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A comparison of Dutch and US public housing regeneration planning: the similarity grows?

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Based on a comparison of HOPE VI and Big Cities Policy in the United States and the Netherlands, we argue that despite major differences in context, there has been a convergence in regeneration strategies in the two countries. In both countries the neighbourhoods look better, are safer and have a better reputation. However, in the Netherlands shopping facilities have improved more than in the United States. In both countries, most of the original residents have a better quality of life after than before the policies were implemented, whether they live on-site or have relocated. However, the needs of multi-problem families are not being met by either HOPE VI or Big Cities Policy. Finally, there is no evidence that the original residents have become more self-sufficient in either country as a result of the regeneration.

Keywords: income mixing; ethnic minorities; relocation; HOPE VI; Big Cities Policy

Introduction

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) HOPE VI programme is one of the most comprehensive policies that have been developed with respect to public and social housing regeneration (Turner *et al.* 2008, Cisneros and Engdahl 2009). In the Netherlands, the *Grotestedenbeleid* (Big Cities Policy, BCP) focuses on deprived neighbourhoods, recently aided by the *Krachtwijken Aanpak* (Action Plan for Strong Neighbourhoods) (Planbureau 2000, Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal 2001, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht 2002, BZK 2004, VROM 2007a, 2007b). Policymakers who deal with questions of how to house the poor and how to improve the quality of public housing neighbourhoods¹ face a difficult task, since there is little available knowledge about specific successful approaches. American and European academics have established a dialogue regarding these issues, but there has yet to be any coherent comparative approach (for an exception, see Beider 2007, 2008).

This article inventories and analyses the causes, strategies and outcomes in the current policy discourse on public and social housing regeneration offered by academics and policymakers in the United States and the Netherlands. Our aim is to compare and contrast the way Dutch and American experts have approached the following two goals:

- (1) To create good-quality neighbourhoods, with high levels of social cohesion, that have a good reputation and are safe and manageable.
- (2) To create places to live that support (rather than constrain) the residents.

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Both countries employ similar means to reach these goals: public–private partnerships, mixed-income developments, a modest emphasis on relocation to non-deprived or mixed-income neighbourhoods and self-sufficiency programmes promoting a shift from welfare to work.

In order to contribute to the academic debate, we provide a systematic and comprehensive comparison of neighbourhood regeneration strategies in the United States and the Netherlands. We are not presenting original research material, but instead we are evaluating and comparing published² research with a focus on the transferability of experiences between the two countries and the issues emerging from this cross-country comparison.³

Needless to say, it is rather difficult to identify a one-and-only policy approach in each country, since policies tend to develop over time and are perceived differently by each policy group. In each country, the approaches towards public housing regeneration are based on a certain set of ideas, notions and understandings of policymakers and academic researchers about the causes of the problems and solutions to deal with them. Nevertheless, we present an overview of the general policy discourse derived from current research in each country because we want to be able to compare these discourses. We are mindful of the diversity of opinions on public housing regeneration in each country, yet only by picturing the general – or mainstream – policy discourse in each country we can compare the differences between these countries and highlight the main commonalities and differences.

We next consider the historical and political context in which the public housing policies in each country were formulated and then present a systematic comparison of both countries' policies based on the three key measures: neighbourhood revitalization, relocation of residents to non-deprived neighbourhoods and promoting self-sufficiency. For each topic we explain the policy goals, the measures taken to reach these goals and the effectiveness of these measures according to recent academic and policy evaluations. Based on this comparative literature review, we derive lessons for both European and American policymakers.

A systematic comparison across two countries

We are building on a body of existing literature that promotes cross-Atlantic exchange. Northwestern European studies often build on American experiences and empirical work to formulate hypotheses and build theoretical expectations (Ostendorf *et al.* 2001, Friedrichs *et al.* 2003, Andersson and Musterd 2005, Musterd and Andersson 2005, Musterd and Ostendorf 2005). Also vice versa, there has been some cross-fertilization from Europe to America (Galster 2002, 2007, Varady and Schulman 2007).

Clearly, there are major differences in context between the Netherlands and the United States:

- The Netherlands is often called a welfare state because of its universal benefits based on citizenship, equal access to excellent services, low degree of dependency on the market and a minor role for private welfare markets. The United States, on the other hand, is often called a liberal society, because of its dependency on the market, restricted public goods and a strong role for the market in the production of welfare (Esping-Andersen 1990).
- In the United States, social housing constitutes about 5% of the total housing stock. This includes units owned by public or not-for-profit entities as well as subsidized housing owned by profit-making companies and individuals who receive various types of public subsidies that reduce rents for residents. In contrast, in the

Netherlands large social housing corporations provide about a third of the total housing, up to 50% in some of the large cities.

- In the United States, the population of public housing developments is mostly made up of blacks and Hispanics. In the Netherlands, however, the ethnic background of the tenants is highly mixed, including Turks, Moroccan, Surinamese, Antillean and native Dutch people ([Aalbers et al. 2011](#)).⁴
- Whereas public housing in the United States historically has had income limits, this was not true for social housing in the Netherlands. However, from January 2011 onwards, housing corporations have to rent out their vacant dwellings for no more than €647.53 per month to households with incomes up to €33,000 per year (see VVD and CDA 2010). The fear is that households with an income just above this income limit will find it difficult to find housing due to a shortage of private rented dwellings and high prices in the owner-occupied market ([Woonbond et al. 2010](#)).

However, differences have been narrowing and commonalities have been growing:

- The welfare state is not as significant as it was in the Netherlands and the focus is more on producing a more efficient government, public–private partnerships and self-sufficiency and social mobility ([VROM 2007a](#), [Uitermark 2009](#), ‘Rotterdam unemployed to work for their benefits’ 2010). This represents a general shift in Western Europe towards a neo-liberalist approach in urban regeneration ([Lupton and Fuller 2009](#)). Neoliberalism refers to a deep-rooted belief in neoclassical thought. This implies that free market solutions are being used more extensively to solve economic problems, to promote a withdrawal of the welfare state, to lower taxes and to increase flexibility in the labour market ([Guarneros-Meza and Geddes 2010](#)). This shift towards more market orientation is also part of regeneration efforts ([Dekker and Van Kempen 2004](#)).
- In line with the deep-rooted belief that the market will solve social problems, social housing companies in the Netherlands were privatized in 1995 and no longer receive government subsidies. They now work in public–private partnerships with the government and private (building) companies in urban regeneration efforts ([Kokx and Van Kempen 2010](#)).
- Policy discourse on public regeneration in the two countries – for example, the emphasis on housing diversification and poverty concentration – is remarkably similar ([Curley and Kleinhans 2010](#)). Furthermore, there has been an extensive debate about neighbourhood effects on individual development in both countries as well as debates about the effects of public housing revitalization measures.
- The policy challenges in both countries are similar: how to revitalize distressed neighbourhoods while helping to promote better well-being among residents ([Curley and Kleinhans 2010](#)).
- Urban poor Dutch neighbourhoods are impacted by a welfare and housing benefits system that, similar to the United States, is seen by some experts to promote an inter-generational cycle of poverty ([Deurloo and Musterd 1998](#)).⁵
- Both countries feature low-income minority concentrations (African American and Hispanic in the case of the United States, immigrants from Morocco, Turkey, Surinam, the Antilles in the case of the Netherlands; [SCP 2010](#)) viewed by many as a threat to the well-being of the city ([Van Amersfoort and Van Niekerk 2006](#), [Stal and Zuberi 2010](#)).

- Although crime is not nearly as bad in the Netherlands, there is considerable concern about antisocial behaviour committed by immigrant youths from different backgrounds (Van Gemert 2001) and a desire to prevent the emergence of ‘ghetto’ conditions in certain parts of Dutch cities, including large social housing complexes.

This study is not the first to compare housing policies across different countries. Beider, for example, compares the degree to which the United Kingdom and United States housing typologies have been shaped by approaches to policy issues, housing affordability and racial segregation (Beider 2007, 2008). Van Kempen and colleagues (2005) compare how problems in large housing estates in 10 different European countries are dealt with by policymakers. Milligan (2003) compares housing policies and accessibility to affordable housing in Australia and the Netherlands. Friedrichs and colleagues (2003) contrast neighbourhood effects in the United States and Europe.

