.

---

**Mai Elmar, Chief Marketing Officer  
Rotterdam:**

“Rotterdam has a strong personality and is, in terms of character, inextricably linked with its port and everything the city has to offer. City and port have been successful in trade and shipping for 400 years already. The broad range of Rotterdam’s services and products arose and evolved from the inside out. As a result, Rotterdam also has a strong middle class. The city is ambitious, is changing all the time and stands for commitment. It is young and dynamic and has always been home to many different nationalities. This is Rotterdam’s strength.”

---

**Arjan van Gils, City Manager of  
Rotterdam:**

“In my opinion, Rotterdam performs quite adequately at the international level. But things can always be improved. I think that it’s very important now to choose the right strategic key points and focus very clearly on these in the coming years. We mustn’t want to do everything, but make conscious choices and then keep to these for the long haul. As I see it, the role of General Affairs/BJI is to make sure that the strategic key points of the policy on international relations are monitored across the board. Administrative Affairs is close to the administration and can coordinate the initiatives and actions of departments and support departments in their European or international activities. In short: I view the role of BJI mainly in directing and controlling. The departments are in charge of their own strategic agenda. But Administrative Affairs is responsible for maintaining the strategic core of international policy. And that means informing, advising, facilitating and, if necessary, mobilising the department well.”

---

In addition to this, the Holland Business Promotion Office (HBPO) was set up in 2006, partly on the initiative of Rotterdam, to draw attention abroad to the commercially strong regions and sectors of the Randstad as a whole. An integrated approach to the international business community strengthens the international competitive position of the Randstad.

At the national level, there is coordination in the Dutch Trade Board, which is chaired by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Naturally, there are also regular contacts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Economic Affairs (including the Agency for International Business and Cooperation and the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, NFIA).

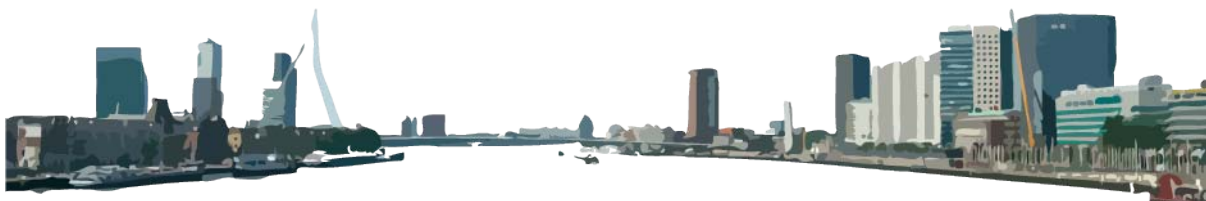
On a number of points of policy there are also contacts with the VNG (Association of Netherlands Municipalities) International.

Rotterdam is open to third-party initiatives (citizens, private organisations, companies and institutions) in the field of international co-operation if they can contribute towards the objectives of elements of Rotterdam policy as described in this programme. However, the municipality does not have a general financial arrangement to support such initiatives. If support is considered desirable, existing arrangements regarding specific elements of municipal policy can be made use of; in other cases, the municipality initiatives can support in another way, for example by providing information on relevant networks.

### **Advisory bodies**

The Economic Development Board Rotterdam (EDBR) is a platform of more than thirty opinion leaders from the world of business, education, science and culture. These prominent Rotterdammers advise the Municipal Executive, both solicited and unsolicited, on the economically successful sectors in which investments must be made in the coming years. At the same time, they support the rapid execution of promising (economic) projects.

The International Advisory Board (IAB) also operates under the EDBR banner. The IAB serves as a sounding board for the municipal council with respect to international economic developments. The IAB consists of top global administrators from the international business community, knowledge institutions and the media. Once a year, the members of the IAB meet in Rotterdam for a conference. With their broad international knowledge and experience, they provide new impulses for Rotterdam’s policy on international economic relations.



## 8.2

# Steering, coordination and instruments

### Steering and coordination

In order to enable the Municipal Executive to structure its responsibility for effective and efficient policy on international relations as well as possible, a progress report on the implementation of the PIEA is discussed every year.

Portfolio holder 'International relations' (or 'Foreign Affairs') is the Mayor. The Mayor and the Aldermen most involved meet about five times a year in a management meeting to discuss the various action points – prepared by the Administrative Department.

Coordination of the international activities geared towards strengthening economic development takes place in the so-called Vierhoek (Quadrangle) (municipality, Port of Rotterdam Authority, Chamber of Commerce and employers/entrepreneurs). Chaired by the Mayor, this body consists of the Vice Mayor for the Economy, Port and Environment, the Port Authority, Rotterdam Development Corporation, the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce, the Rotterdam Port Promotion Council and the Chief Marketing Officer. The secretariat of the Vierhoek is in the hands of the Administrative Department – General Affairs division, Governmental, Legal and International Affairs.

### Instruments

In order to be able to achieve the objectives of the policy regarding international relations, Rotterdam employs an adequate combination of instruments, comprising guidelines, networks and partnerships, education and training courses, provision of information and communication.

