



COA Centraal Orgaan opvang asielzoekers

Annual report 2011

A snapshot in time



A snapshot in time

Time	Time	Time	Time	Time
365	Spring	In the long term	Timeless	24 hour
1 A review of 2011	2 Children in reception	3 Shortening time in reception	4 Durable location	5 Safe public task

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6 Digitalised residents' files	7 Collaboration in the chain	8 Review of 2010	9 Figures

A snapshot in time

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The year 2011 was a turbulent year in the seventeen year history of the COA. It was a year in which we had to focus intensively on the future of our organisation. The number of asylum-seekers in care reduced and this reduction is set to continue; funding levels are also reducing. The consequence of this is that locations are closing. We are also focussing on organisational changes, the preparations for which began in 2011.

2011 was also a year in which we were under particular political and societal scrutiny. The extensive media coverage of the COA's business culture and, as a consequence, the decision to suspend the general director, had a huge impact on COA employees.

Despite the turbulent times, however, day-to-day work continues: 365 days a year, we provide safe and decent reception facilities for asylum-seekers. Whatever the developments at the COA, this is our foremost priority day after day.



1 A look back over 2011

Massive commitment

The minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum, on the recommendation of the Supervisory Board, appointed Harry Paul as the chairman of the COA Board on an interim basis on 3 October. Harry Paul will fulfil this role until Jan-Kees Goet takes up the role of chairman of the board of directors on 15 October 2012. He tells us about his introduction to the COA on 3 October 2011 and takes a moment to review the year.

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Location: **Head office Rijswijk**

Name: **Harry Paul**

A snapshot in time: **"The levels of energy with which the COA employees carry out their day-to-day work. That is very inspiring."**

"It has not been an easy year for COA employees. One of the first things that struck me when I came to the COA in October 2011, was the massive commitment of the employees despite the uncertainty about their jobs.

The media attention regarding Nurten Albayrak and the COA's company culture had put huge demands on employees. Employees regularly asked: when is the good work that we do going to draw some attention within the Netherlands?

There are plenty of fantastic stories though because providing a safe and liveable reception environment for our residents is a pleasant and rewarding task. Both the reception centre employees as well as those in other organisational units make sure this is achievable. This is also where the focus must lie; at the heart of all of the

developments the COA is going through. A great deal happened in 2011. As a result of a reducing number of asylum-seekers in reception centres, the organisation is downsizing. We are closing locations and saying goodbye to colleagues, volunteers and (local) collaborative partners. Over the past year, we have also strengthened cooperation within the chain. The COA, the IND and the DT&V have intensified ties in order to achieve an effective and collective goal. In 2011, we are also making the very first moves towards the reorganisation that will be implemented in 2012.

Important themes in this work include safety, children in care, streamlining processes and procedures and booking the first results of the formulated property vision which is also included in the coalition agreement. This annual report provides stories relating to these areas.

2012 is also set to be a lively year. The reorganisation and further scale reductions will demand huge efforts from employees. Nevertheless, we will continue to prioritise providing our residents with a safe living environment; the massive commitment of our employees will ensure this is always achieved."

Harry Paul

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Working differently

The COA is having to cope with substantial changes in its immediate vicinity: a reducing number of residents, falling financial resources, a more compact government, discussions about independent governing bodies and increased chain collaboration. In addition, internal developments, such as the further development of shared services and IT policy, are also playing a part.

Even though our task has not changed, the circumstances in which we work have. With reduced budgets and fewer employees, work has to be carried out differently. Spearheads in this context include quality and simplicity; the quality of people (competencies) and resources and the simplicity of processes and procedures.

In 2011, we conducted investigations and took the initial steps in terms of formulating what Working differently (the name given to this concept) will actually entail. The management and employees will all contribute ideas. In 2012, the formulation and elaboration must be clear and Working Differently will then be implemented. ■



Downsizing

As a result of a reduction in occupation and on the basis of prognoses for the coming two years, the COA decided to close approximately 6,800 places in 2011. This will partially take place via the expiry of governance agreements. In addition, September saw the decision to close seven asylum-seekers' centres: Aalten, Azelo, Bellingwolde, Crailo, Geeuwenbrug, Rotterdam and Sweikhuizen. These centres must close their doors on 1 March 2012 at the latest.

The decision regarding which locations to close was based on a careful assessment of a number of criteria: flexibility, quality,

affordability, sustainability, safety/living conditions/manageability, governmental support and social anchoring. In December, the COA announced that another 2,400 places were being cut.

The COA will examine how things can be done more efficiently at the existing locations. We will also press on with the sustainable (re)development of locations. ■

> See also **The dynamic of opening and closing** in chapter 4.

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Annual report of the Supervisory Board

Heart and soul

Ella Kalsbeek joined the COA in 2011 when, on 19 October 2011, she was appointed member of the Supervisory Board by the minister of Immigration, Integration and Asylum. She had already had dealings with the COA in her past career so was able to re-familiarise herself in 2011.

The Supervisory Board issues an annual report. This year, the report has been amalgamated with the COA's social report. After the unrest within the COA and imposition of a non-active role on general director Nurten Albayrak, four members temporarily ceased their roles for the duration of the investigation. Vice-chairman Jaap Besemer offered his resignation. On 19 October, the minister appointed Ella Kalsbeek-Jasperse as member of the Supervisory Board. You will find an overview of her experience with the COA and the justification of the Supervisory Board on the following pages.

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Location: **Head office Rijswijk**

Name: **Ella Kalsbeek**

A snapshot in time: **“Despite the consequences of a shrinking organisation on the employees, we continue to put our heart and soul into our work.”**

“For me, it was a reintroduction to the COA when I was appointed member of the Supervisory Board at the end of October 2011. A reintroduction because, between 2001 and 2002, I had had dealings with the COA and the asylum issue in my role as State Secretary of Justice.

In the first few months I noticed that a great deal had changed. The reception process is more efficient and collaboration with other parties plays a much more important role. What has not changed, however, is the untiring dedication of the employees in their efforts to achieve an effective reception provision. They put their heart and soul into working with refugees who usually have very challenging backgrounds. I have enormous admiration for their work and efforts. In addition, the investigation into the COA and the legal procedures took up a great deal of my time. I talked to employees and chain-partners about the culture and the management style at the COA. The report by Scheltema/ Rijdsdijk also indicated that things had to change. I am amazed by the courage of the employees to contribute to these investigations. And all this, while the organisation is shrinking, locations are closing and central jobs are being lost. The employees simply continue to do their jobs and I have a huge amount of respect for them.

The culture and structure of the COA have to change and cooperation within the chain must intensify. In addition, we must not compromise on continuity or lose sight of the outside world. A challenging task, but one to which I am dedicated, together with the new members of the Supervisory Board. It is a fantastic organisation with a rewarding task. People-work that has to be carried out with care; care for the asylum-seekers and for the employees.” ■

Ella Kalsbeek

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Annual Report from the Supervisory Board

With the implementation of the ‘Law of 20 May 2010 regarding changes to the Central Body Act for the reception of asylum-seekers in relation to enabling legislation and the creation of the Supervisory Board’ as of 1 January 2011, the COA was formally provided with a Supervisory Board and a Board of Directors. 2011 was a turbulent year for the entire organisation. A great many changes, many of which were unexpected for some, took place as a result of reports, issued by the NOS in mid-September, about the general director Nurten Albayrak-Temur.

The COA is going through tempestuous times. Despite the negative coverage of ‘their’ COA, however, employees continue to provide accommodation and supervision for asylum-seekers. Both the Supervisory Board and the Board of Directors have expressed their gratitude for this.

The minister decided to conduct further investigations and the (former) Supervisory Board then suspended the general director. Harry Paul took up his role as interim chairman of the board of directors on 3 October. The members of the Supervisory Board (Loek Hermans, Anne-Wil Duthler, Rein Willems and Ronald Bandell) temporarily ceased their roles for the duration of the investigations. Jaap Besemer offered his resignation as a member of the Supervisory Board on that date too.

On 19 October, the minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum, Ella Kalsbeek-Jasperse, was appointed member of the Supervisory Board. At the beginning of November 2011, the minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum set up the independent COA Investigation Commission (commission Scheltema/ Rijdsdijk) in order to conduct an investigation into the work of the COA.

A look ahead to 2012

After publication of the report from the COA’s Investigation Commission, the general director’s dismissal procedure began. The general director’s contract was terminated as of 23 April 2012, taking into account the period of notice that runs until 1 August 2012.

With the implementation of the reorganisation Working differently, as of 1 October 2012, the COA has a three-member board of directors. The recruitment process for a chairman of the COA’s board began in June 2012. By resolution from the Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum on 13 July 2012, Jan- Kees Goet was appointed as chairman of the board for the period from 15 October 2012 to 15 October 2016 (Government Gazette 2012-15546).

Two new members of the board will be recruited externally. The recruitment projects began in mid October 2012 and the minister is aiming to appoint the two new members of the board in the first half of 2013. In order to ensure continuity and give shape to the Working differently project, Petra Ginjaar

and Rien van Immerseel will take on the two board roles from 1 October 2012 until the moment at which the positions are fulfilled.