Of most relevance to this article, Stal and Zuberi (2010) contrast Moving to Opportunity (MTO), America’s sophisticated social experiment of a dispersal programme with the Bijlmermeer revival project, the latter being the Netherlands’ most notorious public housing development. Stal and Zuberi’s article is flawed because they compare two fundamentally different policies (MTO, a housing mobility programme) and Bijlmermeer renewal (an area-regeneration programme). They would have been far better off comparing Bijlmermeer revitalization with one or more American HOPE VI projects (Aalbers *et al.* 2011). In fact, this is precisely what we attempt to do in this article, to provide the first systematic comparison of social housing restructuring policies in the Netherlands and the United States.

The remainder of the article describes how the differences and similarities between the countries have played out with respect to public/social housing revitalization. Despite the fact that the Netherlands still has a more generous welfare state, we argue that the Dutch approach to public housing revitalization is converging with the American one. The aim is not to show which of the two countries has been more successful.

In the following section, we briefly review the evolution of revitalization policies in the United States and the Netherlands. Up to recently, the two countries pursued quite different strategies.

A short historical background on the US policy discourse

America’s public housing programme was established in 1937 as part of the Roosevelt Administration’s New Deal.⁶ Public housing’s original mission was employment generation; slum clearance and meeting the needs of low-income families were added on later. Furthermore, public housing was originally designed for the ‘submerged middle class’. Managers made sure that families were ‘sufficiently orderly’ to qualify for public housing, and they were not shy about evicting unruly tenants (Vale 2000). After World War II, highest priority was given to very lowest income families, typically black and female headed. The increasing proportion of families in poverty is widely believed to have led to increases in the incidence of crime and other problems due to the absence of working adult men as positive role models and the lack of bridging mechanisms to allow individuals to take advantage of opportunities in the larger society (Fuerst 2005).

In 1993, the US Congress, following the recommendations of the National Commission on Severely Distressed Housing, initiated the HOPE VI programme to demolish and redevelop distressed public housing (NCSDH 1992). ‘The fundamental themes of HOPE VI – integrating public housing and its residents into the mainstream, leveraging private sector

investment, providing more effective planning and management of resources at the local level – have gained wide recognition in the nation’s policy community’ (Kingsley 2009, p. 268).

While the HOPE VI is the most dramatic initiative in public housing in the past two decades, it is not the only one. The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 seeks to reduce the concentration of poverty in public housing by sharply limiting the number of extremely low-income households that can be admitted. Furthermore, whereas until recently, upwardly mobile families in American public housing had to leave when their income exceeded a maximum standard, HUD allows local housing authorities to use ‘ceiling rents’, fixed rents based on unit size, to retain working families. Finally, HUD’s ‘One Strike and You’re Out’ eviction policy mandates the eviction of those tenants whose housing units are the scene of criminal actions.

The Bush Administration attempted to eliminate all funding for the HOPE VI programme, but Congress has kept the programme viable with annual, although significantly reduced, appropriations. Funding for HOPE VI has fallen from a peak of \$755 million in Fiscal Year 1994 to just \$100 million in Fiscal Year 2008 (Crowley 2009). It is unclear how the programme will fare under the Obama Administration in the light of the Administration’s plan to replace HOPE VI with its ‘Choice Neighbourhoods’ programme.

The development and implementation of HOPE VI needs to be seen in the context of HUD’s policy shift since around 1980 from supply side programmes (including but not limited to public housing) to demand-side programmes (i.e. the Housing Choice Voucher programme, HCVP; Goetz 2003). HCVP recipients are required to pay 30% of their monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities; the government subsidizes the balance of the costs up to a locally determined maximum, or payment standard (for additional details about HCVP, see Varady and Walker 2007).

When HUD shifted to vouchers they were supposed to be part of a broader poverty deconcentration strategy that also included efforts to disperse federally subsidized private housing and scattered-site public housing to the suburbs, and to assist residents relocated through HOPE VI to move to better (i.e. low poverty) neighbourhoods. Publicity about two demonstration housing mobility programmes (Gautreaux, race based; and MTO, income based) has reinforced the image of HUD pursuing a poverty deconcentration strategy (Rosenbaum *et al.* 2002, 2005, Briggs *et al.* 2010, Rosenbaum and Zuberi 2010). However, deconcentration is not an explicit statutory goal for either HCV or HOPE VI, and is not inherent in the eligible activities of either programme (see US Department of HUD 2006). Furthermore, local public housing authorities vary in the extent to which they encourage moves to low-poverty areas and available empirical research shows that the programme has not in reality promoted deconcentration (Varady *et al.* 2010).⁷ Thus, HUD’s emphasis on income mixing is far more apparent in HOPE VI than the overall HCVP.

A short historical background on the Dutch policy discourse

In the Netherlands, social housing was the predominant housing type in the period between the World War II and the early 1970s. Society in general, and hence also the housing sector, was highly segregated according to religion or socialist conviction (Catholics, protestants and socialists). There was an enormous housing shortage that was solved by building multi-family housing blocks in large housing estates at the edges of the city. Typical neighbourhoods of that time are the Bijlmermeer in Amsterdam and The Hague South West in The Hague. Typical names of the neighbourhoods of that time are ‘Morning Rise’ and ‘Peace and Quiet’. Most of the housing was in the social rented sector and was built by

the local authorities and housing corporations with the aim of creating quality housing for low- and middle- income households.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the liberal and conservative political dominance of the early post-war period was replaced by a socialist dominance of national and local political platforms (Vermeijden 2001). The focus of housing policies shifted towards good-quality housing in city centres and housing choice for all population segments including the poor. 'Building for the neighbourhood' was the new idea. This meant that sitting residents in or near city centres (usually in very poor quality private-rented pre-war housing) were intensively consulted in the design of new housing and were given the right to be re-housed in the same neighbourhood. Consequently, populations were not relocated, but remained in these working class neighbourhoods, however, the quality of the housing improved immensely. (In)famous examples of such neighbourhoods are the Schilderswijk in The Hague and Sterrenwijk in Utrecht. Institutional segregation remained the same, although the Dutch no longer lived their separate lives according to religion or socialist conviction.

The political climate in the 1990s and early twenty-first century is characterized by liberalization of all political parties, that is a more market-oriented public services policy including the socialist one (Vermeijden 2001). 'Purple politics' is the term for a decade-long political coalition of liberals, the Christian party and the Labor party at the national level. The Christian party is still the largest party and has been in a coalition with the Labor party for a few years now. The result of this coalition is a focus on management of the public sector in a private sector manner, that is 'New Public Management', and increased dependency on the private sector for the provision of public goods. With respect to housing policies one implication is that the focus has shifted from providing low-income families with a wide choice to building sufficient housing for them (Dekker *et al.* 2002), to encouraging private building in city centres and persuading medium- and higher-income households to leave the social rented sector and to move to owner-occupied housing in order to create vacancies for low-income households.

Since 1995, the Ministry of Housing has acknowledged that market-oriented policies might lead to spatial concentrations of low-income households in general and poor ethnic minority households in particular. As a result, a new policy for urban restructuring was implemented in 1997. Urban restructuring aims to prevent low-rent housing districts from becoming exclusively low-income areas. Attracting higher-income families to these areas by adding more expensive dwellings, however, is no longer considered undesirable. While the orientation towards urban competitiveness marks a clear break with the past, urban restructuring is mainly aimed at the physical structures (dwellings) and, therefore, uses the same methods of physical restructuring as during the period of urban renewal in the 1970s to the 1990s.

In recent years, the Balkenende Administration has emphasized the need for diversification of neighbourhood populations in terms of income and ethnicity (VROM 2007a). Concentrations of ethnic minorities are regarded as undesirable because it is widely believed that they have difficulty adapting to Dutch society and its mores. This belief has led to the rise of right-wing Freedom Party headed by the highly popular anti-immigrant politician, Geert Wilders, who recommends a halt to the further immigration of Muslims and other ethnic minorities into the Netherlands. Since the fall of 2010 the right-wing Rutte Administration with the support of Wilders' Freedom Party has been in place. The Ministry of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration was abolished and neighbourhood-related topics are shared among three ministries (Internal Affairs, Infrastructure and Environment, Safety and Justice) (rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries 2010). This clearly illustrates how the public debate has shifted from neighbourhoods as the place where integration should

take place, to the coupling of two themes (safety and integration) without the spatial connotation. It is not yet clear what impacts these changes will have on the BCP.