Doing business begins with meeting people. Rotterdam underlines the importance of local networks with an international character when implementing its policy on international relations. This is mainly a question of networks whereby businesses, (knowledge) institutes and government authorities can come into contact with each other, develop initiatives and agree on partnerships. In the coming years, Rotterdam will further encourage the organisation of such networks.

An important instrument in the context of maintaining international relations is Rotterdam's brand signature and the accompanying 'brandbox', which was already referred to in section 8.1. The brandbox is available in several different languages and is a vital part of the toolbox for public and private Rotterdam parties which operate internationally.

Excellent hosting by Rotterdam is very important in connection with successful international relations.

Based on the successful international profiling of Rotterdam, the city also sometimes hosts large inter-governmental or international conferences. In 2009, for example, Rotterdam will be hosting the United Nations for three days, when a Special Session of the General Assembly of the UN is held in Rotterdam. At this session, a new, worldwide shipping treaty to regulate maritime transport contracts will be signed. By having the signing of the treaty to take place in Rotterdam, government delegations and representatives of the business community from many dozens of countries, will also have the opportunity to become acquainted with the world of docks and shipping at first hand.

More particularly, excellent hosting also means that, for companies, their employees wishing to settle here, foreign students, et cetera, 'the red carpet' will have to be put out as soon as possible. In order to further improve this and other aspects in Rotterdam, the EDBR issued the recommendations 'International acquisition' at the end of 2008.

In 2009, Rotterdam is to have a revamped City Portal on the Internet. This site will contain fast, easily-accessible and complete information – in different languages – about Rotterdam's international relations. The overview of proposed working visits – as currently accessible at [www.rotterdamportal.com/reisagenda](http://www.rotterdamportal.com/reisagenda) – will also be available via the new City Portal.

International working visits – by both governors and civil servants – are among the instruments used in international policy. BJI keeps an updated overview of the proposed working visits, which is accessible to all parties involved, so that it is easier to respond to others' initiatives and thereby make the most efficient use possible of the working visit instrument. With respect to the preparation and execution of working visits and the trips made in this connection by administrators and civil servants, strict rules apply. The Municipal Executive decides on administrative working visits, the relevant departmental head on working visits by civil servants, whereby the member of the Municipal Executive concerned is informed in advance.

Rotterdam is also aware of the importance of a good quality international function within the municipality. Civil servants who are charged with duties in the field of international relations must possess specific competencies in the field of networking, relationship management, international negotiation, intercultural co-operation, integrating capacity and knowledge of languages.

It is also very important – for a successful international relations policy – to increase the attention paid to 'thinking and acting internationally' among civil servants who are not employed specifically in an international position.

For this reason, Rotterdam is developing targeted education (language courses, insight into the organisation and working methods of the EU or of a concrete country, etc.) and training courses (skills relating

---

**Ivar Nijhuis, Head Corporate Communications Rotterdam:**

"As of 2009, the City Portal: [www.rotterdam.nl](http://www.rotterdam.nl) is also the entrance to Rotterdam for international relations. "This is where you enter the city with guts!"

---

**Wim Hendriks, Head External Relations & Cabinet, Administrative Department:**

"Rotterdam is known as an open and hospitable city. The international character of Rotterdam is expressed in the rapid increase in international companies and the rise in the number of foreign students. Rotterdam surprises and delights with its architecture, events, sport, art and culture. The municipal council is keen to share all this with its guests. Good hosting means making guests feel welcome in the city and it is one of the most decisive factors in commercial success."

to international negotiation, international networks, dealing with international telephone and E-mail traffic, organising international video conferences, etc.).

In 2009 at the latest, a programme for a Masterclass will have been completed. Attention will also be paid here to the 'toolkit' required for employees in this connection (for example, dealing in an international context with calling cards, business gifts and suchlike). Employees of the municipality of Rotterdam must be able to excel in the international field.

In order to improve co-operation within the municipality's international function, an International and European network was set up in 2007. In that connection, themed and discussion meetings are organised, but initiatives are also discussed for further professionalising the approach to Rotterdam's international relations in the coming years.

Within the municipality, the network will be supported by Rotterdam Worldwide as of spring 2009. This will involve, among other things, reports on international and European activities, attention for topical developments in the international field and Rotterdam's network activities will be announced. With respect to the EU, a monthly informative 'Brussels Memo' will be published, in which there will be a review of and a look ahead to topical EU events.

Edition: City of Rotterdam, February 2009

Information:  
Administrative Department  
Governmental, Legal and International Affairs  
City Hall, Coolingsingel 40  
P.O. box 70012, 3000 KP Rotterdam  
Telephone: +31 10 4173060  
E-mail: [info@rotterdam.nl](mailto:info@rotterdam.nl)  
Internet: [www.rotterdam.nl](http://www.rotterdam.nl)

Layout: Dick Pruis Artworkstudio  
Photography: Fred Ernst, Esther Kokmeijer  
Print: Thieme MediaCenter Rotterdam



ROTTERDAMWORLDPORTWORLDCITYROTTERDAMWORLDPORTWORLDCITY