After the publication of the report from the COA’s Investigation Commission in mid April 2012, the minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum dismissed the members of the Supervisory Board that had taken leave of their positions (Loek Hermans, Anne-Wil Duthler, Rein Willems and Ronald Bandell).

The recruitment process for four members for the Supervisory Board began at the end of May 2012, on the basis of an updated profile for the Supervisory Board. As a result of a resolution from the minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum on 17 July 2012, Mrs Edith Snoeij and Mr Henk Broeders, Henk van Brummen and Ruud Hopstaken were appointed members of the Supervisory Board for the COA for the period from 1 August 2012 until 1 August 2016 (Government Gazette 2012-15546).

Ella Kalsbeek- Jasperse was appointed chair of the Supervisory Board for the COA for the period from 1 August 2012 until 18 October 2015 (Government Gazette 2012-15545).

Maintaining Public Duties

The COA takes part in the Maintenance group for Public Duties and endorses the basic principles and tenets as set out in the Code of Good Governance for Public Service Providers. The code stipulates that organisations must include an explanation of the public governance structure within their annual report that indicates whether the definitions in the code are being followed and, if not, why this is the case.

Board

In accordance with article 1, sections 2, 3 and 4 of the COA’s board Regulations, the COA hereby states that it has an internal risk management and control system. This framework allows the COA to gain a structured insight into risks, management measures, modifications, improvements and results achieved.

Significant changes and important improvements are discussed with the Supervisory Board. In Chapter 1.8 Report of operational management, the ‘in control framework’ and the function thereof is further explained. The board reports to the Supervisory Board every quarter via the quarterly financial report. This report contains a financial and liquidity report and examines the risks and progress of the follow-up to the management letter points from the external accountant and the improvement points from the internal Audit service.

In line with the enabling legislation, the minister sets the level of salaries or remuneration for the board members of independent governing bodies. The board members’ salaries may not exceed the public sector maximum.

Supervisory Board until 11 October 2011 (five active members)

At least once a year, in the absence of the board itself, the Supervisory Board discusses both its own effectiveness and that of the board of directors and the conclusions that must be drawn from this, with the minister. On 14 March 2011, there was an evaluation of the Supervisory Board and the board of directors. On 14 March and 19 September 2011, a governmental discussion took place with the minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum. The Supervisory Board met three times in 2011 (in March, June and September). The Supervisory Board’s audit commission met in March 2011. After discussions in the audit commission, the Supervisory Board confirmed the Financial accounts 2010 and discussed the accountant’s report, in the presence of the accountant, during the March meeting.

Supervisory Board from 19 October 2011 (one new active member)

The Supervisory Board met in December 2011 and approved the annual plan and budget for 2012. During this meeting, the Supervisory Board also passed the regulations for the Supervisory Board, the regulations for the board and the authorisation regulations (annex to the board regulations). After approval by the minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum, the regulations and authorisation regulations will be published in the Government Gazette (Government Gazette 2011-24031, 24032 and 24033). As a result, all of the decisions and undertakings going back to 1 January 2011 have been formally ratified.

As of 1 October 2012, the COA's steering committee takes on a new shape as a result of the Working differently reorganisation. The changes will impact upon authorisation levels for line management and employees; this formed the basis for the changes to the COA's Authorisation regulations. The minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum approved the COA's Authorisation regulations and these will be published in the Government Gazette (Government Gazette 2012-19972).

The regulations for the Supervisory Board and the board of directors include the stipulation that the board must present its decisions with regard to that which is set out in article 11, section 2, parts e. and f. of the COA Act regarding investments or disinvestments and the acceptance of long-term operational agreements which involve a value of over € 10 million, to the Supervisory Board for approval or acceptance.

The level of remuneration for the chair and members of the Supervisory Board is set out in the Regulation for Board Payments COA asylum-seekers. The Regulation from the Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum of 24 May 2012, concerning the remuneration of the chair and the members of the COA's Supervisory Board (Regulation for remuneration for Supervisory Board COA) comes into force (Government Gazette 2012-10778) as of 1 June 2012.

All members of the Supervisory Board are independent in the sense that the dependency criteria as set out in article 2, section 3 of the regulations for the COA's Supervisory Board (Government Gazette 2011-24031) do not apply to them.

**Supervisory Board from 1 August 2012
(five new active members)**

The Supervisory Board met in September 2012 and collectively set up an audit commission and a remuneration commission. In addition, the Supervisory Board appointed a vice-chairman/secretary. ■

A snapshot in time

Spring

Children are in the 'springtime' of their lives. Within reception procedures, they deserve particular and additional attention. Just like Dutch children, they must feel safe, be able to play outdoors and do their homework despite the exceptional circumstances in which they are growing up. It is our responsibility to provide them with a safe learning environment.

The project 'Children within Reception' undertakes activities that endeavour to ensure that the time spent by children within the asylum seekers' centres is as 'normal' as can be. This year, for example, homework rooms were created and a youth council was set up at a number of locations. The welfare of a child at an asylum seekers' centre is one of our top priorities. Because a child is entitled to be a child under any circumstances.



2 Children in reception

Better grades as a result of homework rooms

In 2011, the project 'Children in Reception' helped create special homework areas in asylum seekers' centres to accommodate children who wanted to do their homework. The homework room is working very well at the Den Helder asylum seekers' centre. The room is open seven days a week after school times. During the day, the classroom is used by adults; the space is reserved for children after 16.00. The youngsters have entered into a contract with the reception centre staff regarding the responsibilities for key management, opening, closing and using the space. The scheme has been very positively received within the Den Helder centre. Below is a conversation with two regular users, Omid Oorban Zadeh (aged 15) and Najib Paywand (aged 18), both from Afghanistan.

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Location: **Den Helder asylum seekers' centre**

Name: **Omid and Najib**

A snapshot in time: **Omid: "I sit here almost every day.**

In the beginning there was a problem with the key.

But now it is ok." Najib: "The fact that I can go on the computer every day means my language has improved."

Omid: "I sit here almost every day.

Sometimes for three hours; sometimes until 10 o'clock at night.

At the weekend, I come here during the day. In the beginning, there was a problem with the key. But now it is all sorted. We have signed a contract so that the person who collects the key is then responsible for making sure the computers are turned off and the area is tidy." Najib: "The homework area has been open for a few months. Before we had it, we could only go to the computer room twice a week for a few hours if we wanted to search for something on the computer. There was no time for learning, only at home. But at home it's a bit dark and it can be noisy."

Omid: "If we have a lot of homework, we bring it with us and do it here. We use the computer to translate words we are not familiar with. And if we don't have any homework, we can use the computer for other things. Najib: "I have noticed that my grades have improved. It is much better as far as I'm concerned. I never used to be able to make very good sentences. But now I can easily search for things on the computer and translate words. This is great for me."

Omid: "Another area has now opened too; the talking house – for people who want to chat. There is also a football field there. Youngsters who have finished their homework can go onto the talking house." Najib: "Many things have changed. And I am really happy with the changes." ■

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Family locations

In July 2011, the minister of Immigration, Integration and Asylum tasked the COA with setting up 'family locations'. These locations will accommodate COA families with young children for whom the official right to reception has officially expired. This is the result of a ruling by the Hague Court of Justice that reception services for children from families that have exhausted all legal means of appeal cannot simply be terminated. Two family locations are opening in the summer; Gilze and Katwijk.

The level of facilities in the reception centre is reduced compared to a regular asylum seekers' centre. The facilities for children at family locations, however, are the same as the asylum seekers' centre. There is a child's play area, an Open Learning Centre and homework rooms, and activities for children are organised by the National Association for encouraging Cheerfulness. The basic principle is that families can prepare themselves at this location to return to their countries of origin. The children go to ordinary school.



There is a modified group of provisions for this target group. Families will only be placed in this type of location once the right to reception has come to an end. That is why the family location does not involve reception in the sense of the Regulation for asylum seekers' provisions from 2005. The families are only provided with money for eating and a specific allowance for the child. Minister Leers visited the family location in Katwijk at the end of 2011. During his visit, he indicated that the family location must focus on preparations for, preferably, voluntary repatriation. ■

Children's bikes pilot

The 'Children in Reception' project started in October 2011 with a Children's bikes pilot, involving the local collection of bikes. The aim is to lend children from the age of 4 to 17 a bike and, as a result, increase their mobility.

Within this pilot, the COA works with the Rabobank Foundation, the ANWB and the National association for encouraging Cheerfulness. The ANWB provides cycling lessons and ensures children are more competent in traffic. The experiences gained from a previous national pilot were used within this pilot and the lending system was further developed. This pilot also provides a Bike plan manual, allowing other locations to carry out a similar bike system. ■

A snapshot in time

In the long term

In 2011, the number of asylum-seekers in reception fell dramatically. There are not only fewer asylum-seekers being accommodated by the COA, the period for which they stay with us has also reduced. This is due to the new asylum procedure that was implemented in 2010, which means that procedures are generally shorter than they used to be. It is also partially down to improvements in processes concerning outflow. The Cabinet attaches a great deal of value to this and the parties within the chain are collaborating closely in order to achieve it.