At the time of writing this article (the end of 2010), housing diversification is still supposed to stimulate positive population changes and prevent negative population shifts, that is the turnover of neighbourhoods from mostly Dutch to mostly immigrant, with the goal of creating the positive consequences of diversity. All in all, the aim is to create positive social consequences of diversification. Ethnic minorities on average have lower incomes than native Dutch, and hence, are concentrated in those parts of the city where affordable housing is available. Strikingly, the city of Rotterdam attempts to disperse low-income families (and indirectly, ethnic minorities) across the city by restricting families from relocating into subsidized housing in designated vulnerable neighbourhoods near the city centre (Ouwehand and van der Laan Bouma-Doff 2007, Van Eijk 2010a).⁸ At the moment, the academic and policy discussion in the Netherlands focuses on the hoped-for consequences of ethnic and income diversification (Flache and Koekkoek 2009): a better reputation and reduced maintenance costs, less social exclusion (Van Eijk 2010b), more social cohesion and increased community participation (Van Stokkum and Toenders 2010), role models and greater support for neighbourhood facilities.

Thus, policy and ideological changes have led to an increased focus on the neighbourhood and the local community as a place of integration in the Netherlands. Whilst there has been some focus in the United States on income integration through housing dispersal – more with respect to political rhetoric than reality – there has also been a major emphasis on helping poor residents remain in place in the context of income-mixed communities.

Despite contextual differences, there are sufficient similarities in discourses about HOPE VI and BCP to warrant an investigation of what these programmes are attempting to do, and what they have actually accomplished. We turn to these issues now. Our policy comparison focuses on three themes: neighbourhood revitalization, relocation of residents to non-deprived neighbourhoods and self-sufficiency. For each theme, we describe the approach (aims, interventions, outcomes) first for the United States and then for the Netherlands.

Policy comparison: neighbourhood revitalization

Our discussion of neighbourhood revitalization is subdivided into three parts: (1) physical change; (2) social change; and (3) income, tenure and racial/ethnic mixing.

Physical change

In both countries urban revitalization policies aim to create attractive neighbourhoods. In the United States, public housing revitalization emphasizes physical change – demolition of the rented stock and its replacement with mixed-income housing following New Urbanism design principles. New Urbanism developments built in the United States include Crawford Square in Pittsburgh, City Place in West Palm Beach, Highlands Garden Village in Denver, Park DuValle in Louisville, City West in Cincinnati and Beerline B in Milwaukee (Steuteville 2004).

Most interventions in these cities involve demolition and redevelopment leading to low-rise mixed-income communities (Brown 2009). In sharp contrast, the New York Housing

Authority has sought to reform its housing focusing on good management and affordable housing even if the apartments are in high-rise towers (Bloom 2008).

HOPE VI has achieved important physical improvement successes. Tens of thousands of severely distressed housing units have been replaced by high-quality, mixed-income developments (Popkin *et al.* 2004, Kingsley 2009). Housing prices have often risen (Engdahl 2009b, Turner 2009, Castells 2010, Goetz 2010b, Zielenbach and Voith 2010), revitalization in the surrounding communities has been stimulated and HOPE VI developments provide significant net social welfare benefits for residents and relocatees (Zielenbach *et al.* 2010). However, because housing density is reduced and hence housing options for low-income families are restricted, Sheila Crowley (2009), a housing activist, recommends that housing authorities provide assurance that HOPE VI will not lead to a loss of affordable housing in their jurisdiction.

Although there is broad consensus about the need to continue HOPE VI's strategy of replacing large family developments in high-poverty areas with mixed-income developments (Sard and Fischer 2008), there is a vigorous debate taking place about the future role of demolitions in HOPE VI. Gentry (2009) notes that 90% of the public housing stock is now in reasonably good shape. While demolition is warranted for some developments 'preservation generally now would be the more efficient approach' (p. 269). Unfortunately, inadequate funding for operating and upgrading the stock has created strong incentives for demolition and vouchering-out.

The retail sector remains an ongoing challenge for HOPE VI officials (Rubin 2009, Husock 2010a, 2010b). Many otherwise successful HOPE VI projects lack a decent supermarket. Donohue (1997) using longitudinal data from 1957 to 1992 argues that the lack of supermarkets in the inner city is attributable to the greater attractiveness of suburban locations to the supermarket chains, due to higher buying power and the greater availability of space for larger stores. Urban crime and metropolitan racial patterns are only weakly related to service levels (i.e. the availability of supermarket shopping). In addition, Pothukuchi (2005) asserts that local governments have to take action in order to attract supermarkets to inner cities, but very little has been done to achieve this goal.

Whether physical renewal is leading to an improved image for these HOPE VI areas is another matter entirely. Historically, American public housing has been stigmatized due to physical deterioration as well as large concentrations of blacks and welfare recipients, and high rates of crime and drug dealing.

Branding has been used to change the identity of American HOPE VI neighbourhoods. For example, the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority used HOPE VI funds to replace Lincoln Homes and Laurel Court, two crime-ridden projects in the city's West End, with City West, a mixed-income, New Urbanist development, while the Atlanta Housing Authority used a similar approach to restructure Techwood, adjoining downtown, and close to Coca Cola's headquarters and Georgia Tech, into Centennial Place (Brown 2009).

The outcomes of rebranding activities are yet to be born out, since poor reputations are easily created and reinforced through a single incident. Changing poor reputations into positive ones takes time and endurance. Turner (2009) asserts without any empirical evidence that HOPE VI has contributed to a changed, more positive image for cities.

Similarly, the aims of Dutch urban restructuring are to create more attractive neighbourhoods through mixing low- and higher-income families, demolishing part of the social rented stock, building owner-occupied housing or private-rented dwellings, along with upgrading the existing stock ([Helleman and Wassenberg 2003](#), [Van Bergeijk *et al.* 2008](#)). The quality of social management, however, initially received less attention ([Ouweland](#)

and Davis 2004). The Dutch discourse about restructuring deals with the concentration of low-income families, ethnic minorities and single-parent households. Countering the segregation of ethnic minorities in order to reduce neighbourhood effects is an explicit policy target, and policies emphasize social, economic and safety issues besides physical ones (Kullberg 2006, 2009).

The Dutch measures taken to create more physically attractive neighbourhoods are threefold and have had the intended side-effect of creating more mixed-income neighbourhoods:

- (1) Part of the social rental stock in a neighbourhood is demolished and replaced with mixed-income housing, mostly single-family homes in the owner-occupied sector. The outcomes of these interventions are discussed under the heading 'Social Change' below.
- (2) The public space around these new developments is redesigned: large green areas are usually reshaped to function as meeting places, recreational areas and playgrounds.
- (3) Old shopping centres are either demolished or refurbished and updated.

The outcomes of Dutch physical renewal are usually considered positive both by residents and policymakers (Van Beckhoven and van Kempen 2005, Elsinga and Wassenberg 2007).⁹ Modern building types, as well as modernized public space and facilities have created more attractive neighbourhoods for the original as well as the new residents. Dutch efforts to revitalize district shopping centres have been successful; perhaps because they serve a variety of income groups.¹⁰ For example, in the case of Amsterdam's Bijlmermeer Revival Project, a large new shopping district, Amsterdamse Poort was created between Bijlmermeer housing and the 'ArenA' development (a major sports stadium complex with a stylized name, a metro/train station and a large number of office towers).¹¹

Some Dutch social housing estates have developed bad reputations due to similar causes as American 'projects', that is, a boring and monotonous design, changing populations from native Dutch to higher shares of various kinds of ethnic minorities, increased crime and negative reports in the media. In the Netherlands, sophisticated efforts are being undertaken in a number of cities including Delft (City of Delft, no date) to improve neighbourhood reputations. Rebranding is used at some sites, and positive media attention is generated through community events for outsiders as well as residents, as well as through attractive design features.