In 2011, we focussed on the period for which asylum-seekers remain with the reception process. We will succeed in shortening this as a result of adopting different working methods and entering into pilots in order to seek out new practices. It means that asylum-seekers that have exhausted legal procedures will leave the process more quickly and that those that are granted a permit can make a quicker start on their futures in the Netherlands.

3 Shortening time in reception

Resettled refugees

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has a programme that offers individuals from a refugee camp a chance to resettle in another country. Since 1997, this programme has seen around five hundred people arrive for resettlement in the Netherlands each year. In 2011, a new working method was introduced in order to ensure that refugees feel 'at home' in the Netherlands more quickly. The COA is working on this task with the various municipalities, such as the province of Friesland and the municipality of Raalte where a second group of Bhutanese refugees settled this year. Case manager Daniël Meijerink from the municipality of Raalte is closely involved with this programme.

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In the old situation, refugees who had been invited to the Netherlands would be accommodated for the first period in the country in an asylum seekers' centre in Amersfoort. An investigation then looked into the area in which they would live. In the new situation, preparations for the refugees take place in the refugee camp. Upon arrival in the Netherlands, they are supervised for the first 48 hours by the COA. They are then provided with their new home. The accommodation for the refugees within a municipality is established on the basis of issues such as group locations. This is beneficial because the refugees can support one another. It is also practical if the municipality can organise issues for a large group in one fell swoop. According to Daniel Meijerink, however, this also presents a challenge as the municipality must do a great deal for a large group in one go.

In order to prepare municipalities for the new working method, the COA organises workshops. Daniël attended a few of these in 2011. He is very positive about his experience within these workshops and was pleased that questions raised were

answered immediately by COA employees. The events also enable municipalities to exchange experiences between themselves. If Daniel raises an issue during a workshop regarding problems that Raalte has when it comes to arranging healthcare insurance, for example, there are always other municipalities that have already dealt with this issue. In essence, they look at how things can be done better collectively.

Later in 2011, the first group of refugees was resettled in Raalte using this new working method. Daniël realises that municipalities have to be flexible. He also mentions the usefulness of collaborations between the COA and organisations such as the Dutch council for Refugees as all of the parties have one, collective goal. This cooperative basis provides these groups of people a future within the municipality of Raalte. ■

Location: **Municipality of Raalte**
Name: **Daniël Meijerink**
A snapshot in time: **"The transfer of the house-key; the key to a new life."**



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Shortening time in reception

The number of asylum-seekers in the reception process fell dramatically in 2011. This reduction is partly due to improvements in relation to outflow processes. We are critically examining our regular working methods and using pilots to investigate new approaches.

Placement department

Firstly, within regular operations, there is an ongoing examination of how the placement process can be carried out quicker and more efficiently. On average, the waiting time for a house for an individual who has

been granted a permit was seven months at the beginning of 2011. Our Placement department has worked hard throughout the year on reducing this waiting time. At the end of 2011, the average waiting time had been reduced to five months. Success factors herein include no longer waiting for the permit-holder's pass in order to start the placement process and accelerating registration with the GBA.

In 2012, we will endeavour to further reduce the waiting time for a house and, in this context, will take the results of the Sneller

Thuisgeven (Finding a home quicker) pilot into account.

Sneller Thuisgeven (Finding a home quicker)

The pilot Sneller Thuisgeven began in 2011, in the provinces Utrecht, with the exception of the Utrecht administrative region, Friesland and Drenthe. The aim in this context is to reduce the permit-holder's length of stay from the moment that he receives his permit. In order to do so, a director from the COA will form a connection between a municipality and the permit holder within one week of the permit being granted. The municipality then has ten weeks in which to place the permit-holder in a house in their area. Within the pilot, municipalities become responsible for housing a permit-holder much earlier than was previously the case. The results of this pilot will be included within the final evaluation that will be ready in 2012.

Pilot 28 day period

The Framework letter from November 2010 proposes stricter enforcement of the 28-day period. The COA and its chain partners followed this up with a pilot in 2011. A substantial number of activities were carried out. This included improving the COA's information position and a monthly file comparison within the chain in order to make management more efficient. We are also working with DT&V and the IND in the experiment Logistic quality; this encompasses working on improvements in relation to data gathering. These are just a few examples of the work that is being done.

The result of all this was a faster outflow process for asylum-seekers that have exhausted their legal options by the end of 2011. ■

A snapshot in time

Timeless

We are investing in sustainable relationships with partners [▶ chapter 7](#) and are examining the sustainability of our locations so that they remain useful for the foreseeable future for the surrounding environment.

This choice of sustainability has a number of advantages: it is cheaper in terms of usage, is better for the environment, living conditions improve for the asylum seeker and the working climate for the COA employee becomes healthier.

Together with the municipality, we are examining how a location can best be laid out so that, when we leave, it can take on another role more easily. In other words, it is timeless; we are not just looking at today but also towards tomorrow.



4 Sustainable location

Special school with its own dynamic

In 2011, the construction of two sustainable locations, Dronten and Luttelgeest, began. These two asylum seekers' centres are completely in line with the COA's property vision. During construction, we will examine a range of issues in addition to the space provided for residents and COA employees. The asylum seekers' centre school de Wissel will also be fully rebuilt.

We take a look around with school directors Ella van Essen and Sandra van der Tempel and the location manager of asylum seekers' centre Luttelgeest, Reurik Regelink.

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Location: **asylum seekers' centre school de Wissel**

Name: **Ella van Esssen and Sandra van der Tempel**

A snapshot in time: **"Regular primary school age children have to go to school. But these children really want to go to school. They are so keen to learn. If the school happens to be closed at some point, they are really disappointed that they can't go. You don't see that at many other schools."**

Sandra: "If pupils are singing in one location, the pupils in the room next door can quite easily sing along too."

Reurik: "During construction of this sustainable location, we are looking at the residential areas but also at the service buildings such as the school itself. We, as the COA, are facilitating the construction. We will then pass the key to the user and they will then become the official tenant in the building. That is a very special situation." Sandra adds: "This is also unique within education. In our association, we are the only one that hires the school building. It is also special that we are being given a school in a permanent building. It is excellent."

fantastic. Every day is different. At our other school, the academic year is reasonably constant. Here it is different. One week, there are an extra ten children and the following week another fifteen may leave."

Sandra: "Most of the school is exactly the same as an ordinary primary school. Just like other schools, you have to fulfil a number of objectives. What makes it different is the rapid turnover of pupils and the cultural differences. But we are very clear about the fact that we are a school in every sense. Even if we are a different type of school. Our main aim is to provide foreign-language education for children between the ages of 4 and 12." ■

Ella: "The biggest changes are the working conditions for the personnel and the classroom conditions for the pupils. The current location is very noisy."

Ella: "We have been directors here together for a year and a half now. It is great. The dynamic in terms of teaching is absolutely

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The dynamic of opening and closing

The COA is a growing/shrinking organisation. The scope is determined according to the number of asylum-seekers. On the basis of long-term expectations, decisions are made as to whether fewer or more locations are required. We currently have to deal with a structurally reducing number of asylum-seekers and the length of stay within the reception system is shorter. Fewer beds are therefore required.

On the other hand, the COA would also like to make the asylum centres that remain open more economical to run. Locations are therefore being redeveloped or, in some cases, completely rebuilt. This means that locations are opening and closing alongside one another.

Our property vision, which has been applied since 2011, works on the basis of sustainable property development.

We have to cope with a dynamic demand for reception locations for asylum-seekers. On the basis of current prognoses about the development of the in and outflow of asylum-seekers, a plan is drawn up for the coming twelve months in relation to changes affecting locations (opening, closing or expanding). ■

What does opening a reception location entail?

- When opening a location, the number of reception places required plays an important role. The ministry of Interior Affairs and Kingdom Relations determines, partially on the basis of the expected in and outflow of asylum-seekers, how many places ought to be available.
- On the basis of this insight into the required capacity (or on the basis of planned numbers), the COA then seeks out reception locations. The location can also be offered by the owner of a building or plot, such as a project developer, an estate agent, a private individual, the State, a province or a municipality.
- The location is then evaluated in relation to technical, safety, qualitative and financial aspects, as well as the political/governmental feasibility of a possible site.
- A collaborative contract is then drawn up with the municipality; this includes agreements about issues such as the length of stay in the location, the number of reception places, the organisation of the centre, financing, the consultation structure and the education of the asylum-seekers' children.
- If the location is deemed to be suitable, commercial negotiations between the COA and the owner will then follow.
- Approval by the municipality then confirms the establishment of the reception location.



- COA employees then work in collaboration with chain partners on preparations for the arrival of new, temporary residents in the municipality.
- Once residents have arrived, an average sized reception location can accommodate around 40 nationalities. Residents can then obtain professional assistance from the COA, chain partners and volunteers to help them with their future. ■

A snapshot in time

24 hour

Over the past few years, safety has become a more important topic on the social agenda. The COA has always considered being able to live and work safely at an asylum seekers' centre to be an important facet of our work.

New developments are monitored very closely. Our mission is very clear; we offer safe accommodation to those in a vulnerable position. The COA takes its responsibilities as an employer very seriously too. That is why we are taking part in the national programme 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (Safe Public Task).

In 2010, a standard was set up regarding types of behaviour that would not be tolerated. Over the past year, this standard has been tested in practice at four locations and is now applied organisation-wide.

Safety is also part of the permanent Health & Safety policy. In 2011, the labour inspectorate from the ministry of Social Affairs visited nine of the COA locations. Specific points to be addressed included biological agents (contamination hazard) and aggression and violence. Conclusion: many aspects are going well but there are areas that could be improved. We have now implemented changes, such as the content of courses for dealing with aggression and violence and the creation of new procedures for reducing contamination risks. This ensures that the time spent at the location by the residents and the employees is as safe as it can be.

5 Safe Public Task

'Specifying risks brings them out into the open'

Asylum seekers' centre Nijmegen is housed in former barracks. This is one of the four COA locations where the pilot 'Safe Public Task' was undertaken in 2011. The location became visibly and 'invisibly' safer for employees as the year progressed. Programme supervisor Wout Voskamp and Parvaneh Safari Jafarlou give us a tour.



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We start in the office area in the asylum seekers' centre and walk along a number of interview rooms. Through the glass window you can see that a resident is talking to a COA employee. Wout points to the closed doors and says that, until six months ago, there was no window and nobody could see what was going on in the interview room. Parvaneh adds that they sometimes left the door slightly ajar if they were having a tricky conversation so that colleagues could monitor what was going on. They are now much easier to see. In 2011, a few interview rooms were also redesigned. There is now an emergency button so that security can be called if required.

But, even more important than the actual modifications, is the employees' sense of security. During our tour, Wout and Parvaneh stress that the Safe Public Task programme has led to the employees being much more willing to talk about the issue of

safety. Incidents are registered via a special reporting form and incidents become fixed agenda points in the morning meeting. The fact that these issues are raised every day during the morning meeting means that more colleagues are made aware of them. A culture that allows employees to take the time and dare to talk about how they are affected, when they are involved in an incident, is thus being created. Wout believes that if they talk about it openly, they also gain a more accurate picture of a resident.

The fact that it is not only the COA employees but also the residents who are conscious of safety is clear towards the end of our tour of the asylum seekers' centre when we want to stage an unsafe situation for a photograph. A resident immediately approaches us to make sure that everything is ok. Wout reassures him that all is fine and, after saying hello to us, he continues on his way. ■

Location: **Nijmegen**

Name: **Parvaneh Safari Jafarlou**

A snapshot in time: **"When I realised, after an irritating incident with a resident, that I could relate the story to my colleagues."**



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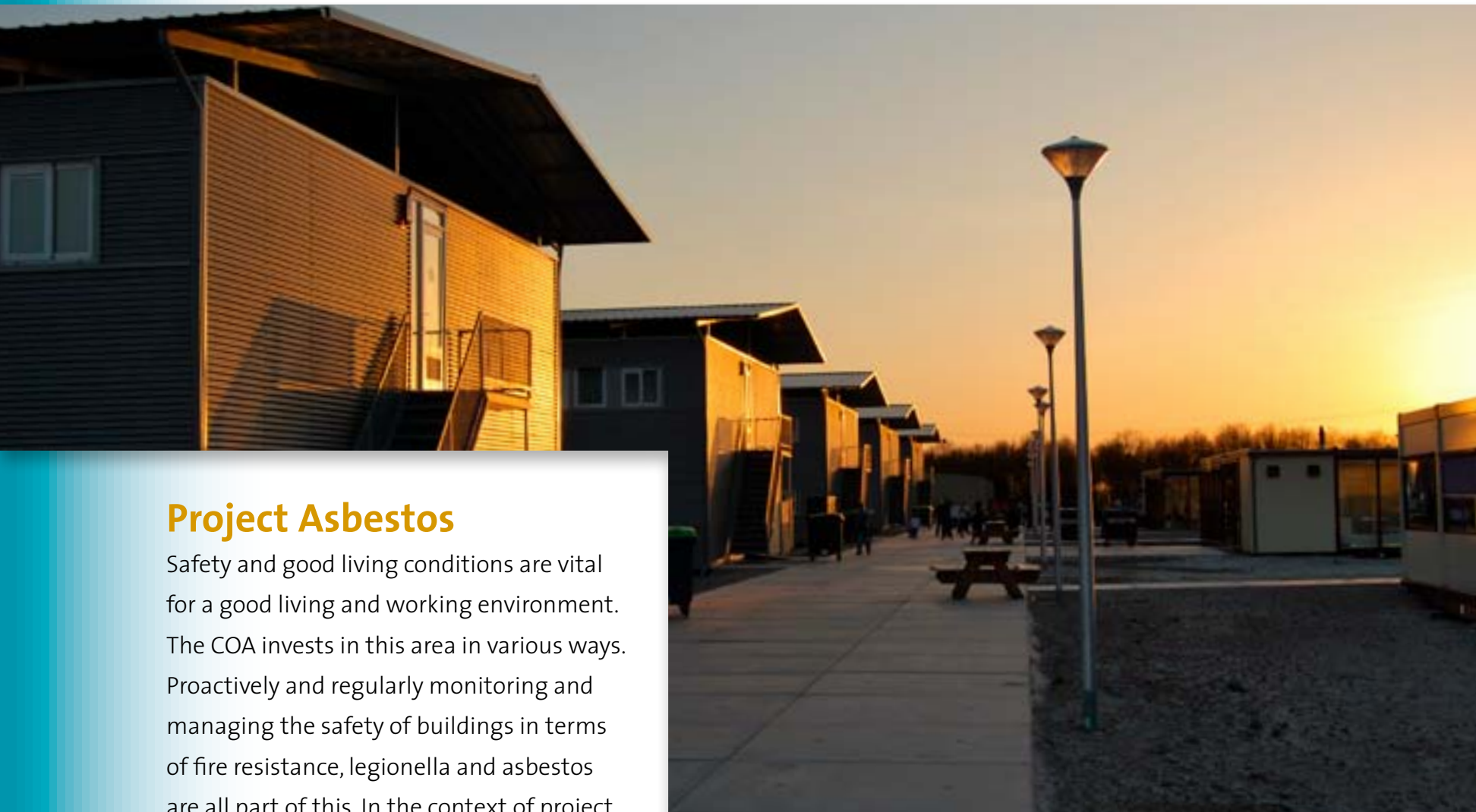
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Project Asbestos

Safety and good living conditions are vital for a good living and working environment. The COA invests in this area in various ways. Proactively and regularly monitoring and managing the safety of buildings in terms of fire resistance, legionella and asbestos are all part of this. In the context of project Asbestos, locations built before 1994 were inventoried for the presence of asbestos and the corresponding risks in order to increase safety conditions. The asbestos sources that present a possible health risk are then cleaned up. Project Asbestos finished in mid 2011. ■

Child abuse and domestic violence

The abuse and neglect of children by parents and carers has to be tackled as rapidly as possible. A pilot began in 2011, to investigate whether working with so-called Focus Officers for Child abuse and Domestic violence could help us in our work. The COA employees, Xander Vink, Anique van Kolfschoten and Nathalie du Mortier, from the Crailo location were provided with special training in 2011. As

part of this, they learnt to recognise the signs of possible child abuse and domestic violence and were taught how to tackle a conversation on this topic and report this to other bodies. If an employee suspects a case of child abuse/domestic violence, he will speak to the focus officer who will then take up the issue.

According to Nathalie, this working method means the approach is better organised. “In principle, it is important that all employees recognise the signals. But they do not need to be familiar with the entire protocol. This reduces pressure somewhat.”