Reinders (in Ouwehand *et al.* 2008) in a qualitative study asserts that the symbolic tissue of a Dutch neighbourhood can be altered by neighbourhood branding and identity strategies because images, stories and symbols provide the world with meaning and understanding. However, there is little or no empirical evidence to support Reinders' optimism. This approach – physical renewal combined with rebranding – needs to be viewed with a dose of caution. As mentioned earlier, poor reputations are easily created and reinforced through a single incident. Changing poor reputations into positive ones takes time and endurance.

Thus, the American and Dutch discourses about physical changes linked to revitalization efforts are remarkably similar, a belief in the importance of physical improvements and the conviction (although not yet supported by facts) that these efforts have led to a better image for these areas. Sophisticated evaluations of rebranding efforts are urgently needed in both countries.

Social change

Under social change we discuss three related subjects: creating social cohesion, income and racial/ethnic mixing, and crime and safety.

Creating social cohesion

Social cohesion is a term used more frequently in the European context and has been defined as the ‘glue that keeps society together’ (Forrest and Kearns 2001). At the neighbourhood level, social cohesion refers to social networks, communal values and norms and neighbourhood attachment (Dekker and Bolt 2005).

At a number of HOPE VI sites in the United States, the aim of policy efforts has been to bring different groups together, or to build community, but the prospects for these efforts is uncertain. Engdahl (2009a) reports that the budget for New Holly in Seattle, Washington (one of the most ethnically diverse HOPE VI sites in the United States), includes funding ‘for a full-time “community builder” charged with getting residents of all socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds involved in common activities and communicating across cultural divides. Community events such as the multicultural New Year’s celebration and community potlucks aim to introduce residents to one another’s culture’ (p. 106). Community building has been difficult to achieve in lieu of the community’s diversity (to our knowledge no attempt has been made to measure changes in community cohesion). ‘Non-English speakers say that they participate less in [community] events because they are busy or embarrassed by their inability to communicate’ (Engdahl 2009a, p. 107).

Although many experts believe that citizen participation is a key prerequisite for a socially cohesive development, our literature review offers very limited evidence of greater cohesion resulting from ‘real’ participation in HOPE VI. Sheila Crowley (2009) asserts that all of the HOPE VI programmes she knew of had held informational meetings but many did not engage residents in actual decision-making processes. According to her, residents were lied to when they were told that public housing residents would live in new homes and would have new opportunities for economic betterment. In reality, only about a third were able to move back. Similarly, Mark Joseph (2010) notes that prior to HOPE VI, Chicago public housing residents were able to work through Local Advisory Councils to influence the redevelopment process; there is no formal role for the Local Advisory Councils in the new mixed-income developments. Finally, Allen and Goetz (2010) criticize the Minneapolis Housing Authority for not recognizing Hmong (Indochinese) preferences for extended family-living arrangements, a major cultural difference between Hmong and other immigrant groups that is often not recognized by municipal planning departments in the United States.

In the Netherlands, one of the aims of the regeneration policy is to create more cohesive societies. To reach this aim, some of the housing for lower-income households is being replaced by owner-occupied homes, which bring in middle-class households. This ‘social mix’ is supposed to be good for increasing mutual tolerance between groups and for enhancing liveability in the neighbourhood (Jupp 1999, Veldboer *et al.* 2007). Later, the change in the housing stock was augmented with integrated social, economic and safety policies. Within the approach, much is expected from the participation of the residents in their neighbourhood. The Dutch National government aims to achieve safety, liveability, integration and social cohesion by ‘facilitating them (the residents) . . . to take responsibility for ‘their’ neighbourhood’ (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal 2001, p. 1).

Dutch area-based regeneration efforts with sizable immigrant populations have utilized both 'ethnic' and general interventions to promote social cohesion. The former include multicultural neighbourhood parties and discussion meetings about Islam while the latter include bringing together diverse parents to discuss the school achievements of their children, community gardens and inter-group cooperation on neighbourhood improvement projects. Unfortunately, 'members of ethnic minorities tend to be underrepresented in these projects, or dominated by indigenous dwellers, unless explicit efforts are made by social workers to get them involved' (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow 2009, p. 92; see also Dekker and van Kempen 2009, Van Eijk 2010b). One of the reasons for the low formal representation of minorities is that 'they would feel uncomfortable in a (sub)culture of endless formal meetings, negotiations and discussions' (Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow 2009, p. 38).

Regarding citizen participation in public housing regeneration, the Dutch research provides a mixed picture. Dekker and van Kempen (2009) as well as [Aalbers *et al.* \(2011\)](#) criticize the level of citizen involvement in the Dutch Big City Program. However, other scholars who offer positive assessments (e.g. Helleman and Wassenberg 2003, Stal and Zuberi 2010) fail to provide empirical evidence supporting claims about meaningful involvement. Marlet *et al.* (2009) find that social investments aimed at promoting social cohesion (funds for neighbourhood committees, community barbeques, etc.) do not lead to reductions in neighbourhood social problems and physical investments (e.g. repairs), and the creation of mixed-tenure communities do alleviate these social problems.

Summing up the preceding, it seems fair to state that in both countries expectations for improved social cohesion as a result of public/social housing restructuring efforts have not been realized. There is little empirical evidence for either country that the types of efforts that have been implemented have led to widespread participation or to shared values.

Income, tenure and racial/ethnic mixing

Population mixing is a means to create neighbourhoods that provide opportunities rather than restrictions for its residents. Although HOPE VI projects have succeeded in attracting middle-income families and homeowners to revitalization sites, the benefits of mixing has come into question. There is little evidence that income mixing can lead to enhanced social networks or to the insertion of middle-income role models ([Schwartz and Tajbakhsh 1997](#), [Berube 2006](#), [Joseph 2006](#), [Curley 2010](#)). While it is conceivable that more middle-income families could lead to enhanced social controls along with lower crime, better shopping and higher-quality public services, there has been little empirical evidence to support these claims. As mentioned above, many HOPE VI sites have failed to attract supermarkets and decent shopping opportunities.

Social interaction between HOPE VI residents and their neighbours in adjoining neighbourhoods beyond the HOPE VI site is made difficult by tensions between middle- and lower-class householders – the street versus decent cultures distinction publicized by ethnographers (Briggs *et al.* 2010, see also Pattillo 2007, 2008). In-movers often feel threatened by minority teenagers 'acting out', sitting on stoops or using profanities.

Up to now we have discussed residential mixing but what about social mixing in local schools? Rene Glover (2010), the Executive Director of the Atlanta Housing Authority, asserts that through greater mixing at HOPE VI sites, Atlanta Housing Authority can improve the educational opportunities of school children. She cites David Rusk's research as indicating the need for a 'healthy' mixture of students in the classroom. Unfortunately, the limited evidence available (Khadduri *et al.* 2003, Varady *et al.* 2005) shows that HOPE

VI sites have generally failed to attract middle-income families with children due to perceptions of local public schools being substandard. Whether big-city school systems will be able to improve local schools and/or change middle-class parents' perceptions of public school quality is highly uncertain. The basic problem is that middle-class parents are unwilling to send their children to these public schools unless middle-class norms are dominant and school systems find it difficult to restrict lower-income parents from enrolling their children in these schools. Unless school officials maintain a balance, middle-class parents are likely to remove their children.

Because racial mixing is so controversial in America it has taken a secondary role behind income and tenure mixing in HOPE VI. Nevertheless, some scholars believe that HOPE VI will not be effective unless racial mixing becomes an explicit part of the programme (Turner *et al.* 2008, DeLuca and Rosenblatt 2009, Polikoff 2009, Turner 2009). However, these scholars offer little practical advice for achieving racial integration at HOPE VI sites. So-called benign racial quotas could be used to attract whites, but courts have declared this approach illegal and the implementation of such quotas is likely to be resisted not only by many whites but also by black civil rights groups complaining about discrimination against black families (see Varady 2009, 2010). The most promising approach would be to make sure that HOPE VI communities become as economically and socially viable as possible (Kelly 2008). If and when this occurs, some whites may be attracted to HOPE VI sites. This is already happening in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago and elsewhere, where the HOPE VI developments lie close to the central business district making the projects attractive to white middle-income singles and childless couples interested in living close to their jobs.