Nathalie also believes it is better for the employee/resident relationship if this type of issue is handed over to someone who is more distanced from the situation. For external parties, it is also useful to have a clear point of contact within the location for reports or suspicions of child abuse or domestic violence. ■

A snapshot in time

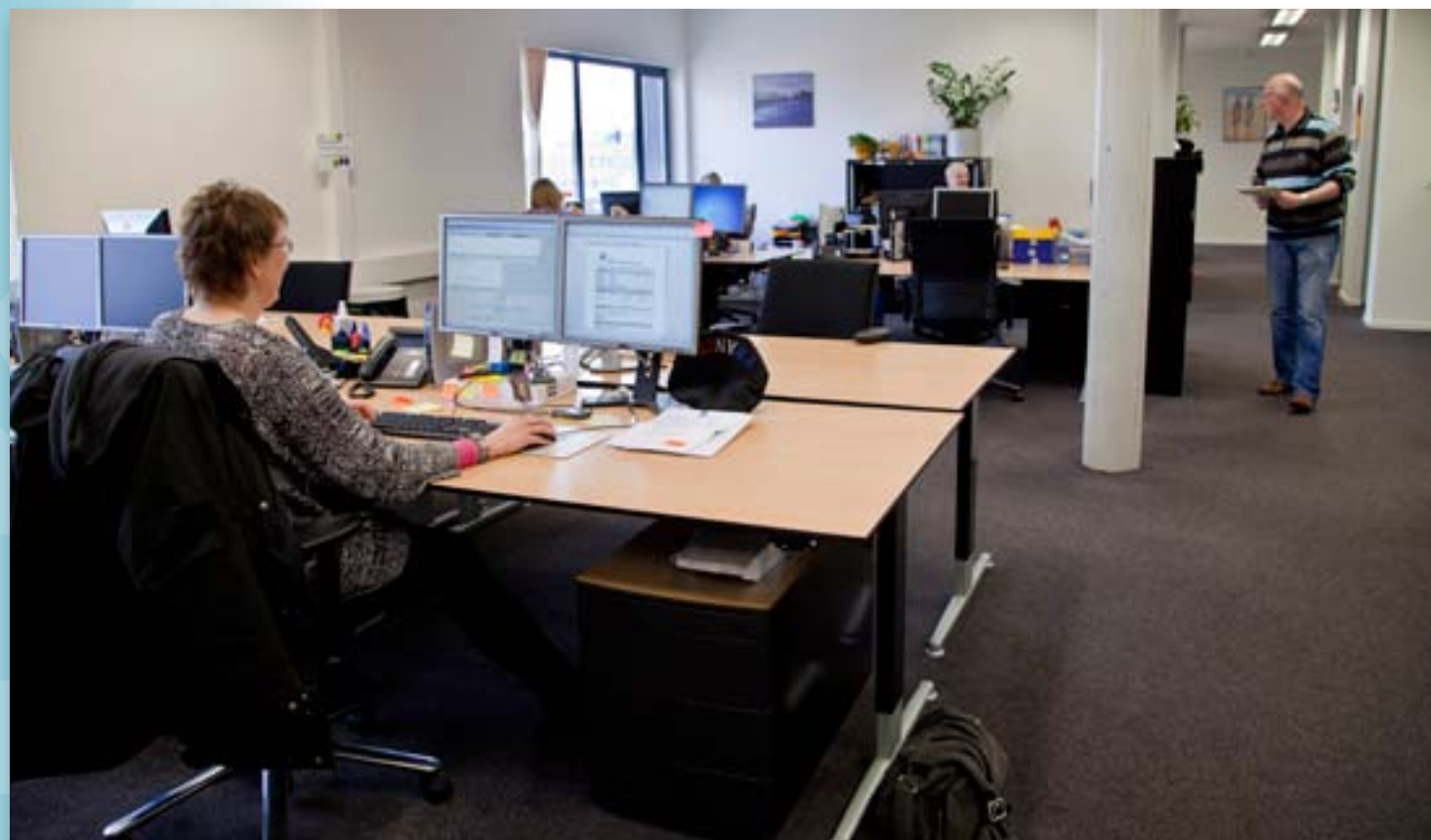
Nowadays

Staying up-to-date also means moving with the times. The concepts of digitalisation and automation are irrevocably connected to the current digital age. And not just in the private sphere but also in terms of work.

We no longer have 30-page reports, just a 3 MB pdf file. This is all part of it, even for the COA. We continuously work on improving operations by simplifying processes.

The COA is consciously crossing boundaries and looking to the outside world for inspiration. We actively endeavour to exchange information with our collaborative partners and examine how we can support and strengthen one another when it comes to ICT. Another important aspect of our contact with the outside world is the provision of information. In order to further develop our intranet, for example, we visited the Public Prosecutor and the IND in order to see how they have approached this task.

The first steps along the digital pathway have been taken. In order to stay up-to-date, the COA must not rest on its laurels but continue along the digital expressway. And that really is part of our digital age.



6 Digitalisation of residents' files

Working with two screens

The two COA residents' administration offices in Meppel and Den Bosch are somewhat emptier nowadays. The 20,000 residents' files are no longer kept in hanging files but are stored in electronic files in the computer.

In 2011, the digitalisation of residents' files became a reality. This was a huge project that heralded the dawn of a new work age.

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“Look, you can see where the cabinet was by the mark on the carpet.” Conny Siemelink, senior support employee points at an impression in the carpet. Together with her colleague, Yvonne van Bommel, we walk around the residents’ administration section at the COA in Meppel. “Some cabinets are still here but nowhere near as many as there used to be. Every family had its own hanging file. We still receive paper documents but we scan them into the computer now.”

The cabinets have disappeared but the desks are becoming more crowded however. Siemelink: “We have started working with two screens. One screen for the scanned documents and the other for IBIS, the software programme for the residents’ files, so that we can carry out the procedures immediately. In the beginning, we wondered if we’d be able to find the right documents for the right resident but now we are just used to it.”

Van Bommel: “This working method is also more in line with the times. And developments are happening fast. A few forms have already been digitalised for

Location: **Residents’ administration Meppel**
Name: **Conny Siemelink and Yvonne van Bommel**
A snapshot in time: **“You notice how handy digitalisation is when you can organise something by phone because both the location and you can view the same file simultaneously.”**

electronic payments. The plan is to develop this to include more forms.”

Siemelink: “This has also now led to small process modifications. If the working method used to involve faxes, it now involves a digital file.” Siemelink: “I think it works better. The risk of losing paperwork is much lower.”

An additional advantage is that locations no longer work with shadow files. All of the information is available at one place for everyone. This makes things much more efficient.” Van Bommel adds: “It is good for the residents too. If they come to the information desk at a particular location and have a question, the reception employee can take a look at the file and provide an answer. They can be dealt with straight away. This means everyone saves time.” ■



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The digital working environment

In order to make the very best use of technology for work, the COA developed a vision of the digital working environment in 2011. The aim is to have phased the digital working environment in and for it to be an essential element of COA work by 2015. It supports mobile and flexible working and encourages collaboration and the ability to share and guarantee expertise. The COA is thus more efficient, transparent and modern. However, this requires not simply technological modifications. The management is challenged by the future digital working environment to be transparent and manage on the basis of results rather than availability. Employees also have to be more disciplined. They now have to enter their knowledge on the portal and keep it up to date. ■

Video conference

Meeting others without having to travel for miles but still being able to see one another.

In 2011, the options for introducing video-conferencing to the COA were examined. With great success. In 2012, the eight cluster offices and the head office in Rijswijk were linked together via a video-conference system. This saves time, saves money on travel costs and provides environmental advantages too. ■

Digitalised invoice flow

A huge step towards paperless working. The flow of invoices within the COA was completely digitalised in 2010 and 2011. An invoice that comes in is scanned and then processed in an entirely digital manner. The advantage of this is that the invoice is easier to find, without having to go to the archives. ■

A snapshot in time

Simultaneously

In order to be able to do our work efficiently, we rely on collaboration. We enjoy working with social and political (chain) partners. We all have our own responsibilities with respect to the asylum issue and collectively achieve the best results for our client, society and, of course, the resident.

The COA, IND and DT&V, in particular, have strengthened their collaborative bands this year within the Collaboration in the Chain project. We are working together on options for improving efficiency, with the aim of saving money and improving quality. But we are also seeking closer ties with the chain and other collaborative partners outside the project too. Other parties also seek us out. We have thus received toys for the asylum seekers' centres from IKEA, a supermarket chain freshened up a leisure area for us and the Guusje Nederhorst Foundation organised the Day of the Forgotten Child for the first time.



7 Collaboration in the chain

Win-win situation as a result of collaboration

The three organisations often hold meetings on a policy level as well as an operational and a directorial level. The collaboration between IND, COA and DT&V was further strengthened in 2011 as a result of the Collaboration in the Chain project. Director of the IND, Caroline Postma and Rhodia Maas, director of DT&V tell us more.

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Location: **DT&V office**

Name: **Rhodia Maas**

A snapshot in time: **"The energy that is released when all three of us sit in the steering committee for the Collaboration in the Chain project".**



Caroline Postma: "We have a collective interest: how can we work together in the chain even more effectively in order to ensure our clients are kept happy? By actively seeking out collaboration, we are effectively killing several birds with one stone. We can work more cheaply, the clients are even happier and the contact between us is better.

Rhodia Maas: "It is, of course, a government-wide development to actively seek out collaboration. We are all interconnected. All three of us work with foreigners. Even though we have been collaborating for some time, there is a new dimension as a result of this collective project. I find it very inspiring."

Caroline Postma: "I'll give you an example. Not so long ago, there was a meeting in the department that we were unable to attend. Then, internally, we had an idea: could we ask someone from COA to make our contribution for us? That would not have happened a year ago. Not because it was not possible, but because it just never occurred to us. This project really adds something to the collaboration."

Rhodia Maas: "I can provide another great example. All three of us are involved with internal training such as courses on the law with respect to foreigners, for example. But should we do that individually or could we do it together?"

Caroline Postma: "Yes, and take the example of the meeting rooms. Instead of an external location, we could also organise meetings between ourselves. Still external, but much cheaper. And the same goes for accommodation at the locations; we are currently taking a good look at that too."