Dutch revitalization projects also aim to attract a mix of market- and below-market renter families (Van Beekhoven *et al.* 2009). However, the concept of social mixing has shifted over time. Originally most experts felt that to attain social mixing it would be necessary to attract middle-income families from the outside; now the goal is to provide socially mobile families with the opportunity to remain in the community and to develop their housing career there (Helleman and Wassenberg 2003, Kullberg and Kulu-Glasgow 2009, Wassenberg 2010).

A growing number of Dutch scholars question the desirability and feasibility of tenure and income mixing.¹² Musterd and Ostendorf (2005, p. 88) believe it unnecessary to create a social mix because 'in the welfare state of the Netherlands social mix in neighbourhoods is already a reality'. Van Eijk and Blokland (2006, see also Van Eijk 2010b) argue that it would be a mistake to rely on the presumed tolerant new middle class to create stable economically diverse neighbourhoods. Relying on a Cool South (Rotterdam) case study, the authors found that (1) middle-class people were no more likely to mention diversity as a reason to move, (2) a preference for diversity did not translate into neighbourhood engagement and (3) the taste for diversity did not lead to more diverse social networks either locally or elsewhere. 'Liking diversity does not necessarily translate into engagement with resource-poorer residents; seeking diverse places may more have to do with distinction than involvement' (Van Eijk 2010b, p. 19).¹³

Ethnic segregation in large Dutch cities resembles American patterns (Van Kempen and Van Weesep 1998, Logan 2006) in that there are large and growing areas of the cities where immigrants from different nationality groups constitute the overwhelming majority just as black ghettos constitute large areas of American cities.¹⁴ Van der Laan Bouma-Doff (2007a, 2007b) convincingly shows that Dutch ethnic segregation patterns hamper contacts between ethnic minorities and native Dutch, thereby providing arguments to counteract segregation.

However, promoting ethnically mixed neighbourhoods by attracting and holding educated native Dutch and educated immigrants does not necessarily lead to mutual tolerance. Even though better educated members of ethnic minorities generally have a much stronger commitment towards Dutch society (Gijsberts and Dagevos 2007, p. 829) and they more often have native Dutch friends and acquaintances ([Martinovic et al. 2009](#)), surprisingly this same ‘elite’ group turns out to be the more intolerant than the less educated ([Martinovic et al. 2009](#)).

Thus far, Dutch efforts to create ethnically mixed regeneration projects in Dutch cities have not proven successful. Disadvantaged people – often immigrants – continue to migrate to the Big Cities Program neighbourhoods in least demand, while advantaged inhabitants (typically white native Dutch) tend to leave these neighbourhoods as soon as they have the opportunity to do so. And if they stay together in the same neighbourhood, interaction between immigrants and native Dutch remains the exception and not the rule (Blokland (2003)).

Ethnic mixing efforts may, in fact, be counterproductive. Gijsberts and Dagevos (2007) found that rapid neighbourhood ethnic change – the type of change typical on social housing estates – had a negative impact on social contact and also led to a decreased acceptance of Moroccan immigrants by native Dutch.

There are big cultural and religious differences among Dutch immigrant groups and as a result it may be easier to implement ethnic mixing, including residential mixing, between native Dutch and particular groups (Van Kempen and Van Weesep 1998, Dekker and Bolt 2005, Van Bergeijk *et al.* 2008, Van Liempt and Veldboer 2009, Van Eijk 2010b). [Verkuyten and Martinovic \(2006\)](#) note that Surinamese and Antillean immigrants come from previously owned Dutch colonies where they were exposed to Dutch culture, which would make them more inclined towards residential and social integration with the Dutch. The cultural and religious heritage of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants makes these residents more distinguishable from the Dutch, and may lessen the likelihood of having close social interaction with non-Muslim neighbours ([Havekes et al. 2010](#)).

Turning from neighbourhood mixing to mixing in the schools, Van Eijk (2010b) notes that segregated institutions may play a more important role than segregated neighbourhoods in limiting social interaction across ethnic lines. A study on the degree of segregation indicates that the trends in school segregation mimic the trends in residential segregation. The reported levels of school segregation are much higher in the Netherlands than in the United States ([Ladd et al. 2010](#)). The authors indicate that school segregation has only recently become a concern for the Dutch government, which explains why so little action has been taken to prevent segregation, although this will probably change in the near future.

The preceding section shows that in both countries it is politically feasible to promote income and tenure mixing but the benefits of this mixing have not been adequately documented. On the other hand, ethnic integration is not only highly controversial (and hence, politically infeasible) but it is likely to play a much less important role than education in promoting social mobility (Mollenkopf 2009, Gijsberts and Dagevos 2010). Thus, although there are major differences in the nature and make-up of minority populations in US and Dutch cities, policy discourse regarding racial and ethnic mixing is remarkably similar.

Crime and safety

Physical changes have been undertaken as HOPE VI projects aim to reduce crime and enhance safety; New Urbanism townhouses with private entrances have replaced mid- and high-rise buildings with communal hallways that tended to attract outsiders and

criminals. Strict management techniques have been crucial in reducing crime rates and levels of incivility (Baron 2009). Multi-problem families¹⁵ with poor records of rent paying or records of antisocial behaviour are either evicted or not allowed to return after restructuring (Zielenbach and Voith 2010). In some cases – Atlanta, Chicago and Seattle, for example – housing authorities require tenants to have jobs before moving back. HUD's 'One Strike and You're Out' policy, initiated in 1996, was designed to encourage public housing authorities to be more aggressive in rejecting applicants with criminal histories and in evicting tenants involved in criminal activities. Most sites have experienced sharp declines in crime (Engdahl 2009a, 2009c, Glover 2009, Turner 2009).

The Dutch approach aims to reduce both subjective and objective crime but the measures taken are somewhat different from the American ones. The Dutch have not yet started to check on resident's credit or criminal backgrounds, although notoriously 'non-social' behaving families are being carefully dispersed throughout the city (Van de Griend 2005). The Dutch prefer preventive measures over curative ones (Ufkes *et al.* 2009). Examples of the former include neighbourhood parties stimulating contact between ethnic groups, and training residents in dealing with ethnic differences. If these preventive measures fail, then safety problems are dealt with through mediation, by encouraging citizens to report problems to the police, by creating a more visible police presence (sometimes through community policing), and as a final measure, by expelling problematic families from the neighbourhood.

Also, different from the situation in the United States is the Dutch way of creating shared rules of behaviour. These rules are not imposed from the top, but are usually discussed with residents. The most pressing social problems are discussed first and the residents themselves help to formulate the rules of behaviour. After this, 'behaviour rule' signs are put up in public places but there is no enforcement (Oude Vrielink 2007). Therefore, in general, Dutch management is in a great deal 'softer' than the American method but the effectiveness of this 'softer' approach is far from clear.

In addition, Dutch social workers connect with youngsters in the street in an effort to try to prevent them from criminal behaviour, and residents are now encouraged to report crime to the police more often than in the past. The problem of young teenagers engaged in criminal behaviour has received much attention recently (Brons *et al.* 2009, Ministerie van Justitie 2009). According to some policymakers cooperation among the police, social- and street-corner workers, schools, training centres, etc. these youngsters are no longer slipping through the net. However, it is unlikely that coordination alone will be a panacea for this 'wicked problem'.

In order to curb disturbances caused by Moroccan youth, an Amsterdam project, SAOA, used two means (Vermeulen and Plaggenburg 2009). First, street coaches went around the neighbourhood to identify problems youth. Second, family coaches followed up by visiting parents of these youths, informing them that they were responsible for their child's actions. According to staff, SAOA has been successful, in part because family visitors are chosen partly on the basis of ethnicity. Vermeulen and Plaggenburg do not, however, report any objective evaluation of the programme's success.

Wassenberg and Blokland (2008 cited in Ouweland *et al.* 2008) advocate increasing 'public familiarity' which would enhance social controls, reduce crime and lead to a greater feeling of safety. Public familiarity refers to the positive effect of informal contacts in the street and the feeling of safety of the residents, the degree to which they feel at home and are proud of their neighbourhood, knowing one's neighbours even if one never actually talks to them, and creating informal meeting opportunities in the street or in the shops.¹⁶ Wassenberg and Blokland also advise social workers and housing corporations to continue

their efforts to bring residents together, to see this communal interaction as the ultimate goal rather than simply as a means to create better neighbourhoods. Mixing functions within neighbourhoods (shopping, schools, etc.) also presumably creates higher degrees of public familiarity, because it enables residents to meet others in public space. Whether these measures actually enhance public familiarity and whether greater familiarity leads to lower crime, remains to be seen.

Van Wilsem and colleagues (2006) show that socio-economic improvement (due to regeneration) of neighbourhoods is related to higher victimization risk for theft, violence and vandalism; improved neighbourhoods can thus experience more crime because 'the pickings are better than before'. Also, with more of the residents working there are fewer people around to watch out for criminals. The study shows that a change in socio-economic dynamics negatively influences the social organization in neighbourhoods. As a result some Dutch officials are suggesting the same types of stern anti-crime measures already implemented in the United States (e.g. proposals to introduce night-time detention and 'penal community service') (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties 2010).

The new Rutte Administration (2010– . . .) regards the reduction of crime as one of its main tasks. Adopting a stricter approach towards criminal behaviour than the previous administration, it favours harsher punishments, removal of problematic individuals from the street, and both work tasks and re-education while still at home and at school for offenders (VVD and CDA 2010).

The preceding indicates that whereas the crime problem is more serious in American than Dutch cities there is nearly as much *concern* about crime in the Netherlands as in the United States. Dutch politicians want to prevent current levels of crime from rising and creating the 'ghetto' conditions found in many American cities.

Policy comparison: relocation of residents to non-deprived neighbourhoods

The second major policy effort dominating the urban revitalization discourse is the relocation of residents away from regeneration sites. The ways this happens differs between the two countries.¹⁷

It is widely believed that in the United States, HOPE VI promotes the restructuring of inner-city 'projects' as mixed-income communities as part of a broad poverty deconcentration strategy which includes providing some families with housing vouchers with the goal of moving many to lower-poverty neighbourhoods. The reality, however, is that deconcentration is not a statutory requirement. Families are not required to make de-segregative moves and few do.

To many American low-income activists like Sheila Crowley (2009, p. 229), HOPE VI 'is a case study in how badly a government program can run amok'. The reason is that so few residents have been able to benefit by moving back, instead (according to her) they have been forced to relocate and as a result, have been hurt by the process (see also Bennett *et al.* 2006).¹⁸ Empirical research and case studies of particular cities provides a more complex and nuanced picture, however.

The HOPE VI Panel Study (Popkin and Cunningham 2009, p. 195) showed (1) 'that for most original residents of HOPE VI sites overall; HOPE VI has meant relocation, not living in a new, mixed-income community'; (2) that most relocatees experienced improved housing and neighbourhood conditions although utility costs did rise; (3) that there were no improvements in employment for private renters, returnees to HOPE VI sites and for those who remained in traditional public housing (this is discussed in more detail below); and (4) that 'hard-to-house' residents (including those with a criminal record) were less likely

to experience improvements in quality of life and were more likely to move into traditional public housing. Other recent articles have produced similar results ([Kingsley *et al.* 2003](#), [Clampet-Lundquist 2004](#), [Popkin *et al.* 2004](#), [Venkatesh *et al.* 2004](#), [Kingsley 2009](#), [Curley 2010](#), [Goetz 2010a](#), [2010b](#), [Joseph 2010](#), [Oakley *et al.* 2010](#)).

Existing research shows the importance of high-quality counselling and supportive services in addressing relocation ([Kingsley 2009](#), [Polikoff 2010](#), [Rosenbaum and Zuberi 2010](#)). However, even with this assistance voucher, recipients may decide not to move to distant, low-minority suburbs. However, the housing mobility programme associated with the Thompson versus HUD de-segregation case in Baltimore shows that high-quality pre- and post-move counselling can help poor families who move to the suburbs and stay there ([Briggs and Turner 2006](#), [Tegeler 2007](#), [DeLuca and Rosenblatt 2009](#), [Boyd *et al.* 2010](#)).

The Atlanta Housing Authority's seeming success in relocating families via housing vouchers reflects its use of a private firm to provide long-term (3–5 years) individual development services including counselling and relocation help to former project tenants who are spread over the entire metropolitan area ([Husock 2010a](#), [2010b](#), see also [Glover 2009](#)). Chicago's HOPE VI programme highlights the challenges to handling relocation issues, for example, convincing residents to return to the HOPE VI site in lieu of Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA's) strict tenant selection criteria. The case of Seattle illustrates how a successful site-wide counselling effort can prepare residents for relocation ([Kleit and Manzo 2006](#)). Minneapolis's Hollman mobility programme (a part of the city's HOPE VI effort) shows a relocation strategy explicitly focused on racial and poverty deconcentration will not necessarily benefit refugees such as the Indochinese Hmong ([Allen and Goetz 2010](#)).

In the Netherlands, an explicit aim is to reduce the concentration of low-income households in deprived areas. This obviously involves relocating residents to other neighbourhoods, although no use is made of housing vouchers. Those who are displaced due to demolitions are subsidized for the move and are given intensive support in finding a suitable home elsewhere in the city ([Kleinhans 2005](#)). [Slob and colleagues \(2008\)](#) show that most renters move to other deprived areas as well as slightly less-deprived areas where they are easily recognized as 'different' by the original residents. [Kleinhans and colleagues \(in Ouweland *et al.* 2008\)](#) observe that the lack of affordable housing in better neighbourhoods prevents poor households from moving into non-deprived neighbourhoods. So, although the results are more positive than in the United States, there are also some problems.

[Helleman and Wassenberg \(2003\)](#) enthuse over [Bijlmermeer \(Amsterdam's\)](#) relocation effort. 'For many [demolition] is a great opportunity . . . residents who are forced to move because of demolition receive compensation for their relocation costs . . . People can move out of the Bijlmermeer and even receive some money or get a new dwelling of a type they prefer . . . Their certificate of urgency gives them a head start over regular house hunters and, as a consequence, the majority of relocated residents improved their housing situation' (p. 8). Most of [Bijlmermeer's](#) residents supported demolition because of the popularity of Amsterdam's new social housing developments of the 1990s (see also [Stal and Zuberi 2010](#)). [Helleman and Wassenberg](#) do not, however, provide empirical evidence to support their upbeat assessment.

Relocation assistance is not available to everyone, however. Social housing residents are only allowed to move into the new dwellings if they have not had nuisance complaints or rent arrears. When the most vulnerable are prevented from returning they tend to end up in deprived neighbourhoods ([Aalbers *et al.* 2011](#)).

To summarize, the relocation experience differs between the two countries. Whereas HOPE VI relocatees are given housing vouchers to use in the private rental stock, Dutch relocatees are helped to move within the social housing stock. In general, relocation has

been more controversial in the United States because such a small proportion of families have been able to move back to HOPE VI sites. On the other hand, two commonalities emerge. First, in both countries the ability to improve one's housing and residential conditions is constrained by the availability of affordable housing. Second, the 'hard-to-house' families in both countries typically are the ones most likely to be hurt by the process.

Policy comparison: promoting self-sufficiency

Self-sufficiency refers to the state of not requiring any outside aid, support or interaction for survival. The term refers to becoming economically independent of state subsidies, which is clearly important for both the government and the citizens.

In the United States, promoting self-sufficiency means fostering employment opportunities and moving individuals from dependency on welfare. Through its Community and Supportive Services component, HOPE VI seeks to promote residents' self-sufficiency by offering services such as computer education, job search support and childcare assistance (Popkin 2010, p. 46; see also Engdahl 2009b). Curley and Kleinhans (2010) argue that the US Department of HUD's Community Support Services overambitious goals constitute a fundamental obstacle to progress. Emphasizing employment outcomes may pull resources from fundamental obstacles which limit progress towards self-sufficiency such as poor physical and mental health and parenting problems. We wonder, however, whether the rhetoric of self-sufficiency may play a necessary and meaningful role in promoting self-improvement even if full self-sufficiency is not feasible in the short-run for all residents.