Rhodia Maas: "This type of topic is always coming up. Within our regular working week, we have little time to think about collaborative processes. Now, through, we can proceed outside the regular routes. And that strengthens us too. Because ordinary collaboration

also leads to stronger contacts. What's nice is the fact that there is still plenty of room for strengthening bonds even though we already work together. We can learn from one another; oh, do you do it like that? The fact that we, as direct chain partners, can help and strengthen one another benefits everyone."

Caroline Postma: "It is a genuine win-win situation." ■



Location: **Office IND**

Name: **Caroline Postma**

A snapshot in time: **"As a result of this intensive collaboration, we end up with entirely new ideas."**

Short messages >

RET

Taking a look ‘outside’ also means taking a look abroad. There is a great deal of contact with reception organisations abroad in order to exchange expertise. This may concern which topics are to be dealt with as part of an integration programme, for example, or we could be looking for answers to questions such as; how can asylum-seekers improve their job-finding prospects? The Reception Experts Teams project enables 22 European countries to work together on themes such as integration and the accommodation of asylum-seekers. In 2011, the COA is taking the initiative for and managing this project as a result of our expertise in the reception sector. Participating countries are developing methods for European reception organisations. The project officially concludes at the beginning of December 2011. ■



Day of the Forgotten Child

The Guusje Nederhorst Foundation is dedicated to organising interesting activities for children within reception centres. On 4 February 2011, the foundation organised the Day of the Forgotten Child for the very first time. Almost three hundred asylum children were invited to the Beekse Bergen to enjoy a range of activities. The date for this first Day of the Forgotten Child was deliberately set on the birthday of Guusje Nederhorst.

The children and supervisors from asylum seekers’ centres in the centre and south of the country were picked up and taken home in buses. During the day, they took part in a multifaceted programme of events and it was an unforgettable event for the children involved. The initiator of the foundation Dinand Woesthoff talks about the activities: “It is very rewarding to do this type of thing. Everyone has to have a little enjoyment in their lives, particularly as a child. We try to make a small contribution to this.” ■

Past tense

In 2011, we did not publish an annual report. This annual report, therefore, contains a short overview of recent history because many of the activities that were followed up in 2011 actually began during this previous period.

In addition to our activities, there was also a significant occurrence in 2010. The year saw substantial political change. For about 16 years, we have been answering to the Minister of Justice. With the arrival of the new cabinet in October, however, this changed to the ministry of Internal Affairs and Kingdom Relations. In the last few months of 2010, we familiarised ourselves with and worked intensively on the creation of a new working relationship.



8 A review of 2010

Past tense in brief

New working methods were particularly evident in 2010. The new asylum procedure, for which we had been preparing with our chain partners since 2009, came into force.

In relation to supervising our residents, an accelerated procedure also led to a quicker settling-in programme. As a result, the same things now have to be learnt in a shorter period. It has become a more intensive programme that aims to provide permit-holders with a good starting position in the Netherlands. And there were further significant events in 2010.

Savings on gas and electricity

The topic of ‘energy’ is alive and kicking for COA employees.

The COA is often provided with energy-saving tips, such as scrutinising contracts with energy suppliers, via an internal suggestion box. Even though this was an ad-hoc activity, the aim for the coming years is now to achieve structural energy savings.

With this in mind, the Energy Management Programme, a method for reducing the consumption of gas and electricity at all of our locations, was prepared in 2010. This saves costs and is socially responsible. In 2011, an external consultancy examined four locations: Utrecht, Alkmaar, Schalkhaar and Echt. It looked at the ways in which energy consumption could be lowered. In the period that followed, concrete measures for the long-term were set out. This could involved technology, organisation and behaviour. By 2020, central government would like to have achieved a 30% reduction in CO₂, compared to 1990. The COA is also contributing towards this. ■

New asylum procedure comes into force

The new asylum procedure was implemented in 2010. For the COA, this means that we fulfil a central role as soon as the refugee enters the Netherlands. This is a new role that we have picked up with great vigour. Within one day, we organise the initial activities for asylum-seekers and choose the location at which the asylum-seeker will follow the asylum procedure. The COA plans the first interviews for asylum-seekers, such as the tbc screening, and schedules an explanation by the Dutch Council for Refugees, medical advice and preparatory meetings with a lawyer. A few days later, we also plan the beginning of the asylum procedure and the hearings at the registration centre for the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND).

The new procedure has also led to two new types of COA location: the central reception location and the process reception location. We are thus setting up existing locations in a new way. Upon arrival in the Netherlands, the COA initially accommodates people who are requesting asylum in the new, central reception centre in Ter Apel. After a few days, they then move to one of three process reception centres that we set up in 2010. The process reception location provides all the facilities required to prepare the foreigner for the asylum procedure. These locations are



situated near an IND processing office. If they are allowed to proceed with the asylum procedure, they move to a regular asylum-seekers’ centre. These accommodate both asylum-seekers that have a permit to stay and those who are still going through the follow-up procedure or have to return to their country of origin. ■

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Updated independent, foreign minor (amv) method helps with monitoring

Every independent foreign minor (amv in Dutch) is supervised by COA employees and collaborative partners. These supervisors shortened and clarified their method during 2010. The fact that mentors now have a clear guideline means they can ensure they supervise and help all the youngsters in a similar fashion. The basic principle is: youngsters must be prepared as effectively as possible for their future either in the Netherlands or elsewhere.

Collective efforts are being made to develop competencies such as the execution of household chores or preparing for work. All mentors have completed specific training and youngsters between the ages of 15 and 18 reside at a special amv campus. The COA employees provide 24 hour/day supervision.

On the campus, young people live in small groups of eight. They do everything for themselves, including cooking, cleaning, shopping and going to school. They are intensively supervised. The mentors are responsible for the safety and living conditions within the campus. The guardian institution Nidos also provides a reporting role. The intensive supervision enables the youngsters concerned to develop effectively and discover their own special skills. Mentors stimulate them to consider their futures and questions such as, what do I want and what are my options? Whether this involves the Netherlands or their country of origin. ■



A snapshot in time

In short

The events of 2011 and 2010 have been summarised in this annual report in both words and images. This chapter provides an overview of the years in brief summaries. How many asylum-seekers are staying with the COA and what financial budget does the COA receive? How many locations are there and where can they be found? What does the COA represent and who provides the leadership? And also: where do the asylum-seekers come from? In short, 2010 and 2011 in fact and figures.

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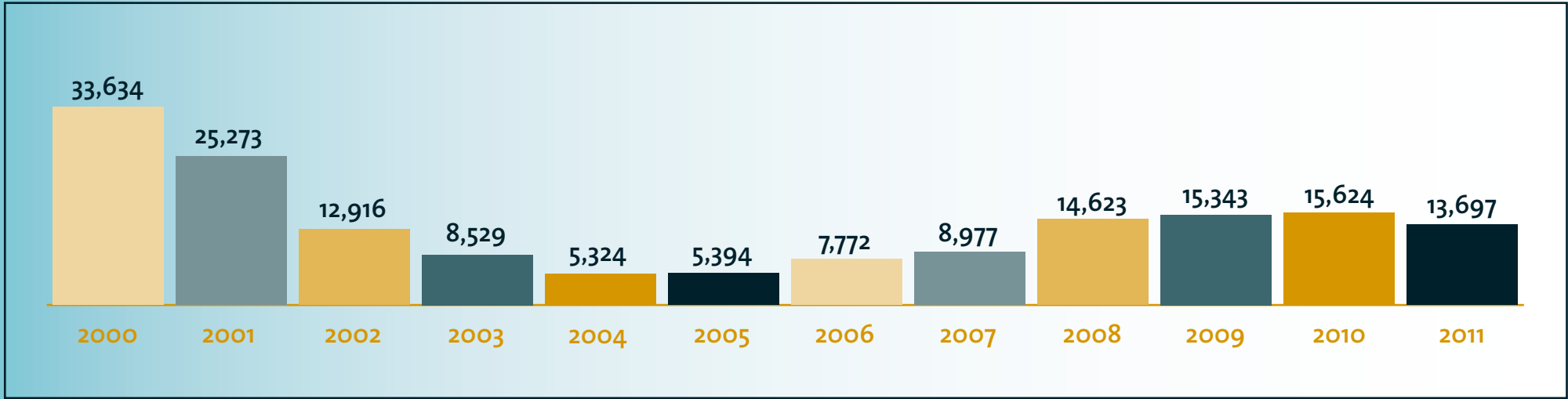
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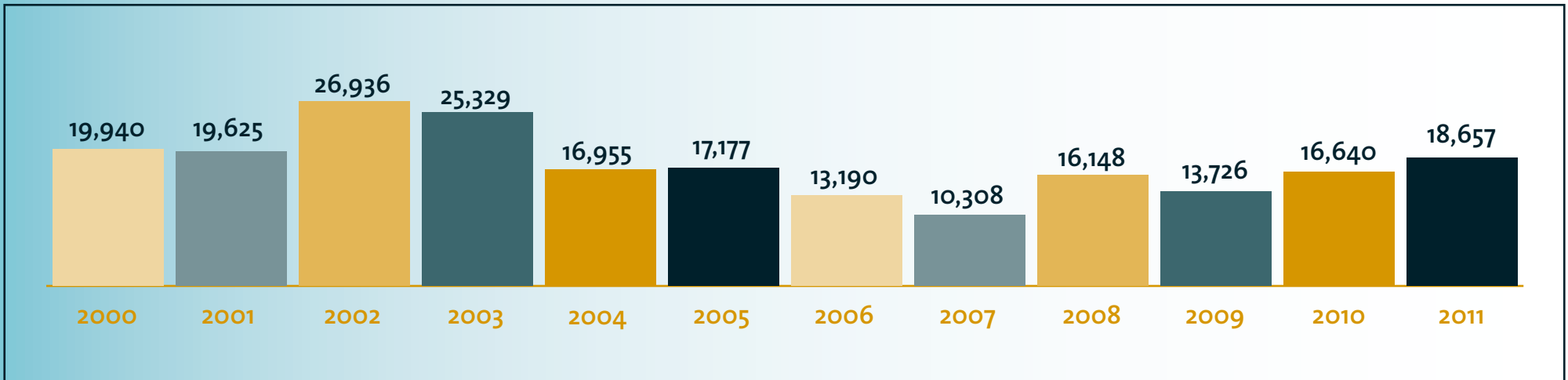
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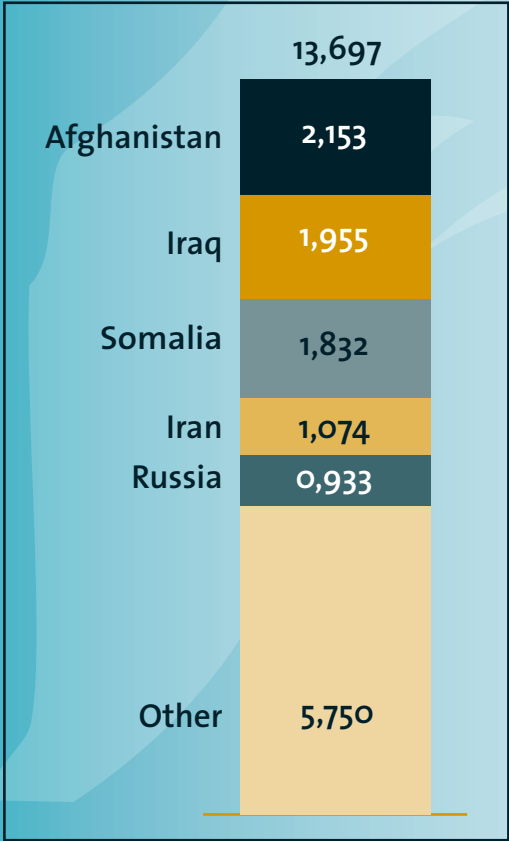
Development inflow central reception from 2000 to 2011