HUD's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) programme is an employment and savings incentive programme for low-income families that have HCVP vouchers or live in public housing. Enacted in 1990, FSS includes both case management services to help participants pursue employment and escrow accounts into which the public housing authority deposits the increased rental charges that a family pays as its earnings rise. Families that complete the programme may withdraw funds from these accounts for any reason after 5 years. FSS is currently underutilized. Fewer than 5% of families with children in the public housing and HCVP currently participate in FSS (Sard 2004).

The Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families (Jobs-Plus) combines on-site employment-related services, new rent rules to allow residents to keep more of their earnings and a neighbour-to-neighbour outreach strategy to share information about employment opportunities (Verma *et al.* 2005). A sophisticated national evaluation and studies at four specific sites show that this strategy has substantially improved earnings (Riccio 2008). A key finding from research on 'Housing Plus' is that residents' progress towards goals can take a long time (Bratt 2008, p. 104).

In cities like Atlanta, Chicago and Seattle, at least one adult must be working 30 hours a week or more for the family to be able to move back to the HOPE VI site. The work requirement has been linked to an increase in the employment rate at HOPE VI sites in Atlanta (Husock 2010a, 2010b) and Seattle (Engdahl 2009a). However, it is unclear whether the rise in employment reflects people feeling impelled to get a job as a result of the work requirement, people being helped through counselling or supportive services or simply people being dropped from public housing eligibility because of failure to meet the work requirement.

As indicated above, the work requirement for living in HOPE VI developments has been quite controversial in cities like Chicago and activists have called for its elimination. Gentry (2009) argues that, to the contrary, more should be required of public housing

residents. He believes that the old entitlement mentality, which historically has resulted in the warehousing of the poor in public housing, harms both residents and their long-term prospects. That mentality also works to the detriment of the surrounding population and the likelihood that it will offer political support to public housing over the long term. Consequently, a *quid-pro-quo* approach towards residents [e.g. a work requirement] is not unreasonable (p. 218).

Nor would the idea of a time limit be excessive to some experts. Charlotte, North Carolina's time limit on residency in public housing, resembles the welfare system's time limit (Minter 1999, Nolan 1999, Husock 2000, Barnett and Gabel 2005). According to Husock, the time limit feature underscores the fact that families are not 'entitled' to public housing over their lifetime, emphasizing welfare reform's message of self-sufficiency.

A key reason why the HOPE VI programme has been far more successful in addressing distressed buildings than the distressed residents of such buildings is that the programme does not address the fundamental causes of poverty including weak family structure (Crowley 2009, Utt 2009, Goetz 2010a, 2010b, Joseph 2010).¹⁹ How to help those, for whom self-sufficiency is not a realistic goal, is a particular challenge. Under a case management approach currently being tested in the United States housing authorities might offer modest assistance 'to people who need just a little boost to become self-sufficient and more intensive, longer-term services to those who have multiple problems' (Kingsley 2009, p. 289; see also Popkin 2010).

Most of the residents of HOPE VI sites are black, single mothers with children (Popkin and Cunningham 2009). In order to ratchet up its self-sufficiency effort, America would need to address weak family structure – especially within the black community. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1965), in his famous Department of Labor report, argued that the unstable black family was 'a principle source of most of the aberrant, inadequate, or anti-social behavior that did not establish, but now serves to perpetuate the cycle of poverty and deprivation' (Wilson 1987, p. 172, quoted in Turner *et al.* 2008, p. 207). Currently, most HOPE VI social services focus on the needs of black women and their families but a few small programmes have been created to incorporate the black father into the family (Harris 2008, Holzer 2008). Unfortunately, there appears to be little political commitment for strengthening the black family.

The Dutch clearly have taken a more measured and cautious approach towards self-sufficiency, which is in line with the social democratic legacy of the country.²⁰ Self-sufficiency is not a goal in itself in the Netherlands, contrary to the United States. However, some aspects of self-sufficiency can be found in neighbourhood economic development projects and back-to-work programmes. Economic development in neighbourhood regeneration policies aims to create a better match between employment needs of residents and employers. The measures focus on the support of small companies (Van Meijeren *et al.* 2008), back-to-school programmes and intensive training programmes for youngsters and long-term unemployed. Examples of social and economic renewal programmes that were part of Bijlmermeer revival include a Women Empowerment Center, a centre to care for drug addicts and facilities for entrepreneurs starting out in business (Helleman and Wassenberg 2003). The Big Cities economic development policies which aim at small companies may not only enhance the quality of the neighbourhood's environment but may also aid residents in getting by and getting on.

The Dutch government's goal of generating greater self-discipline among residents is demonstrated at the local level. In each neighbourhood throughout the Netherlands, the recently established 'Center on Youth and Family' assists families in raising their children well, both in helping out in the early phases of problematic behaviour and in preventing

juvenile delinquency. These centres were created to solve coordination problems in Dutch youth care, but a recently released evaluation indicates that the centres have created more problems than solutions (Commissie Zorg om Jeugd 2009). Strengthening weak families is a question that has not been addressed yet (Mollenkopf 2009, Van de Wijdeven and Hendriks 2009).²¹

Up to now it has been possible to contrast America's strict approach towards economic self-sufficiency with the Dutch Welfare State's softer approach towards social mobility (a longer-term approach with options like more education, rather than an exclusive job focus). However, the Rutte Administration has adopted a more stringent approach towards social-benefit receivers and requires the unemployed to work for their social benefits (VVD and CDA 2010). What is happening now at the national level in the Netherlands therefore provides evidence of a withdrawal of the Dutch welfare state with a greater emphasis on self-sufficiency. Convergence between the two countries on this issue is occurring and is likely to continue to occur.

Conclusions

In recent decades, the shrinkage of the Dutch welfare state has led to a narrowing of differences in social and housing policy between the Netherlands and the United States. Our aim was to show this by comparing and contrasting the way Dutch and American experts have approached two goals:

- (1) To create good-quality neighbourhoods, with high levels of social cohesion, that have a good reputation and that are safe and manageable.
- (2) To create places to live that support (rather than constrain) the residents.

Our literature review from both countries highlights many commonalities, but also some differences. American and Dutch policymakers now share a common comprehensive outlook towards revitalization, which includes an emphasis on both physical improvement and social mixing and, to some extent, an emphasis on self-sufficiency as well. Although the measures are different, the outcomes (where they are available) are generally similar. Table 1 summarizes the findings.

What policy recommendations can we draw from these findings? Maybe Dutch policymakers could learn from America's stricter approach to management, which has led to dramatic improvements in safety at HOPE VI sites. Marketing and positive news stories may also play a role in promoting positive images at revitalization sites but these efforts can only be effective in conjunction with attempts to improve the social climate of these areas by screening out multi-problem, antisocial families. This would not, however, be acceptable to many Dutch politicians or policymakers. American policy experts such as Susan Popkin are seeking ways to house multi-problem families in supportive housing developments, but there are no easy solutions to this complex issue.

Dutch policymakers could benefit from America's experience in trying to link public housing revitalization with housing mobility to enable them to move to healthier, low-poverty areas. However, it might be difficult to transfer this American rhetoric to the Netherlands because of the desire of many residents of restructuring areas to remain close to family and familiar social institutions and also because of their dependence on cheap social housing.

Housing mobility is, however, no poverty panacea. Many 'hard-to-house' families have difficulty using vouchers in the housing market and vouchering-out may lead to

Table 1. Summary of the findings.

Physical change:

- Physical design and physical conditions have improved in both countries; but the retail sector is stronger at Dutch restructuring sites.

Social change:

- Social cohesion is not an explicit aim in the United States; ethnic diversity poses a challenge to Dutch efforts to increase social cohesion.
- Citizen participation is a weak link in HOPE VI, so it is in the Netherlands although there are some positive exceptions.
- Both countries have achieved success in creating income and tenure mixed developments, although social interaction across these lines is limited.
- The US developments generally are predominantly minority. Dutch developments have difficulty attracting and holding native Dutch.
- Although the approach to crime is 'softer' in the Netherlands than in the United States, in both countries crime has gone down. Yet, perceptions of safety have improved more in the United States than in the Netherlands.

Relocation:

- The focus in both countries is to improve the site. In both countries large numbers of the original residents move away from the restructuring sites.
- For both countries, the relocation leads to better housing and similar neighbourhood conditions. Multi-problem family relocation is a challenge for American and Dutch officials.

Self-sufficiency:

- In the United States, there is no evidence that the programmes at HOPE VI sites or the programmes for relocation promote better employment outcomes.
- The current Dutch approach is softer than in the United States, but is becoming stricter.

reclustering and in turn, the transfer of social problems from merely one location to another (i.e. negative neighbourhood spillovers). Efforts to monitor geographical shifts are needed as well as programmes to address reclustering-related problems such as increased crime when they occur. Pre- and post-move relocation counselling will also be necessary to ensure that families move to, and remain in, low-poverty neighbourhoods and that they benefit from these moves.

Integrating ethnic immigrants is a hot button issue in the Netherlands, yet America's experience with policies explicitly focused on racial integration suggests that ethnic dispersal or benign quotas is fraught with political and legal controversies. Two basic dilemmas stymie consensus: How is it possible to promote desegregation when patterns of segregation partly reflect voluntary factors? And how is it possible to generate support for desegregation policies that reduce choices for ethnic minorities? Developing politically viable ethnic desegregation strategies will not be easy in either country.

Up to now, American policymakers have become more serious in promoting self-sufficiency as part of revitalization but HOPE VI efforts to address distressed residents have not been as successful as efforts to handle distressed buildings. Helping residents to leave welfare and get good jobs will require programmes to strengthen families – which in the American context may often mean encouraging black noncustodial fathers to rejoin their families. As this is being written, the unfavourable economic climate in the United States is making this goal of obtaining a job for black males almost unachievable. The

Dutch have not yet confronted the issue of weak family structure among residents of social housing but, given the high rates of welfare dependency in particular groups like Netherlands Antilleans, the time may not be far off when they will need to do so. Future research is urgently needed on how to effectively link social services with social housing restructuring so as to promote upward social mobility. This research should be longitudinal in nature, and should employ a mixed-methods approach, as in the MTO demonstration (Briggs *et al.* 2010). Where possible, European and American scholars should employ similar questions and methods so as to foster cross-national learning.

Notes

1. In the United States context, we are talking about developments operated by local public housing authorities (i.e. public housing ‘projects’) whereas in the Netherlands we are talking about developments managed by private housing companies. To increase readability, we use the term ‘public housing’ for developments in both countries. We limit the scope of the article to public housing neighbourhoods; it was beyond the intended purpose of this article to investigate neighbourhood revitalization efforts in private rental housing communities.
2. Sometimes we also refer to unpublished papers, in order to overcome the publication bias of significant findings (Cooper 2009).
3. We did not conduct a systematic literature research employing keywords and library databases. Instead, we used a ‘snowball’ type strategy (Cooper 2009). That is, we started off with each of us reviewing 10 of the most important articles, books or reports on public housing revitalization in the United States and the Netherlands, respectively. We then expanded our search using (1) references in these 10 books, (2) notifications of new publications from publishers and research institutes and (3) suggestions we received in emails from scholars and practitioners. We believe that this approach yielded as complete a list as we would have obtained from a more systematic literature review.
4. In the Netherlands, as elsewhere in Europe, members of ethnic minorities are sometimes referred to as ‘black’ even though they are Caucasians. Clearly, the meaning of ‘blackness’ varies between the United States and Europe (Aalbers *et al.* 2011).
5. Priemus *et al.* (2005, p. 583) observe that ‘there is emerging concern about the possible negative impacts of the housing allowance on work incentives and on economizing on housing costs. The poverty trap has become more of an issue as a result of the accumulation of income-related programs’. Unfortunately, there has been little empirical research examining the influence of housing and income programmes on the motivation to work.
6. For a more detailed discussion of the history of America’s public housing programme, see Landis and McClure (2010) and Schwartz (2010).
7. As we will show below, this is certainly the case with respect to the use of vouchers for relocating HOPE VI residents.
8. The so-called Rotterdam Act is discussed in more detail below.
9. Dutch researchers have not been uniformly positive regarding improvements in physical conditions. Van Bergeijk and colleagues (2008) highlight a disappointingly high incidence of neighbourhood problems (litter, crime, complaints about different life styles) at some revitalization sites. They believe that building new homes and demolishing other dwellings is not sufficient to turn around the ‘spiral of decline’ in these neighbourhoods. Marlet and colleagues (2009) assert that even where physical strategies are effective, community organizations may not support these measures.
10. Global trends (the ‘greying’ of the population, socio-economic decline in parts of the city, economic ‘scaling up’ in the retail sector and rising automobility) have undercut the viability of neighbourhood shopping centres in the larger social housing estates leading to a concentration of shopping in district centres (Elsinga and Wassenberg 2007).
11. Site visits by the authors highlight a number of other shopping centre success stories (especially in comparison to HOPE VI sites): Amsterdam West, Hoogvliet (Rotterdam), Southwest Hague and Poptahoff (Delft).
12. There are some more positive findings, however. Galster (2007) concludes that low-educated and unemployed residents in mixed European neighbourhoods do profit from slightly better

- off neighbours. However, the status differences between the better off and the poor should not, however, be too great in order for this type of mixing to be beneficial. Also, Van Beckhoven and colleagues (2009) argue that well-designed public spaces could promote social cohesion by encouraging members of different groups to interact.
13. Pinkster's (2009) study of two neighbourhoods in The Hague indicated that low-income residents in a more homogeneous low-income area had a more constricted social network than low-income residents living in a more mixed area. However, this finding does not prove that a mixing strategy would help low-income people expand their social networks. Only a longitudinal study would provide convincing evidence.
 14. Levels of segregation (based on the Index of Dissimilarity) are declining faster for Surinamese and Antilleans than Moroccans and Turks.
 15. Multi-problem tenants are ones who exhibit problems of paying rent, who are unable maintain basic housekeeping or childrearing and who are unable to maintain workable relationships with neighbours with or without help or supervision (Scobie 1975, see also Vale 2000, pp. 331–332). Susan Popkin of the Urban Institute (Popkin *et al.* 2004) uses the more politically acceptable term 'hard-to-house' which unfortunately conflates two distinct groups (1) those who have trouble finding adequate housing but who do not pose a threat to neighbours (e.g. grandmothers raising their grandchildren); and (2) those with a record of criminality and/or antisocial behaviour who pose problems for neighbours. These problematic tenants comprise a significant minority among the hard-to-house at most HOPE VI sites.
 16. Sampson *et al.* (2005) advocate similar policies in the United States, that is, to create a greater degree of familiarity among neighbours thereby promoting a greater degree of social control.
 17. This section focuses on the impact of neighbourhood restructuring on public/social housing residents through their relocation experiences. It is beyond the intended scope of this article to discuss the effects of relocation patterns on destination neighbourhoods (negative neighbourhood spillovers). For a detailed treatment of this subject, see Kleinhans and Varady (2010).
 18. Some who are qualified to move back choose not to do so either because of concern about the employment requirement at the HOPE VI site (discussed in the next section) or having moved once preferred not to move again.
 19. A number of Dutch scholars (Van de Wijdeven and Hendriks 2009) have made the same point, that area-based strategies are fundamentally limited in their ability to address poverty problems.
 20. One could argue, however, that the Netherlands is moving more and more in the direction of America's stricter approach to social benefits. As an example, we cite Rotterdam's decision to implement a welfare programme requiring recipients to work in order to obtain benefits ('Rotterdam unemployed to work for their benefits' 2010).
 21. The incidence of single-parenthood and teenage pregnancies is particularly high among black immigrants from the Netherlands Antilles (Gijsberts and Dagevos 2010) but up to now little attention has been given to family-strengthening policies sensitive to the characteristics and needs of particular ethnic groups.

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