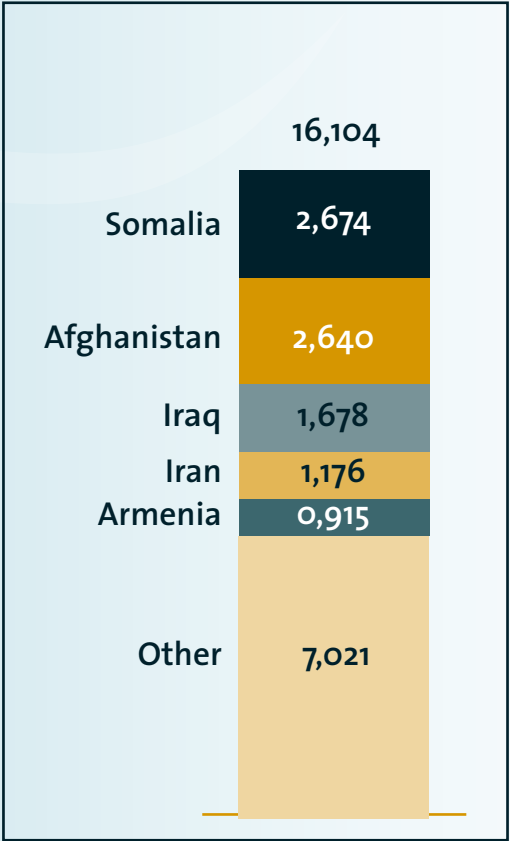
Development outflow central reception from 2000 to 2011



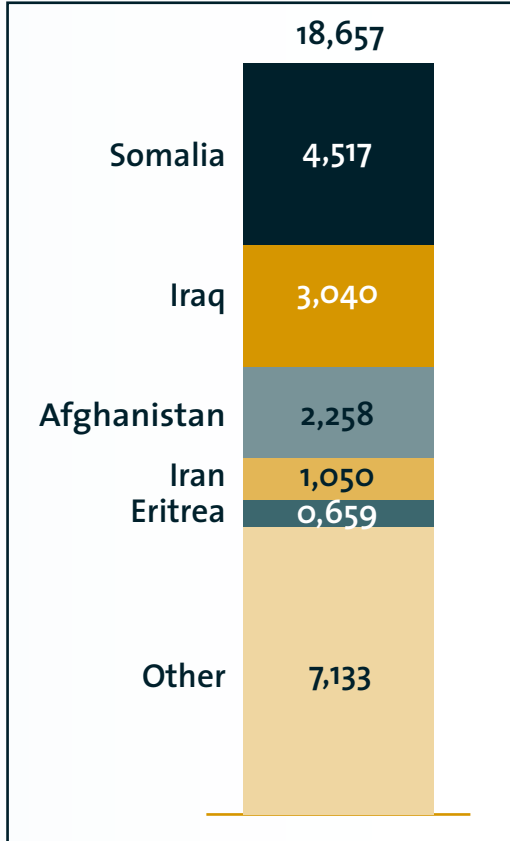
Top 5 inflow 2010
according to country of
origin



Occupation central
reception Top-5 according
to country of origin



Top 5 outflow 2010
according to country of
origin



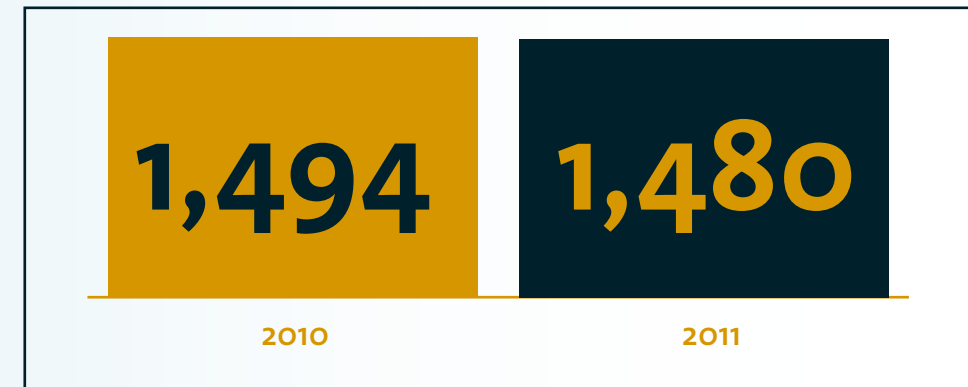
Our vision

We are the reception organisation within Dutch society that endeavours to ensure reception services for foreigners run smoothly. We do so by providing safe accommodation, means of support and targeted programmes.

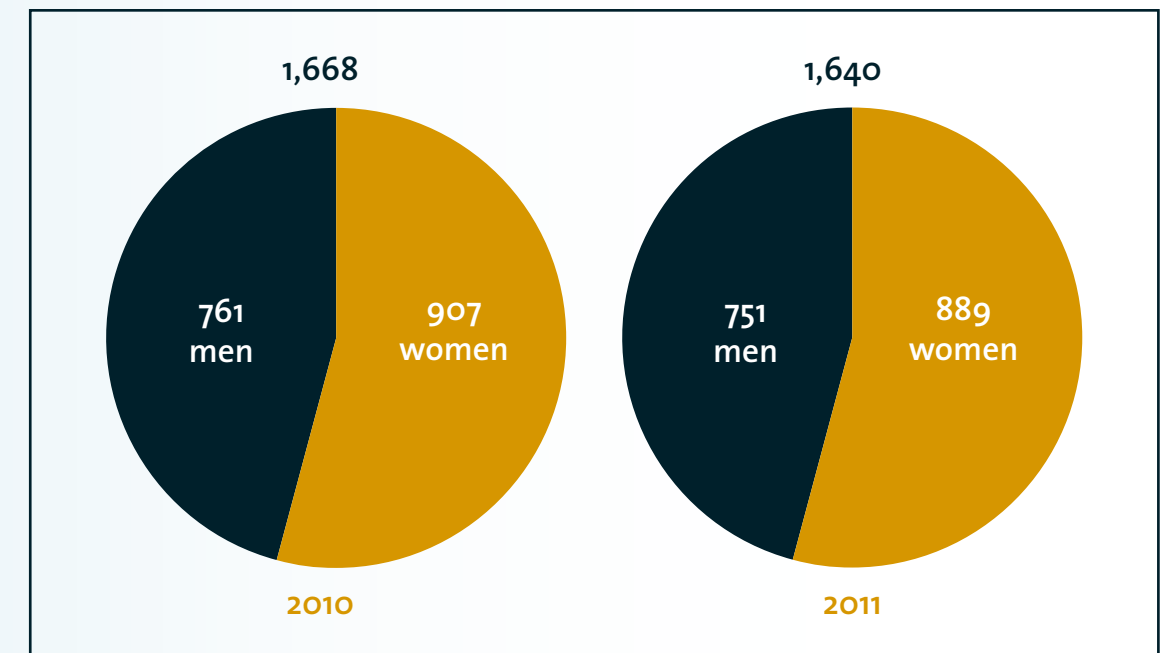
Our mission

We ensure that people in vulnerable positions are provided with a positive and safe environment in which to live and are supervised professionally so that the reception of foreigners remains manageable from a political and societal perspective and can be properly accounted for.

Contracted personnel FTE



Contracted personnel, number of employees



Operating summary

(amounts in € 1,000)	Realisation 2011	Realisation 2010
Total income	451,449	500,178
Personnel	129,340	118,274
Equipment	131,770	187,275
Interest and depreciation	25,754	25,682
Healthcare	93,450	99,910
Programme costs	57,878	66,085
Total costs	438,192	497,226
Regular operating balance	13,257	2,952
Result shrinkage	-20,445	-1,000
Contribution to reserve policy investments	-	-390
Remaining operating balance	-7,188	1,562

Reception locations in 2011

Aalten
Alkmaar
Almelo
Almere
Amersfoort
Apeldoorn
Arnhem
Azelo
Baexem
Bellingwolde
Burgum
Crailo
Cranendonck
Delfzijl
Den Helder
Drachten
Dronten
Duinrell *(closed on 01-04-11)*
Echt
Eindhoven *(closed on 30-09-11)*
Emmen
Geeuwenbrug *(closed on 30-11-11)*
Gilze en Rijen
Goes
Grave

Heerlen
Heijen *(closed on 31-05-11)*
Hoeven *(closed on 01-12-11)*
Katwijk
Leersum
Luttelgeest
Markelo
Middelburg *(closed on 31-10-11)*
Musselkanaal
Nijmegen

Oisterwijk
Oldebroek *(closed on 14-05-11)*
Oude Pekela
Rotterdam *(closed on 09-11-11)*
Sambeek *(closed on 28-02-11)*
Schalkhaar
's-Gravendeel
St. Annaparochie
Sweikhuizen
Ter Apel

Tienray *(closed on 31-05-11)*
Utrecht
Velp *(closed on 31-10-11)*
Venlo
Vlagtwedde
Vught
Wageningen
Well *(closed on 31-05-11)*
Winterswijk
Zweeloo



Supervisory Board

Temporary withdrawal on 11 October 2011 for the duration of the investigation of the COA

- Loek Hermans, chair
- Ronald Bandell, member
- Anne-Wil Duthler, member
- Rein Willems, member

Resigned 11 October 2011

- Jaap Besemer, member

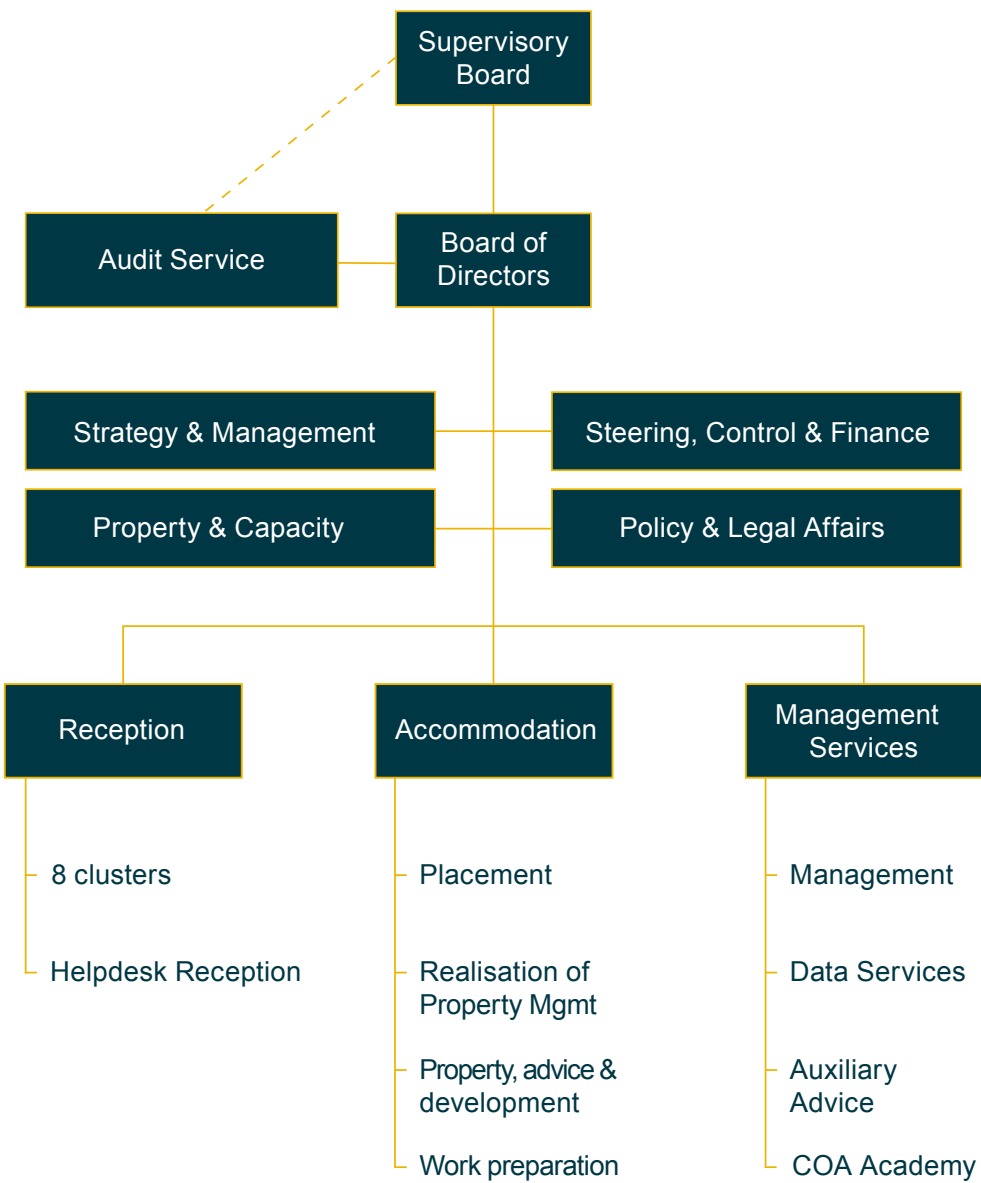
Appointed 19 October 2011

- Ella Kalsbeek-Jasperse, member

Board of directors

- Nurten Albayrak-Temur, general director (suspended as of 27 September 2011)
- Harry Paul, interim board chairman (as of 3 October 2011)

Organisation (as of 31 December 2011)



Directors

- Arina Blom-Zuidgeest, director Policy & Legal Affairs
- Henriëtte van der Bend, director Accommodation (from 1 February 2011)
- Petra Ginjaar, director Reception
- Robert Barentz, director Strategy & Management
- Jelle van Netten, director Steering, Control & Finance (from 1 July to 11 August 2011)
- Marlies Goebel, temporary director Steering, Control & Finance
- Michel Buurman, director Property & Capacity
- Maurice van der Meulen, temporary director Management Services (until 1 May 2011)
- Rien van Immerseel, director Management Services (from 1 May 2011)
- Ronald de Ruiter, head of Audit Service

Additional functions Supervisory Board and Board of Directors

The COA endorses the Code of Good Governance for Public Service Providers and provides transparency about the additional roles of the members of the Supervisory Board and Board of Directors (as of 1 January 2012).

Mrs N.A. Kalsbeek-Jasperse,
member of Supervisory Board as of 19 October
Primary role:
Chair of Board of Governors/Directors of Altra, an institution for youth care and special education in Amsterdam.

Current additional functions:

- Member of Organisational Board of University of Tilburg
- Chair of Stuurgroep Actieplan Professionalisering Jeugdzorg (set up by former minister of Youth and Family)
- Chair of Supervisory Board Nederlands Jeugdinstituut (NJI)
- Member of Board of Nederlands-Boliviaanse NGO Chakana (until September 2012)

Mr H. Paul MPA,
as of 3 October 2011, interim board chairman
(until 15 October 2012).

Current additional functions:

- Chair Supervisory Board, ZOA Hulp, Hoop, Herstel
- Member of Advisory Board IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students)
- Member Supervisory Board Hogeschool Driestar Educatief (until 1 January 2012)

Colophon

Publication

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2280 ME RIJSWIJK

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Strategy and Management - COA

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Design

Ontwerpwerk - The Hague >

1 July 2012

With thanks to all who have contributed to the creation of this annual report.